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PRACTICAL POINTS
ON PRAYER

Dub McClish

The Lord wants us to be a people of prayer (Luke 19:46), but too often we are like the apostles in Gethsemane, sleeping when we should be praying (Mark 14:37-38). That the Lord intended for His followers to use prayer as an essential strand in the fabric of life, rather than merely as a storm shelter, is unarguable. One of the most practical passages on prayer is in James 5:13-18.

James urges:

**Personal Prayer** (“let him pray,” v. 13). We need to spend time with the Father “in secret” (Mat. 6:6). Perhaps no other daily habit will do so much to make God a real, constant companion to us.

**United Prayer** (“let them pray,” v. 14). One is mistaken if he thinks Jesus emphasized only personal prayer (Mat. 6:9, “Our Father”; Mat. 18:19-20). One of the earliest descriptions of the church has them “continued stedfastly...in prayers” (Acts 2:42).

**Believing Prayer** (“prayer of faith,” v. 15). Faithless prayer is wasted words, but believing prayer God hears and answers, according to His will (Mark 11:24; Jam. 1:6ff).

**Intercessory Prayer** (“pray one for another,” v. 16). Jesus prayed for His apostles and for us (John 17:9-23). We need to pray for one another and for all men (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

**Fervent Prayer** (“prayed fervently,” v. 17). There ought to be a fire in our hearts as we pray. Lack of fervency would seem to indicate lack of faith.

**Specific Prayer** (“that it...not rain,” v. 17). To the general request of James and John, Jesus said to them to be more specific (Mark 10:36). Much of the material in the prayers of the Bible involves specific requests.

**Continued Prayer** (“and he prayed again,” v. 18). Christ urged men “always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). Constant prayer is a theme in
Paul’s letters summed up simply: “Pray without ceasing” (1 Th. 5:17).

The great key to a faithful Christian life is to pray the way we ought and live the way we pray.

908 Imperial Drive; Denton, TX 76201

PSALM 127:1
“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

IDOLATRY IN 1998
Lennie Reagan

The theme of the book of Leviticus answers the question of how sinful man approaches a holy God. Hence, we read of holiness throughout this grand Mosaic book. But, how does this Old Testament book apply to New Testament Christians and all men who are amenable to the law of Christ?

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Rom. 15:4). ... in the New Testament. God’s attitude toward sin in the Old Testament is the same attitude God possesses toward sin today. You see, if God is like this in the Old Testament times, God is going to be like that in New Testament times; for, God does not change. We understand that the law has changed from the law of Moses to the law of Christ; but, God has not changed. God’s attitude toward His law in the Old Testament is the same attitude God possesses toward His law in the New Testament. God’s attitude toward sin in the Old Testament is the same attitude God possesses toward sin today.

Take just a few minutes to read the inspired instructions revealed in Leviticus 26:1-46. There are some considerations of obedience worthy of our time and application if we seek to make heaven our eternal home.

**The Obedient Will Not Make Any Idols**

The word “idol” is an interesting term in the Hebrew language. Literally, it is used to define “a thing of nothing.” So when men would make an idol they would be actually making a thing of nothing to which they would bow down.

The very first thing that God commanded His people was: “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exo. 20:3). Regardless if it were carved, graven, imagined, or real—God demands that we place no thing of “nothingness” before Him.

The Old Testament prophet identifies the folly of idol makers in the forty-fourth chapter of Isaiah. The preaching prophet describes the idol maker as a man who goes into the woods and cuts down a tree. With part of that tree he will cut up into fire wood and use it to warm himself. With another part of that cut up tree he will burn in his stove to bake bread and roast meat. With the residue of the same tree this man will make a god, fall down and worship that tree saying: “Deliver me; for thou art my god” (Isa. 44:14-17).

Shall we take that which Jehovah has given us and worship the creation instead of the Creator (Rom. 1:18-25)? Yet, that is exactly what idolatry is. Of course, we are not involved in idolatry today, are we? Surely, when we consider our biblical roots and Christian background we will realize that we are too enlightened to be bothered with idolatry (written with great sarcasm). Regardless of our understanding or intellectual possession—America is one of the most idolatrous nations on earth. Hear the words of the apostle Paul: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5). Paul commands that we should put to death whatever belongs to our earthly nature; whether
it is sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires or greed which is identified as idolatry.

As a nation we have fallen right in line with covetousness. We continue to feed the greed with lies like: “What I really need is a bigger house!” “What I really need is a better car!” “What I really need is more money to pay for what I really need!” We have swallowed the devilish bait, hook, line, and sinker, that we really need all of those things to make us happy and we want to be “happy” right now! Our society maintains the attitude that financial gain is the very thing for which every true American should strive. The real American dream is to have more and more and more and more...

Please understand the possession of material things is not sinful of itself. We have the obligation and the privilege to care for our families, pay our bills, and to provide for the golden years of life. However, when we allow the very essence of our being to be dominated by the accumulation of material things—we have made an idol. When we fail to fulfill and faithfully follow the will of God because of our financial pursuits, we have fallen down and worshiped a thing of nothingness.

We not only idolize material possessions; but we worship youth and looking younger. There seems to be some kind of shame in America when your chin starts to sag and lighten it up there, bring it in here and let it out there! We do whatever we have to do to stay young and look beautiful. It is interesting to see how we view youth and how God views the elderly. God defines the hoary head as an honorable thing: it is “a crown of glory” (Pro. 16:31).

Stephen Covey, in his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, hit the proverbial nail on the head when he pointed out a transition in society relative to how we identify successful people. He suggests that prior to World War II a successful person was described in terms of his character. Was a person honest, courageous, just, and upright? A person was successful based on the quality of his character, even if that meant he had to stand alone for that which was right. However, after World War II, a change took place as to how we judged success. No longer was character the key element, but personality and outward appearance. As a result our main concern was and, unfortunately still is, how people see us. No longer does society view success based on good traits; but, now society determines success on how people perceive us.

We have taught several generations how to look good, sound good, and to build their entire lives upon temporal matters that will not provide one iota to things eternal. Our children know how to dress for success; but, do they know how to pray through the trials and temptations of life as they trust God? The image that society has taught our children to worship is nothing: it is a thing of nothingness.

God declared first of all, if we are going to be His people, we must give up our idols. As parents we need to quit serving the idols of nothingness. Our children need to see and hear us trust in God and they must be taught that they can trust in God and they must be taught that they can trust in God to perform that which He has promised. “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORd, and whose hope the LORd is” (Jer. 17:7).

The wise man Solomon teaches an eternally valuable lesson that seemingly appears lost in society today: “A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understandingshall attain unto wise counsels: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Pro. 1:5, 7).

Again, notice the wisdom of Solomon as he describes life without God: “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity” (Ecc. 1:2). The temporary things of this world can never bestow true joy. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecc. 12:13).
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Tim Lamb, Geneauve Dean, and Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter). Mary Muldoon is in Baptist Hospital.

READING/INVITATION
January 13, 1999
Reading: Elward Brantley
Invitation: Paul Brantley
January 20, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Jerry Caine

MARK THESE DATES
January 10, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 11, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
January 17, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 18, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
January 25, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit

1 PETER 1:23-25
“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which livest and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
CHRISTIAN GROWTH

Bob Patterson

It does not take one long to hear of the various plans and methods to be employed in order to bring about what some would call “church growth.” We are living in a time of “church growth” emphasis. We have so many who are willing to meet together and talk about it, yet with the result of very little (if any) growth actually taking place! Thus, why (in a time of what’s been called “encounters” and various workshops and seminars) has so little been accomplished toward that end? Could it be that in such meetings the things which makes for growth has been placed “on the back burner” so to speak, and everything from “Gymnastics for Jesus” to “Dominoes for Deity” has been promoted. There can be no doubt that these things are entertaining, but what can they provide in the area of true Christian growth? By the methods offered, many individuals may indeed be drawn by the fun, the social, and the entertaining, but growth (as God calls growth) still has not been accomplished.

I do not know of any plainer teaching or any clearer statement found in Scripture that deals with the matter of how Christian growth comes than what we find in 1 Peter 2:2, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.” Notice what these verse sets before us: (1) There is the Word of God. (2) There is the pureness of that Word. (3) There is the nutrition the Word of God supplies. (4) There is also the appetite that we must have for the Word of God. (5) There is the growth which results!

One does not have to have a “PhD” to recognize knowledge and application of God’s Word is that which makes for growth! In 2 Peter 3:18 we are instructed to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Paul’s prayer on behalf of the brethren in Philippi (and for all members of the body of Christ) was that “your love may abound yet more
and more in knowledge and all discernment” (Phil. 1:9). One cannot help but notice the emphasis that is placed on Christian growth. But, in what way should one desire to grow? Here are some obvious areas to consider: (1) From one being non-spiritual to spiritual (Eph. 2:13; Rom. 12:1-2). (2) From our being a babe in Christ to being one who is full-grown and complete (Eph. 4:13-15; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). (3) From our having very little knowledge to possessing fine knowledge (Col. 1:9; 2 Pet. 1:3, 5). (4) From one having very little discernment to being able to utilize great discerning skill (1 Cor. 2:14-15; Heb. 5:14)! Now, how is any of that possible apart from a consistent, conscientious, continual study of the only thing that can truly bring about true Christian growth, THE WORD OF GOD!

Throughout the history of the church there have been problems to arise within the body from those “desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm” (1 Tim. 1:7). The key to one’s security (spiritually speaking), is one’s continual spiritual growth which is in keeping with what the Lord said makes for growth. Just think about it, without proper spiritual growth, we are like those Paul talked about being “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. 4:14). Instead of our “falling victim” and our being “fair game” for those who would want to take advantage and damage our souls, let us determine to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15) and to have “searched diligently” (2 Pet. 1:5, 10) and having done all “to stand” (Eph. 6:13)!

Let’s not be deceived by men and their devices (that Christian growth can be derived from the concoctions of men), but recognize God has provided for our growth spiritually based on our desire, study, and application of His Will!

May we keep before us the words penned by Hosea (in the long ago) speaking on behalf of God, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee” (Hos. 4:6).

P.O. Box 690; Sapulpa, OK 74067

HEARTS STIRRED FOR GOD

When Paul came to Athens and saw the city steeped in idolatry, the Bible says “his spirit was stirred in him” (Acts 17:16). Believe me, that is exactly the same type of thing that needs to happen in the church today. So many Christians are beset by appalling indifference! Vast numbers of church members are satisfied, week after week to just warm a pew. Beyond that—nothing!

In so many places today, the church is just like the one in Sardis in the first century—it “hast a name” of being alive and active when in reality it is nigh to being dead (Rev. 3:1ff).

We must somehow awaken Christians out of their lethargy and complacency if the church is ever to be all that God would have it to be! As long as we are content to “hit on only 3 out of 8 cylinders” we will continue to “chug along” instead of really functioning efficiently for the Lord.

Brethren, let us open our hearts to the Word of God. We desperately need hearts that are “stirred” to action. Our actions reveals the heart, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Pro. 4:23).

Author Unknown

NEW WEB PAGE ADDRESS

The new Internet web page address for the Bellview Church of Christ is: http://members.tripod.com/bellviewcoc
**SOUND DOCTRINE**

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (Tit. 2:1).

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11).

“Hold fast the form of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13).

Give book, chapter, and verse. Do Bible things in Bible ways. Call Bible things by Bible names.

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<td>2. “Church of Christ doctrine”</td>
<td>“Bible doctrine, truth” (2 John 9-11; John 8:32)</td>
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<td>3. “the Church of Christ teaches”</td>
<td>“the Bible teaches” (Gal. 1:6-9)</td>
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<td>4. “the authority of the Church”</td>
<td>“the authority of Christ” (Mat. 28:18-20)</td>
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<td>5. “he is a Church of Christ”</td>
<td>“he is a Christian—a member of the body of Christ” (1 cor. 12:13)</td>
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<td>6. “he is a Church of Christ”</td>
<td>“he is a Christian”</td>
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<td>7. “I am teaching him our position”</td>
<td>“We are studying God’s Word: what the Lord teaches.”</td>
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<td>8. “The Church of Christ is right in all points of doctrine and practice.”</td>
<td>“The Bible is right and we are making an effort to conform to its teaching.”</td>
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<td>9. “giving to the Church”</td>
<td>“giving to the Lord”</td>
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<td>10. “quitting the Church”</td>
<td>“quitting the Lord”</td>
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<td>11. “join the church to be saved”</td>
<td>“Obey the gospel: be added to the church” (2 The. 1:7-9; Acts 2:47)</td>
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<td>12. “Our church; My church”</td>
<td>“the Lord’s church” (Mat. 16:18; Rom. 16:16)</td>
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<td>13. “Church of Christ church”</td>
<td>“church of Christ: the Lord’s church”</td>
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<td>14. “vote him into the church”</td>
<td>“The Lord added him to the church” (Acts 2:47)</td>
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<td>15. “Rev. So-N-So”</td>
<td>“Christ warns against exalting titles” (Mat. 23:4-15; cf., Psa. 111:9)</td>
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<td>16. “Father So-N-So”</td>
<td>“And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven” (Mat. 23:9)</td>
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*Author Unknown*
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Mary Muldoon, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Tim Lamb, Geneauve Dean, and Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter).

RESTORED
Daniel Coe and Angie Kelly were restored to Christ on January 10. Please keep them in your prayers and offer them encouragement.

READING/INVITATION
January 20, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Jerry Caine
January 27, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Jeremy Caine

MARK THESE DATES
January 17, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 18, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
January 25, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit

SOON TO DEPART
Daniel and Kim Coe will be departing the Pensacola area on January 22, 1999, for duty in the Washington, D.C. area. Daniel will be stationed there with the U.S. Navy. As soon as we have an address for them we will let everyone know. Please keep them in your prayers and write to them.
January 13, 1999
Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Rd.
Pensacola, FL 32526

Dear brethren:

It is our plan to coordinate an effort in which humanitarian aid will be provided to two hospitals, two orphanages, and needy individuals in Murmansk, Russia. Because of the severe economic conditions which now exist in Russia, there are many who are in need. Through this effort, we hope to ease some of the medical, nutritional, and other hardships these people are presently enduring. We are hoping that you will want to have a part in this effort also.

Why is aid to be provided to hospitals and orphanages in Murmansk, Russia? As you may already know, brother Clifford Lyons has been serving in the Murmansk area as a missionary for several years, under the oversight of the Southaven elders, and in cooperation with the Memphis School of Preaching. He and brothers Robert Hawkins and Alexander Nesterkin regularly teach God’s Word at the Murmansk Sloping Hospital for Seamen, in addition to one of the orphanages. Learning of the dire need of these organizations and their patients, brother Lyons asked if we could assist. The hospitals and orphanages are government owned and supported Rom Moscow. Support, however, has not been available for several months now, because of the country’s very severe economic crisis. Because of numerous difficulties encountered...
while attempting to make suitable arrangements to ship goods to Murmansk; we have decided to send monetary assistance, in lieu of goods, through the church in Murmansk. The church will ensure that these funds are received by these facilities who will then purchase the needed items. Items to be purchased include food, medical equipment, and supplies. Documentation for purchases will be provided to the Southaven elders by the respective organization’s representatives. In addition to these designated funds; a small amount will remain in the Murmansk church treasury to assist needy individuals there. Will you help provide this much needed financial assistance? If so, please send your check, payable to the “Southaven church of Christ,” and designated for “Humanitarian Aid” by Friday, February 28, 1999. Brother Lyons and others will be returning to the work in Murmansk in early February. All funds received by his departure date will be carried back and delivered by him. Funds received after that time will be “wired” to the church soon after the above date. If you desire additional information, please feel free to write or call.

In His Service:

Larry Everson  Bill Pierce  Coleman Simpson

Editors’ Note: The above letter was recently received by the elders of the Southaven Church of Christ. Those wishing to assist in this endeavor can send checks to either Southaven Church of Christ or to Bellview Church of Christ. Please indicate on the check that it is for the Murmansk Humanitarian Aid.

NEW WEB PAGE ADDRESS
The new Internet web page address for the Bellview Church of Christ is: http://members.tripod.com/bellviewcoc

SELECTIVE MORALITY

Dave Rogers

“Disney pulls plug on raunchy Posse” reads the title of a news item on page 2D of USA Today (June 27, 1997). The article notes that Hollywood Records, a subsidiary of the Walt Disney company, “pulled” the release of an album called The Great Milenko by a duo called Insane Clown Posse. Their stated reason was that profanity-laced, “brutally frank, sexually explicit...” lyrics on the album were “often offensive.” One hundred thousand copies had already been distributed when Disney officials “decided it was ‘inappropriate’ for a Disney product.” According to the report, Disney has already dropped the duo, and has canceled a tour planned for them.

We commend the Walt Disney Company for recognizing that vulgar and sexually explicit “music” is not appropriate for public consumption. We suspect, however, that this is a case of selective morality. The announcement comes a week after the Southern Baptist Convention (following the lead of the Assemblies of God) called on its membership to boycott the Walt Disney Company. The SBC announced the boycott because of what it perceives as anti-family and anti-Christian policies at the Disney company (particularly the promotion of “Gay Day at Disney,” and acceptance of workplace concessions to the homosexual lobby).

Disney has made its commitment to financial profit very plain in recent years. It owns several other entertainment companies which do not bear the Disney name. Miramax and Touchstone Pictures are the producers of Pulp Fiction, Natural Born Killers, Kids (described by some as “nihilistic pornography”), and Priest, which features homosexual activities. Through another subsidiary Hyperion, Disney is publishing Grow-
ing Up Gay: From Left Out To Coming Out, a book whose title is self-explanatory. Even the seemingly innocuous Pocahontas, a hit animated musical, portrays Captain John Smith as a believer in some sort of godless “nature religion.” This is ironic since Pocahontas herself became a believer in the God of the Bible, was baptized into the Anglican religion, and a mural of her baptism hangs in the nation’s capital!

What has happened here? Have the Disney company’s managers suddenly “got religion”? Have they “seen the error of their ways”? Is this the first step in “making amends for past wrongs”? It hardly seems likely! If it were, surely Disney would renounce all of their offensive enterprises, not just an insignificant musical act. More likely, “rap” publicist Phyllis Pollack is correct in suspecting ... thus appear (momentarily) virtuous on one hand, while continuing to purvey smut and vulgarity with the other.

The real problem here is not that the venerable Walt Disney company has moved into areas of “entertainment” which must have its esteemed founders spinning in their graves. Selective morality lies at the root of nearly all our current societal ills. Where Solomon long ago counseled: “In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Pro. 3:6), today even God’s children will cut their ethical moorings if it is convenient or profitable! The company’s managers thus appear (momentarily) virtuous on one hand, while continuing to purvey smut and vulgarity with the other.

A preacher said to a farmer: “Do you belong to the Christian family?”
“No,” said he, “They live two farms down.”
“I mean are you lost?”
“No, I’ve been here thirty years.”
“I mean are you ready for the judgment day?”
“When is it?”
“It could be tomorrow, or even today.”
“Well, when you find out for sure when it is, let me know. My wife will probably want to go.”

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Mary Muldoon, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Diana Brazell, Geneauve Dean, Angie Kelly, and Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter).

READING/INVITATION
January 27, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Jeremy Caine
February 3, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Bill Cline

MARK THESE DATES
January 25, 1999—Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 1, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 8, 1999—Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 14, 1999—Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 15, 1999—Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 21, 1999—Elders/Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 22, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit

When I neglect any of the services of the church, I injure and cripple its good name. I also lessen its power, I discourage its membership. And at the same time I chill my own soul.

Someone said: “A cold church is much like cold butter, it never spreads well.” The church offers something that cannot be attained at any other place.
WALKING IN CHRIST

Joel Wheeler

The life of a Christian has often been described throughout the Bible in various ways. Life itself is often described as a walk or a journey down a certain pathway. There are a number of passages that refer to the Christian life as a “walk.” “Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise” (Eph. 5:15). Paul also wrote that Christians were to “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1). The apostle John wrote, “if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). These passages and more indicate that the Christians’ life is active and not passive. Often individuals want a passive or do nothing religion. They want all the benefits of God, but do not want the inconvenience of putting forth the effort of living a pure life.

We see in the Old Testament that men walked with God. Two verses in Genesis 5 tell us that Enoch walked with God. Noah, a preacher of righteousness also walked with God. This phrase “walked with God” indicates a pious, moral, and blameless life under the law according to the directions of the divine commands. It shows a deep intimate relationship with their creator. The Old Testament describes a sinful world, full of wickedness, yet these men had the courage and endurance to obey God’s laws. Enoch and Noah not only walked with God according to Genesis, but they walked against a world of wickedness.

Jesus said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Mat. 7:13-14). Jesus is implying that we are walking down either of two paths. We are walking down the broad way which leads to destruction or the narrow way which...
leads to eternal life. Jesus went on to say “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12).

The psalmist wrote “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:105). An individual will lose his way in the dark without a light and without the lamp of God we would be eternally lost. Paul refers to God’s Holy Word as the “light of the glorious gospel” (2 Cor. 4:4). We are to “walk by faith, and not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7) according to the inspired apostle Paul. This faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17).

Walking by faith and walking in Christ are simply obeying the commandments of God though we cannot see the end results. If we could visibly see the end then we would not need faith. Sometimes situations in life will lead us down an uncertain path but if we will “keep the commandments of God” the end result will take care of itself. We must trust in God and seek first the kingdom and we will have our reward.

P.O. Box 714; Foley, AL 36536

HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FOR MURMANSK, RUSSIA

Southaven Church of Christ
1483 Brookhaven Dr. at U.S. Hwy. 51
P. O. Box 128, Southaven, MS 38671-0128
(601)342-2690

January 13, 1999

Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Rd.
Pensacola, FL 32526

Dear brethren:

It is our plan to coordinate an effort in which humanitarian aid will be provided to two hospita-
nated for “Humanitarian Aid” by Friday, February 28, 1999. Brother Lyons and others will be returning to the work in Murmansk in early February. All funds received by his departure date will be carried back and delivered by him. Funds received after that time will be “wired” to the church soon after the above date.

If you desire additional information, please feel free to write or call.

In His Service:

Larry Everson  Bill Pierce  Coleman Simpson

Editors’ Note: The above letter was recently received from the elders of the Southaven Church of Christ. Those wishing to assist in this endeavor can send checks to ... Church of Christ or to Bellview Church of Christ. Please indicate on the check that it is for the Murmansk Humanitarian Aid.

THE INGREDIENTS OF A 15-MINUTE SERMON

Dennis Gullege

Did you hear about the Baptist preacher who decided to cut his religious services down to 22 minutes and issued it as a challenge to see if people would be bold enough to “receive their religion in small doses?” He wanted to do for his preaching what McDonalds has done for food—make it fast! What this preacher proposes is nothing new, and he certainly is right up there with some of our brethren in his fascination for brevity.

The length of a sermon is purely a subjective matter. There is no right and wrong as to the time involved. The personal preferences of people get involved and everybody has their opinion about it. As far as opinions go, one is about as good as another. It isn’t as though I haven’t given some thought to learning the art of the 15-minute sermon. I have given serious consideration to the ingredients of such, and here are my conclusions:

1. Leave out a lot of Scripture. Keep “opening and alleging,” preaching the Word, quoting and reading to a minimum.

2. Dispense with heart felt appeals for lost souls.

3. Don’t study.

4. Eliminate applications from Bible passages that might fit our time and situations in life. It might take a few minutes.

5. Quit calling them sermons and call them “nice little talks,” or better yet, “sermonettes.”

6. Forget boldness in the pulpit—you might be prompted to linger.

7. Never condemn sin! There is too much of that to have to deal with. For the sake of brevity you may just have to ignore it.

8. Minimize any concern for the disobedient and wayward persons in your audience. You might shed too many tears privately and too many words publicly in trying to reach them. And besides, people will be too busy studying their watches to hear what is said anyway.

9. Leave out any treatment of issues troubling the church. You might be perceived as being “negative,” and you might get bogged down in warning people.

10. Just have something to say instead of something you have to say. Try to squelch any feelings of earnestness about your task. Just get the job done quickly.

This is what I would have to recommend to my preaching brethren if they are to learn the art of the 15-minute sermon. However, it appears that many of them caught on... you consider some of the ingredients above. All in all, it appears that more is left out of the sermon than is put in it.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Mary Muldoon, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Geneauve Dean, Ella Hammac (recent eye surgery), and Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter). Horace Myrick is in Sacred Heart Hospital, 3rd floor intensive care unit. Ray Dodd is scheduled for outpatient surgery January 25 and again on February 1.

RESTORED/PLACED MEMBERSHIP
Debbie Cutler was restored on January 23, 1999. She has placed membership with the Bellview congregation. Carl Ayliffe was restored on January 24, 1999. Please keep them in your prayers and offer any assistance you can.

READING/INVITATION
February 3, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Bill Cline
February 10, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Michael Hatcher

MARK THESE DATES
February 1, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 8, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit
God wants His church to grow. Such is apparent from the parable of the mustard seed (Mat. 13:31-32), the parable of the leaven (Mat. 13:33), and from the parable of spontaneous growth (Mark 4:26-29). Furthermore, such is evident from the figures of speech employed by the Lord to portray the true nature of His church. For example, the church is likened to a body (Eph. 1:22-23). A body is a growing organism. It is a grow or die proposition. Then, Daniel prophesied that the kingdom would begin as a small stone and grow until it filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31). However, it is growth that the Lord desires; not flamboyant mushrooming produced by shallow sensationalism, shallow emotional, and denominational gimmickry. The example and pattern for our growth is the New Testament, the Jerusalem Church. It grew; and, oh how it grew (Acts 2:42, 47; 5:14; 6:7). When a religious body is not concerned with Bible authority, anything and everything can go; but, we are a people concerned with Bible authority! Accordingly, again we affirm that the New Testament church is the pattern and stimulus for our growth today; rather than some high-flying, emotionally charged denomination or religious cult.

Among the many factors contributing to the remarkable growth of the first century church was the fact that (1) they were united in love (Acts 4:31-33), and (2) they really loved the lost, resulting in their being evangelistically zealous (Acts 5:42; 8:1-4). Now, let us observe these two factors separately.

Part I: Great Love For The Brethren

1. The Necessity Of Brotherly Love

1. It is a badge of discipleship (John 13:35); 2. It is a command (John 15:12; 13:34; 1 John 4:21); 3. It is supreme (1 Pet. 4:8); 4. It is the ful-
fillment of the law (Rom. 13:8-10). It must be practiced to prevent stumbling (1 John 2:10). We must practice it to be in the light (1 John 2:9, 11). It is a mark of divine sonship (1 John 3:10). It is a mark of conversion and spiritual life (1 John 3:14). 9. Without it we are murderers (John 3:15). 10. We must practice it to be of God, to be born of God, and to know God, (1 John 4:7-8). 11. We should love one another because God loved us (1 John 4:11). 12. We must love one another for God to dwell in us and His love to be perfected in us (1 John 4:12). 13. We cannot love God without it (1 John 4:20; 5:1-2).

2. The Nature Of Brotherly Love
1. We must love one another as the Lord loved us (John 13:34; 15:12). He loved us enough to give His life (John 3:16). 2. We are to love one another as we love ourselves (Mat. 22:39). 3. We are to love one another fervently (1 Pet. 1:22; 4:8). 4. We are to love one another genuinely (1 Pet. 1:22-23). 5. We are to love one another with a pure heart (1 Pet. 1:22-23). Our hearts are to be pure from envy, malice, hatred, animosity, jealousy, ill will, etc. 6. We are to love one another in deed and not in word only (1 John 3:17-18). 7. An analysis of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 will help us to understand the action of our love toward our brethren.

Part II: Great Love For The Lost
1. Examples Of Those Who Possess A Great Love For The Lost:
1. God and Christ. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).
2. Paul. So deep and abiding was his love for the lost that he penned: “I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren” (Rom. 9:1-3).
3. Jeremiah. Being so passionately concerned for his lost brethren, Jeremiah exclaimed, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” (Jer. 9:1).

2. What Will We Obtain When We Possess A Great Love For The Lost?
1. We will seek opportunities. A courting couple will seek every opportunity to be together. Why? Because they love one another. In like manner, when we really love the lost, we will seek every opportunity possible to reach them with the gospel of Christ.
2. We will see the lost and not the cost. Why will a mother and father sacrifice every material possession they have in the interest of a very sick child, seeking medical aid from every location and physician of whom they hear, and from whom they receive one ray of encouraging hope? It is because of their great and undying love for their child. In like manner, when we really love the lost, we will not spend so much of our time in business meetings talking about the cost. Rather, we will be discussing ways and means by which we can motivate each other to be more liberal in our giving, as well as devising scriptural methods by which we can effectively reach the lost.
3. We will pray. It is no marvel that we read the Lord’s lengthy prayer in John 17, when we have already read in chapter 13 and verse 1 that “he loved them unto the end.” However, his prayer for them was not so many empty words. Instead, he went to the cross in their behalf. Accordingly, let us pray for the lost; and then be willing to make every sacrifice possible to see that they come to know the Lord.
4. We will give. Loving the lost as He did, God gave (John 3:16)! When a child of God is having friction with his contribution, it is because he has friction in his consecration toward saving a lost and dying world.

Conclusion
Let us really work at the job of duplicating in the twentieth century the first century church in their love for one another and in their love for the lost. Such will result in each of us living a very meaningful and fulfilled Christian life, as well as
HUMANITARIAN RELIEF FOR MURMANSK, RUSSIA

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Pensacola, FL 32526

Dear brethren:

It is our plan to coordinate an effort in which humanitarian aid will be provided to two hospitals, two orphanages, and needy individuals in Murmansk, Russia. Because of the severe economic conditions which now exist in Russia, there are many who are in need. Through this effort, we hope to ease some of the medical, nutritional, and other hardships these people are presently enduring. We are hoping that you will want to have a part in this effort also.

Why is aid to be provided to hospitals and orphanages in Murmansk, Russia? As you may already know, brother Clifford Lyons has been serving in the Murmansk area as a missionary for several years, under the oversight of the Southaven elders, and in cooperation with the Memphis School of Preaching. He and brothers Robert Hawkins and Alexander Nesterkin regularly teach God’s Word at the Murmansk Sloping Hospital for Seamen, in addition to one of the orphanages. Learning of the dire need of these organizations and their patients, brother Lyons asked if we could assist. The hospitals and orphanages are government owned and supported from Moscow. Support, however, has not been available for several months now, because of the country’s very severe economic crisis.

Because of numerous difficulties encountered while attempting to make suitable arrangements to ship goods to Murmansk; we have decided to send monetary assistance, in lieu of goods, through the church in Murmansk. The church will ensure that these funds are received by these facilities who will then purchase the needed items. Items to be purchased include food, medical equipment, and supplies. Documentation for purchases will be provided to the Southaven elders by the respective organization’s representatives. In addition to these designated funds; a small amount will remain in the Murmansk church treasury to assist needy individuals there.

Will you help provide this much needed financial assistance? If so, please send your check, payable to the “Southaven Church of Christ,” and designated for “Humanitarian Aid” by Friday, February 28, 1999. Brother Lyons and others will be returning to the work in Murmansk in early February. All funds received by his departure date will be carried back and delivered by him. Funds received after that time will be “wired” to the church soon after the above date.

If you desire additional information, please feel free to write or call.

In His Service:

Larry Everson
Bill Pierce
Coleman Simpson

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SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Mary Muldoon, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Ella Hammac, Horace Myrick, Ray Dodd, Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Jack Dodd (Ray Dodd’s brother).

RESTORED
Joyce Simmons was restored on January 31, 1999. Please keep Joyce in your prayers and offer any assistance you can.

READING/INVITATION
February 10, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Jeremy Caine
February 17, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Bill Crowe

MARK THESE DATES
February 8, 1999—Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 14, 1999—Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 15, 1999—Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 21, 1999—Elders/Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
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PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

PSALM 116:1
“I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.”
TIPS FOR AN EFFECTIVE VISITATION PROGRAM

Clayton Pepper

Training is essential to a successful soul-winning program. Preparation eliminates fear, gives confidence, and assures success. All this helps to keep the workers happy and working. A failure to prepare means to start, stumble, falter, and fail at last.

Workers need to know some simple do’s and don’ts

1. Workers must learn to look and act like soul-winners. This involves your personality and dress.
2. You must know the importance of tact; the ability to say the right thing at the right time and in the right way.
3. You need to know how long to stay on the first visit, what to discuss and what not to discuss.

Rules to observe when you visit

1. Appreciate the value of a soul.
2. Make your first visit brief.
3. Be pleasant.
4. Avoid any kind of argument.
5. Be interested in the interests of the person you visit—not yours.
6. Don’t ask personal questions that could possibly embarrass the host.
7. Have initiative—be not easily discouraged.
8. Never become impatient.
10. Talk about something in common.
11. Size up the situation and be alert for ways to reflect a Christ-like interest.

Ministering to spiritual needs through visitation

Workers need to know:

1. Why is the visit being made?
2. What do you do in this type of visit?
3. What is to be accomplished?

Let us apply these three questions to the various
Visits to non-Christians

1. Why should you visit the non-Christian who visit our services? Or other similar prospects?
   a. To demonstrate personal interest and concern—make them feel welcome.
   b. To answer any questions that they might have about the church.
   c. To arrange to study the Bible or show filmstrips in the home.

2. What do you do in this type of visit?
   a. Express appreciation for their attendance to the service.
   b. Begin to develop a warm personal friendship.
   c. Invite the family to your home for a visit or meal.
   d. Leave appropriate tracts, carefully chosen, with each person’s needs in mind.
   e. Describe the visualized Bible survey and sell the prospect on seeing these; offer Bible correspondence course; enroll in Bible classes.
   f. Be careful not to overwhelm them on the first visit.

3. What are you to accomplish?
   a. Create a feeling of good will in the prospect toward the church and yourself.
   b. Make them feel wanted and appreciated.
   c. Develop their interest in God and spiritual things.
   d. Lead those souls to Christ.

A NICE STRANGER TELLS HIS STORY

I am a nice stranger. I never complain, I never create a scene. When I attend church services, I never object if I have to walk all the way to the front of the building to find an empty seat while everyone cranes and stares to watch my embarrassed march.

No. I just take a seat in the manner of a lady or gentleman. I am a nice visitor who never complains. Not even when I have to push by the feet of selfish members who occupy the aisle seats, and wouldn’t move out of their favorite place for anyone. I just sit down meekly and quietly.

I am an ideal stranger. I don’t complain when those in the nearby seats talk and whisper to each other during the sermon, or when someone is busy “cooing” at the babies instead of listening to the sermon. This does make it so I cannot hear the sermon, which I was interested in, but I don’t complain.

I wouldn’t hurt someone’s feelings, or embarrass a mother by asking her to keep quiet so that I, who am not a member, can hear the preacher. I am a nice stranger. I never create a scene if, at the close of the service, nobody speaks to me. No, when they gather in their little groups, it doesn’t bother me. I am a nice stranger, and I am too cultured to say anything about all of this. I JUST DON’T COME BACK!

Author Unknown

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SICK AND SHUT-IN
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RESTORED
Dale Cunningham was restored on February 7, 1999. Please keep Dale in your prayers and offer any assistance you can.

READING/INVITATION
February 17, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Bill Crowe
February 24, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Tim Lamb

MARK THESE DATES
February 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.
February 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

NEW BIBLE CLASSES
The spring quarter for our Bible class program will be starting in March. Make plans now to attend.
DANGERS OF CHURCH GROWTH

Jerry Moffitt

We hear a lot today regarding church growth, and many emphasize it, numbers, and bigness. This writer thinks there are some dangers in this attitude which seems to be sweeping through the brotherhood. But we would first state that church growth can be good. It can mean that a congregation is alive, working, and evangelizing the lost through the preaching and teaching of the gospel. This type of growth is sound and biblical (Acts 2:41; 4:4; Phi. 1:5; 1 The. 1:8). But in this article we want to stress abuses and dangers. Let us begin.

Competition in the Social and Entertainment Mode: To foster the swelling of a congregation, a swelling by additions of Christians from other congregations and false “conversions” from the denominations (which simply is not evangelistic growth), a church may generate programs which are attractive to worldly-minded people. So we see bulletins with calendars emphasizing parties, games, Christmas caroling, birthdays, retreats, catered meals, open houses, seminars on marriage enrichment, gyms, swimming parties, jogging for Christ, singles car-tune-up days, etc.

Individual Christians may want to provide times for special groups to be together and do some things, and this is good. But is this the work of the church, as we see that work in the Scriptures? We now have ministers of youth, ministers of singles, movies nights, camp outs, all led by ministers of this and ministers of that. Is this the work of the church, or have we drifted? Why can we not have individual Christians do these things which are good, and allow the church to do its spiritual and God-given work?

But the sad fact is, all this is probably going to stay and greatly increase, because churches
feel that they must compete with other churches and denominations in the social and entertainment areas or lose members. So the spirit of competition (and compromise) heats up, and like a boy running downhill, cannot stop. Yet all of this justifies itself under the philosophy of church growth, numbers, ministering to the whole man, and bigness. But when you convert and train brethren in this emphasis, you have to feed them with these things to keep them “faithful.” So what does an eldership have? They have a church full of people who must have those “needs” met in ever increasing doses, brethren and half-converted denominationalists who are not there out of love for truth, willingness to sacrifice, desire to accept denial, and a heart aching for biblical truth (Mark 8:34-35; Luke 14:26-32; 13:24). Is this all this Jesus caught the hearts of thousands, and how He mustered a vast army of disciples willing to die for Him at the drop of a hat?

**Compromise:** “Preacher, you are too negative. You better tone it down, or...you might actually turn someone off or run someone away!” We have a brotherhood that cannot any longer swallow that hard kind of preaching which always makes strong Christians. Elders now can only tolerate a preacher who gives pink tea, a diet of candy, and a monotonous rat-a-tat-tat on how to feel good, real good! Congregations are weak and susceptible to gangrene because they have a bad case of sugar diabetes. There is a lack, rather a dearth of plain old sin-hating, God-fearing, distinctive, hard, doctrinal preaching. And some lament that we do not have more of the same sweet stuff. Why? We might lose someone to another congregation. Jesus was pretty rough, and the disciples were like some of our brethren: “Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?” (Mat. 15:12).

When we gather to ourselves elders and preachers who care less what the Holy Spirit said regarding marriage and divorce, modesty, morality, drunkenness, work, giving of self, and sacrifice, and care more about growth (swelling), numbers, and bigness, we, as a candlestick, are on the way toward being snuffed out.

**Over Emphasis on Numbers:** The “numbers-at-all-costs” philosophy will make us pay dearly in real spiritual health. It is not wrong to be small every now and then. It may indicate that a church realizes that the way is strait and narrow (Mat. 7:13-14), and that though many are called, few are chosen (Mat. 22:14). Jesus said, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many shall say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able” (Luke 13:24). No, it’s not wrong to be small (Rev. 3:4). God can get along nicely with the Gideon few. In fact, vast numbers should make us lift an eyebrow or two and do some real deep soul-searching. The vast majority of people at any given time, in biblical history, were generally either lost or wrong. Take Noah’s day, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Elijah on Mount Carmel and afterward.

There is nothing wrong, in many cases, if a church loses members and dwindles in size. It may be a good indication that itching ears were not scratched (2 Tim. 4:1-4), rebellious people had the law laid down, toes were righteously stepped on, and like an evil, dark, foul spirit, droves of hypocrites and compromisers sought greener pastures back down in Egypt.

I kind of like the preacher who, when asked how his meeting went, replied, “Great! Seven people got up and walked out!” It may be that such was necessary. But we have preachers who never had antagonists throw the tiniest handful of dust in the air while they spoke (Acts 22:23). Stephen had the face of an angel and they gnashed on him with their teeth when he cut...
them to the heart (Acts 6:15; 7:54).

The truth is, church growth is not always an indication as to how well the congregation is doing. Congregations should probably be weighed, not counted. Numbers are rarely a sign of true spirituality, and growth is not always a sign of the redeemed being added to the ranks of just men made perfect (Heb. 12:23). Real growth is evangelistic growth, and can be present even when numerical growth is not. Let us then emphasize spiritual growth...growth that comes only by working hard and diligently fighting for the truth (Jude 3):

213 Sabine; Portland, TX 78374

“BE YE KIND...”

Al Brown

Micah wrote: “Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?” (Mic. 6:6-8)? Christians are told to show kindness to others (Col. 3:12). The dictionary says kindness is to be friendly, generous, and warm-hearted; to show sympathy, to be understanding, charitable, humane, considerate, tolerant, and forbearing. A kind person has a tender, considerate, helping nature. Obviously, it is a very complex word, not easily defined. Yet, we all know what it means to be kind. We also know if it is a part of our nature.

Paul said it is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), so it is clearly one of the “must have’s” of Christianity. It is named as a trait of love (1 Cor. 13:4). This means if we are not kind toward others, we do not love them; hence, we are cut off from God (1 John 3:14; 4:7-83). Someone said, “The real test of a man’s kindness is his respect for those who can be of no possible service to him.” Kindness is being of service to others without expecting to be repaid.

The world would be much easier to live in if people were kinder. The church would be a more powerful influence on the world if we were always kind, especially when others have acted in such a way that the opposite is expected. What peace and love we would enjoy with our brethren if we showed this fruit of the Spirit. Tell me, can we have the mind in us which was also in Christ Jesus unless we are kind?

Deceased

BOOK CORNER


If you are interested in any of these books or any of the others in the library please see the librarian (secretary) to check them out.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Horace Myrick, Ray Dodd, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Jack Dodd (Ray Dodd’s brother). Tim Lamb is scheduled for surgery on February 16. Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter) is scheduled for surgery on February 18.

READING/INVITATION
February 24, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Tim Lamb
March 3, 1999
Reading: David Kelly
Invitation: Ray Dodd

MARK THESE DATES
February 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting will be held at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
February 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the Zone Room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

NEW ARRIVAL
Tim Lamb is proud to announce the birth of his niece, Alyssa Nichol Lewis, born on February 10, 1999, to Melinda and Tommy Lewis from Pensacola, FL. Alyssa weighed in at 6 pounds 11 ounces and was 24 inches long. Our congratulations and best wishes are extended to everyone.
MEETING TIMES

SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE EQUALS SAVING SOULS

David P. Brown

Since the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ, God recognizes only faithful members of the church of Christ as the saved of the earth (Acts 2:47). These are persons who heard the Word of God, had faith in Christ formed in them by their correct understanding of the Word (the gospel; Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16), repented of their sins, confessed their faith in Christ, and were baptized (immersed) in water by the authority of Christ into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in order to obtain the remission (forgiveness) of sins (Rom. 10:17; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Mat. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 22:16). This is God’s plan of salvation. It is obligatory upon man. Less than these steps in God’s plan one cannot do and be saved from his sins. More than what this plan of salvation requires God does not demand of one in order for him to be saved from sin. There is no other plan of salvation for man. Only persons who have complied with the preceding plan of salvation are authorized to be fellowshipped by other faithful children of God (Acts 2:41; Eph. 5:23).

In order to remain in fellowship with God church members must continue to live according to New Testament teaching regarding Christian living (Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:7). Since space does not allow for a detailed discussion of obligatory matters involved in Christian living, suffice it to say that obligatory matters relating to faithfulness pertain to what all Christians must do to remain saved. A child of God who ceases to submit to any or all of God’s obligatory laws (New Testament principles that one must abide by in order to remain saved or faithful) must have any relationship between himself and faithful members
of the Lord’s church terminated.

Christians must understand that all the processes or means by which the church teaches and trains its members to “walk in the light” is disciplinary in nature. However, I am emphasizing the responsibility of faithful members to restore wayward members and to keep the church pure by withdrawing fellowship from those who are determined to live disorderly lives (lives not in submission to the obligatory matters of the gospel of Christ or those who create factions by making laws for God and splitting the church by striving to make other Christians submit to them as if they were obligatory in nature). The design of all church discipline is to save erring brethren and to keep the church pure in life and teaching.

When the church fails to discipline her members she is not doing all God demands her to do and be. It is a sin of omission (Jam. 4:17). God intends for the church of Christ to be His influence for good on the earth. When church members are allowed to be impure, it is impossible for the mission of the church to be accomplished as God intended. Hence, when members of the church persist in sin, faithful brethren must labor to get the unfaithful members to repent. However, if in time a church member adamantly refuses to repent, the church is to withdraw itself from the rebellious member. This means that this person is not to enjoy the fraternal association that exists between and among faithful members of the church of Christ (Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5; 2 The. 3:6, 14-15; Gal. 6:1-2). Sins that have their beginning in private between two brethren are taught by Christ to be handled according to Matthew 18:15-17. Furthermore, elders who will not demand that such be routinely preached and practiced are themselves sinning and need to repent. If they refuse to amend their sinful ways, they become subjects for corrective church discipline themselves.

P.O. Box 39; Spring, TX 77383

BEING KIND ONE TO ANOTHER
Al Macias

It is amazing how often the Lord saw the need for certain lessons to be taught to the people with whom He dealt. In the book of Luke, we find one such occasion, in which the Lord saw the need to teach a group of lawyers and Pharisees the im-

NEW BIBLE CLASSES BEGINNING

Bible classes for the spring quarter will begin Wednesday, March 3 and Sunday, March 7. Classes are available for all ages (cradle roll through adults). Make plans now to attend these classes.

Sunday Schedule

| Adults I | Denominational Doctrines | Michael Hatcher |
| Adults II | Luke | Jim Loy |
| Adults III | Mark | Paul Brantley |
| New Converts | Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living | Bill Gallaher |

Wednesday Schedule

| Adults I | Exodus | Ray Foshee |
| Adults II | Law I (Leviticus & Numbers) | Michael Hatcher |
| Adults III | Law II (Numbers & Deuteronomy) | Fred Stancliff |
| New Converts | Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living | Bill Gallaher |
portance of humility and kindness. The lack of humility and kindness has always been a problem among us all. At one time or another, we all have been guilty, perhaps, of being too proud or not showing kindness to others. In Luke 14 we find an incident related, in which the Lord had been invited to eat at the home of a Pharisee. As we study what happened here, we find that the Lord noticed immediately upon entering the house of the Pharisee that only certain people had been invited, and those were some fellow Pharisees and lawyers of the Law of Moses. The Lord realized that these people needed two lessons in particular—one on humility, and one on being kind to one another.

There was one man at the home of this Pharisee that would be suspect as to why he was there, because he suffered from the dropsy, and he stood before the Lord. Luke wrote by inspiration that the lawyers and the Pharisees were watching to see what the Lord would do, particularly concerning the sick man, as it was the Sabbath. We can conclude by what the Lord said to the lawyers and the Pharisees that He knew their thoughts and that their motives were not good. The Lord asked this group of men whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath day. They did not reply, and the Lord proceeded to heal the man. The Lord continued to teach those gathered that if one were invited to a wedding, he should not sit in the highest room lest a more honourable man were to come in afterward, and then the first man would be told to give his place to the other, thus putting the first man to shame. The Lord said this because He knew that these men had a problem with the lack of humility.

But the Lord had also noticed those who were present. Only lawyers and Pharisees, the Lord, and the sick man were there. These people had shown kindness only to certain ones, and not to all. This group of Pharisees and lawyers needed to learn that one is to be kind to all, not just to those who they considered to be in their own circle. To whom do we show kindness, and how are we doing with the problem of pride?

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED FOR THE N. B. HARDEMAN LIBRARY AT MSOP

Brother N. B. Hardeman’s granddaughter and her family have proposed construction of a ten thousand square foot, two story building on the Memphis School of Preaching campus to be named in honor of N. B. Hardeman. They have very generously offered to contribute and raise $350,000 of the $700,000 needed. We are seeking to raise the rest, and have $100,000 already in hand. We truly believe brother Hardeman to be worthy of this honor since none has influenced our work more that he has (Rom. 13:7).

With the addition of several preachers’ libraries and other donations, the present library facilities are filled to overflowing. The new building will accommodate our present holdings, make room for additional donations already promised, and provide space for desperately needed study areas. In addition, the library will house a display of memorabilia of brother Hardeman, including debate notes and other writings.

We are thankful MSOP has been chosen as the location of this library with all it will mean to our work, and to the brotherhood. We are confident God will bless us with the needed funds, and that brethren will see the need and the opportunity to join with us in this effort by sending a contribution to Forest Hill Church of Christ; 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road; Memphis, TN 38125; marked “For MSOP Library Fund.”
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Horace Myrick, Charles Williams, Tim Lamb, Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter), Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Jack Dodd (Ray Dodd’s brother), Alyssa Waters (Leon and Fran Waters’ great-granddaughter). Genieave Stevens (Fran Waters’ mother) is in West Florida Hospital after suffering a stroke.

RESTORED
Diana McDaniels was restored to Christ on February 21, 1999. Please keep Diana in your prayers and offer any assistance you can.

SYMPATHY
Our deepest sympathy is extended to Karen Diamond and her family in the loss of her brother, Merlin Underwood, of Jacksonville, Florida. Please keep Karen and her family in your prayers.

READING/INVITATION
March 3, 1999
Reading: David Kelly
Invitation: Ray Dodd
March 10, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Ray Foshee

MARK THESE DATES
March 1, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 8, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
IS THERE AUTHORITY IN BIBLICAL SILENCE?

Michael Light

The above question seems to be a recurring one. I cannot count the times I’ve heard the statement, “Well, the Bible doesn’t say I can’t.” Is that which is not expressly forbidden, automatically authorized? Can one find solace in that which God does not say? The answer is NO. We shall examine this concept more completely in this article.

Authorization is in the name of Jesus Christ. In Colossians 3:17 we read, “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” Whatever we do in “word” teaching, and “deed” practice must be according to the divine authority of Christ. Acts 4:7-10 shows that “in the name of” is the same as by the authority of. The passage states, “And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.” A similar statement is found in Matthew 28:18 when Christ says, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Christ claimed that all authority rests in Him. There is no other source to which we can turn in areas of religious authority. As the New Testament is examined we find that there are three ways in which the Bible authorizes. These are: (1) direct statement, (2) implication, and (3) approved example. These
three means of ascertaining biblical authority are all encompassing. As you might notice there is no number four wherein we find authority by means of silence.

The legislation is “do not go beyond that which is written.” It is in 1 Corinthians 4:6 (ASV) that we read: “Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written.”

John 12:48 says, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.” We read “books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written” (Rev. 20:12). It is explicitly stated: (1) do not go beyond what is written, (2) it is the Word that Christ spake that will judge us, and (3) the dead are going to be judged by what is written. If this is the case, and inspiration says it is, then I should not concern myself with what “is not written.” Biblical silence is not my judge.

When we take Paul’s advice (Rom. 15:4) and look back to the Old Testament we find dozens of examples showing that silence does not authorize. Nadab and Abihu were never told explicitly not to use the type of fire they used, but they were killed for going beyond that which was written. Moses was not told directly not to strike the rock, but the fact that God said to speak automatically limited the authorized action to speaking. God does not have to list every single prohibition when it comes to our compliance with His will. He simply tells us what He wants and how He wants it and we are to comply. He does not need us to try to improve upon what He has given, who are we to think we can improve upon God’s divine directives? We do greatly over-step our bounds when we seek to go beyond what God has given.

Jesus said, “If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments” (John 14:15, 21, 23), and John said, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:3) also “And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar” (1 John 2:3-4). Paul said that we are to “rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). I wonder how one can keep that which is not written? How can you rightly divide that which is not written? Friend you cannot even talk intelligibly about that which is not written, for it is not there. We cannot fulfill these passages by appealing to silence. Everything that we need to go to heaven has been written.

The Christian walk is to be by faith. Faith can only come through the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Romans 14:23 states, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” These two passages together show that there can be no faith in that which has not been given by God. It is a sin to act in areas of religion without God’s direction. It is a sin to appeal to the Bible’s silence as proof of God’s approval. To appeal to the silence of the Scriptures is to appeal for subjectivism. Each man’s own conscience becomes his guide. If we follow our own likes and dislikes we are not following God.

In our everyday lives we recognize that silence authorizes nothing. We know that “the authority” is in the statement of “what is said,” not in the “silence of what is not said.” When a recipe calls for two eggs, does it have to state “now this does not mean 100 eggs?” When we receive a wedding invitation that lists the date and time as October 4 at 5:00 p.m., must it also say we do not mean at 11:00 a.m. or 9:00 p.m., etc.? If someone asked, “What is your daughter’s name?” And I responded, “Shelby,” must I also say her name is not Melissa, Molly or Sue? Of course not. In secular things we see this principle
very clearly. Why is it in religion so many people want to put their brains in neutral? If we go to a restaurant and order a hamburger and fries, and the waitress returns with one of everything on the menu do we feel obligated to pay for them? What if, when you refused to pay she said, “Well, you didn’t say not to bring one of everything.” The preceding should be more than enough examples to show the principle of inclusion.

On many occasions when discussing this principle with someone who has just uttered the infamous words, “The Bible doesn’t say you can’t do this and such.” I will automatically ask them this question, “Would it be acceptable with God if we put peanut butter and jelly on the Lord’s Supper?” Everyone so far has answered, “NO.” I then respond by calling to their attention that the Bible nowhere directly forbids such action. They then correctly remind me that the Bible says to use bread and fruit of the vine. And I answer, “Amen.” Can we all not see that only that which is authorized is allowed? If not, anything goes. The Bible does not authorize by what it does not say but by what it does say.

P. O. Box 158; Bangs, TX 76823

PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

1. That they will know Christ as Savior early in life.
2. That they will hate sin.
3. That they will be caught when guilty.
4. That they will be protected from the evil one in every area: physically, emotionally, and especially spiritually.
5. That they will have a responsible attitude in all their interpersonal relationships.
6. That they will respect those in authority over them.
7. That they will desire the right kinds of friends, and will be protected from the wrong friends.
8. That they will be kept from the wrong mate, and saved for the right mate.
9. That they, as well as who they marry, will be kept pure until the day of marriage.
10. That they will totally submit to God and actively resist Satan in all circumstances.
11. That they will be single-hearted, willing to be sold out for Jesus Christ.
12. That they will be hedged in so that they cannot find wrong people or wrong places, and that the wrong people cannot find their way to your children.

Author Unknown

THE TEN BEST DRESSED WOMEN

1. The woman whose modesty adorns her.
2. The woman who clothes herself in good works, and whose accessory is the Bible.
3. The woman who does not clothe herself with tattling and gossip.
4. The woman who refuses to wear the garment of idleness, but stays busy in doing good.
5. The woman whose warmth is generated by an inner love for others.
6. The woman who dresses in a way that she will not be a stumblingblock to younger women, or to men of any age.
7. The woman whose feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.
8. The woman who sparkles, not with jewelry, but with her love for her family.
9. The woman who drapes herself with chastity and fidelity.
10. The woman whose best suit is her love for Christ and His church.

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN

Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Charles Williams, Tim Lamb, Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter), Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Jack Dodd (Ray Dodd’s brother), Alyssa Waters (Leon and Fran Waters’ great-granddaughter).

SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Fran Waters and her family in the loss of her mother, Genevieve Stevens, on February 27, 1999. Please keep them in your prayers and offer any assistance you can.

READING/INVITATION

March 10, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Ray Foshee

March 17, 1999
Reading: Jim Loy
Invitation: Louis Herrington

MARK THESE DATES

March 8, 1999 – Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 14, 1999 – Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
March 15, 1999 – Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 21, 1999 – Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
March 22, 1999 – Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 29, 1999 – Visitation Group Get-Together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. A pot-luck dinner will precede the meeting. All members are expected to attend.
MUST I PLACE MEMBERSHIP?

W. Kent Graham

In the New Testament we find that the church of our Lord is comprised of independent congregations. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18), but each congregation is overseen by a group of qualified elders, or pastors. Individual members of the Lord’s church are called Christians, and they are the constituent elements of the congregation. A perusal of the Scriptures will reveal no other organizational plan for the church. This is the Divine pattern which God has given His faithful people to follow. Any church organization which deviates from the Divine pattern functions without Divine authority and without Divine approval.

In the New Testament, the congregation provides the individual Christian a means by which he can do the Lord’s work in harmony with fellow Christians. Their efforts are directed and overseen by qualified elders, or pastors, who ensure that all activities of the congregation are both expedient and scriptural. The elders of a congregation provide the individual Christian with important guidance, instruction, and leadership as he grows spiritually. The Christian under the oversight of a sound and faithful eldership is much more likely to develop spiritually; and hence, much more likely to go to heaven. This guidance can only be found in the Divinely sanctioned congregation!

Besides the benefit of being guided by qualified pastors, and having the opportunity of working with fellow Christians, the individual Christian is relieved of the tremendous responsibility of how to finance the work of the church. The elders of a congregation are charged with the responsibility of budgeting the contributions of the individual Christians to see that their monies are utilized efficiently. By being a member of a congregation, the individual member only needs to offer his contribution each Sunday, and trust that the elders will faithfully carry out the financ-
ing of the Lord’s work.  

Many resources are available to the individual Christian through the congregation. The elders of the congregation are responsible for seeing that the individual Christian is well supplied spiritually, and that he has the physical necessities of life. The building and facilities provide the Christian with a “home base” from which he may do the Lord’s work if he so desires. Additionally, the blessing of Christian fellowship naturally flows from a congregation of God’s people. The congregation engenders Christian love as no other organization possibly can. The closeness and respect which comes from being Christian workers, the sharing of a common and sound Christian experience, and the regular worshiping of Jehovah God Almighty with other Christians, can only be accomplished within the congregation!  

Occasionally, Christians neglect or refuse to place membership with a congregation of the Lord’s church. If there is a sound congregation of the Lord’s people with whom a Christian can work and worship, then he must! Any person who has gone so far as to prove his faith in God by being baptized into Jesus Christ is being foolish to deprive himself of the spiritual blessings found in the congregation. To refuse to place membership with a congregation is to shun God’s organizational pattern for the church. The common objection to placing membership is that there is no direct command in the Bible that we must do so. However, the Bible teaches, guides, and directs us in other ways besides direct commands! The Bible also authorizes and directs through example and implication. We have many examples of Christians being members of a congregation, and the wise Christian will follow those examples. Through implication we also see that it is good for a Christian to be a member of a congregation. Remember what the brother of Jesus said, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (Jam. 4:17).  

Sometimes, “well meaning” Christians will opine or even advise neophyte Christians that “they don’t think we have to ‘join’ a congregation!” What reason could there be for making such a statement, or offering such advice? Do they think some Christians are better off “winging it” on their own, than to be a valued member of one of God’s Divinely sanctioned congregations? Do they think that placing membership is not a good thing for a Christian to do? (Consider again, if you will, James 4:17!) Do they think that we as individuals are sometimes better off all by ourselves? Do they not realize that many times the recalcitrant Christian will refuse to place membership so that he can quietly neglect all of the responsibilities of congregational membership? Are there any good reasons for advising a Christian, or suggesting, that we need not place membership with a sound congregation? If there are, they elude this writer!  

Friends, it is always advisable to do that thing which we know is right, and cannot be wrong! Placing membership with a sound congregation is one thing that we know is right, and cannot be wrong. Not placing membership with a sound congregation, when we could, is taking an unnecessary chance with our eternal salvation. Let us offer sound advice to others because we never know when someone might take it. When it comes to placing membership with a sound congregation, YOU KNOW IT IS RIGHT, AND CANNOT BE WRONG!  

P.O. Box 276; Atoka, OK 74525

“WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO HELL?”

Hell is no laughing matter. Today the term hell is used lightly, jokingly, and as a minor threat. But, it’s rarely used as a word carrying the awesome impact of eternal damnation. Why, when most people still believe in punishment for
wrongdoing, do they deny God’s Word that hell is a place of eternal punishment? How is it that hell has become a “figure of speech” that “we created here on earth”? Why are people afraid to take hell seriously?

If you’re concerned that you or someone you care about is beginning to take hell lightly, learn the reasons behind this behavior. The denial of the true nature of hell is a basic denial of the truthfulness of God’s Word. The consequences are eternal.

“Study to shew thyself approved” (2 Tim. 2:15).

Author Unknown

WORSHIP IN PROGRESS

The visitor entered the building through the glass doors. He had missed class and was late for worship (there had been an older couple with a flat, and he had stopped to help, only to discover they had no spare—well, you know how the story goes from there). He went to the restroom, washed the grease off his hands, and quickly moved toward the auditorium. In the lobby he saw fifteen to twenty people. Some were visiting, laughing, and enjoying one another’s company. Two, sitting on the pew near the water fountain, seemed to be engaged in some sort of serious conversation. Two or three were standing by the glass doors staring out into the parking lot. One young adult was happily playing with a toddler who seemed to be enjoying life to the fullest. As he passed two fellows, he heard “champion-ship...,” but nothing more.

Quietly, he pushed the doors to the auditorium open, saw a vacant seat about a quarter of the way toward the front and over to one side of the auditorium. He took the seat.

Several young adult men and women were engaged in a quiet, whispered conversation. Three rows over, it appeared that a grandma was playing with a grandchild—“pati-cake,” he thought. Over on the other side he saw several teens sitting hunched over, heads at about pew-top level. Every once in a while one of them would raise his head, glance quickly in a specific direction, as if looking for someone, then return to the hunched over posture. The group seemed to be enjoying themselves, for every once in a while they would all shake as if in laughter. In the other direction he noticed someone dozing comfortably. The person next to him yawned, looked at his watch, crossed his legs, and folded his arms across his chest. About that time a baby behind him began to fuss. Rather that take the baby out the mother whispered loudly for the child to be quiet. Soon, the rustling of paper indicated that she was looking for something for the baby to play with, but the baby only got louder and louder. Suddenly, everyone stood and started to sing.

After services he left the auditorium. As he passed through the lobby now bustling with people, he noticed a beautifully worded sign standing out of the way, next to the wall—“Quiet—Worship in Progress.”

Author Unknown

Visitation Program
Get-Together
Monday, March 29, at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.
A pot-luck dinner will precede the meeting.
Everyone is expected to be there.
We will be discussing improvements, problems, and other topics regarding the Visitation Program.
Make plans to attend!
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Charles Williams, Lucille Staples, Gina Cates (Allen and Diana Brazell’s daughter), Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Alyssa Waters (Leon and Fran Waters’ great-granddaughter). Tim Lamb had surgery on March 8.

READING/INVITATION
March 17, 1999
Reading: Jim Loy
Invitation: David Kelly
March 24, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Tim Lamb

MARK THESE DATES
March 14, 1999—Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
March 15, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 21, 1999—Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
March 22, 1999—Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
March 29, 1999—Visitation Group Get-Together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.
March 31, 1999—Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.

DIRECTORY CHANGE
Wanda Batten’s new telephone number is 941-1862. Please update your directory.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat
A SCIENTIST WITH A SONG!

Many years ago I taught at a small Christian college in Florida. The school was small and the faculty was young and inexperienced. It was a great inspiration to this young inexperienced faculty, therefore, when the distinguished Christian scientist, Dr. A. W. Dicus joined our number to serve as academic dean and give intellectual leadership to our faculty.

Dr. Dicus had already had an impressive career as the head of the Department of Physics at Tennessee Tech University. He was a distinguished scientist and renowned physics teacher. During the dark days of World War II when the developmental work was being done on the atomic bomb, Dr. Dicus is said to have sent more physicists into the Oak Ridge Laboratories than any other physics teacher in America. However, brother Dicus did not find complete satisfaction in his work in the state university and decided that he wanted to devote part of his life to Christian education. Though he had not yet reached the normal retirement age, brother Dicus took an early retirement from Tennessee Tech and came to Florida at a modest salary to serve as academic dean at a small struggling Christian college.

Through the years that I worked under brother Dicus, he was a great source of strength and inspiration. As a young inexperienced teacher, I could go to him for counsel and encouragement. But I remember brother Dicus as more than a distinguished physicist turned college dean. I remember him as a disciple of Christ, a man of deep faith and a man that expressed that faith in a song. For it was brother Dicus who wrote both the words and music for the song that is so popular among young folk in the church (and us older folk also).

“There is beyond the azure blue,
A God concealed from human sight,
He tinted skies with heavenly hue,
And framed the worlds with His great might.
There was a long, long time ago,  
a God whose voice the prophets heard;  
He is the God that we should know,  
Who speaks from His inspired Word.  
Our God whose Son upon a tree,  
A life was willing there to give,  
That He from sin might set men free,  
And evermore with Him could live."

Whenever I hear a congregation singing these  
words today, and especially a group of young  
people, I think of brother Dicus and a lumpcomes in my throat. It is a source of spiritual  
strength to me to know that these great words of  
faith were written by a distinguished scientist. It  
is also a gentle reminder of the great debt of  
gratitude that every generation owes to those  
who have gone before. Brother Dicus died at  
about 90 years of age. But even though he is  
gone, he still lives on when we sing, “There Is A  
God.”

Via “Parkview Proclaimer”; Odessa, TX

IT’S A CRAZY WORLD
If a boy rises before 4:00 A.M. to deliver  
papers, he is a go-getter. If the church should ask  
him to rise at 4:00 A.M. to do some work for the  
Lord, people would say, “That’s asking too much!”

If a woman were to work eight hours at some  
community project, people would say, “She’s a  
fine, energetic, public-minded citizen.” But if she  
were to work eight hours for the church, some  
would say, “Her religion has gone to her head.”

If an employer asks an employee to work each  
day, and not be tardy, people would say, “He’s a  
sensible business man who requires that which is  
right.” But if the elders of the church ask the  
members to attend the services three times each  
week, and to please be on time, some are ready to  
say, “You ask too much. And besides, it doesn’t  
matter if I’m on time for services anyway.”

If as man obligates himself to pay $300 a  
month (or more) for a new car, people say,  
“Fine.” If the elders of the church suggests that  
the same man obligate himself for a certain  
amount to be given regularly to the support of the  
church, people say, “They are too demanding.”

It’s a strange world indeed, when the first  
things are last, and the last things are first.  

Author Unknown

MATTHEW 12:41

James Meadows

“The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the  
judgment with this generation, and shall con-  
demn it: for they repented at the preaching of  
Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here.”  
The Lord’s statement, “they repented at [eis] the  
preaching of Jonah,” is often used by Baptist  
debaters and preachers to evade the force of the  
preposition eis in Acts 2:38, “for the remission of  
sins.” They claim that eis certainly has a retro-  
spective significance (looking backward) and  
means “on account of.” They boldly declare that  
men did not repent in order to get Jonah to  
preach, but they repented on account of his  
preaching. In the same way Acts 2:38 means,  
they assert, that baptism is on account of the  
remission of sins already possessed. This cannot  
be true for several reasons.
First, the word “preaching” is a noun not a verb, and does not refer to the act of preaching, but to the message; that which was preached. It is a translation of the Greek noun kerukma. W. E. Vine defines it as “a proclamation by a herald, denotes a message, a preaching (the substance of what is preached as distinct from the act of preaching), Matt. 12:41.” The word refers to “that which is promulgated by a herald or public crier, a proclamation by the heralds of God or Christ” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, p. 346). The reference in this passage is to “the proclamation of the necessity of repentance and reformation made by the prophet Jonah” (Ibid.).

Second, the Septuagent has this same Greek noun at Jonah 3:2 where God instructed Jonah, “Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.” Jonah was to preach (verb: the act of preaching) the preaching (noun: the message preached). The preaching definitely refers to the message (the substance or contents) that God gave to Jonah.

Third, the Greek word eis appears about seventeen hundred places in the New Testament and translators have used some forty-eight English words or phrases to express its meaning in various contexts. “In most places, however, it is rendered against, among, at, by, concerning, or, hereunto, in, into, that, till, to, to the end, toward, unto, and with, but never is it translated “because of”” (L. O. Sanderson). “There is not a reputable scholar in the world that will assert that the preposition eis is retrospective—looks backward—in meaning” (Guy Woods).

Fourth, it becomes perfectly clear that Jonah preached a certain kind of life. This life was in his preaching—his message. The men of Nineveh got into this life by repentance. “The men of Nineveh will rise with the leaders of this age at the judgment and condemn them, for they turned to the message of Jonah.” (Williams’ Translation. Dr. Charles B. Williams was once professor of Greek in Union University, a prominent Baptist school in Jackson, Tennessee. His translations has gained wide recognition among scholars of all religious bodies.) “That is, the people of Nineveh repented, and the proof of it was their ‘turning to practice the message preached by Jonah,’ putting their faith in Jonah and forsaking their sins—something prospective” (Dr. Charles B. Williams). “They repented into the preaching of Jonah. This is not idiomatic English, but it conveys the exact thought which a Greek would derive from the original. The term preaching as put for the course of life required by the preaching, and it is asserted that they repented into this. Their repentance, in other words, brought them into the course of life which the preaching required. If Jesus had merely said they repented in consequence of Jonah’s preaching, he would have stopped short with the internal change which they underwent; but he chooses to go further, and indicate the terminus of their repentance, that is brought them into the condition which the preaching demanded” (J. W. McGarvey, The New Commentary, Vol. I, Matthew and Mark; Delight, AR: Gospel Light, n.d.).

Acts 2:38 teaches baptism “for [in order to obtain] the remission of your sins” and Matthew 12:41 gives absolutely no support to those who claim otherwise.

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SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Lucille Staples, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Alyssa Waters (Leon and Fran Waters’ great-granddaughter).

BAPTIZED
We rejoice with Sarah Martin who put on Christ in baptism on March 10, 1999. She has placed membership with the Bellview congregation. Sarah’s address is: 5990 Clark Road; Milton, FL 32570; Please keep Sarah in your prayers, welcome her, and offer any assistance you can.

PLACED MEMBERSHIP
Cliff and Gail Carroll and their daughters Linda and Mary have placed membership with the Bellview congregation. Their address and telephone are: 7333 Pine Forest Road #72; Pensacola, FL 32526; 941-4814. Please keep the Carroll family in your prayers, welcome them, and offer any assistance you can.

READING/INVITATION
March 24, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Tim Lamb
March 31, 1999
Reading: Horace Myrick
Invitation: Tony Liddell

MARK THESE DATES
March 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
March 22, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE

Jason R. Roberts

Paul Harvey tells us that in Maryland a young lady has to get parental consent to get her ears pierced, but the same young lady can have an abortion without her mother and father even knowing about it. That is the world in which we live. In Pennsylvania, a young lady was sent home from school because of the T-shirt she was wearing. The front of the T-shirt said, “I AM A VIRGIN.” Tragically, the back of the shirt read “THIS IS AN OLD SHIRT.” That is the world in which we live.

Thousands of schools all across our nation have taken down the Ten Commandments and consequently have put up metal detectors as their replacement, and that too is the world in which we live.

The world in which we live is a world that calls homosexuality a respectable lifestyle, while God calls it a repulsive lifestyle (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:24-28; Jude 7). Things that were once considered as abomination are now deemed as “selected alternatives.” Morality is now determined by the majority, yet Jesus said the majority will be lost (Mat. 7:13-14, 21-23).

Years ago grass was something you mowed, today it is something you smoke. Coke was something you drank, today it is something you snort. There was a time when aids were student helpers in the Principal’s office, today AIDS is a raging plague. This is the world in which we live!

It is a world in which the sanctity of human life has been cheapened to the expression of “It’s my choice,” when years ago it was expressed as “It’s my child!” It is a world that used to take care of the aged and the infirm, but now under the title of “mercy killing” we relieve their pain by giving them an injection, and many, if not most of them slip out into eternity where they have even greater pain (Jam. 1:27; Rev. 14:11). Ladies
and gentlemen how long, oh how long, will such injustice and rebellion persist in a land that claims Jehovah as their God. The truth of the matter is they know not God (Tit. 1:16)! Like the people of Hosea’s day, our nation is “destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos. 4:6). “Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel; for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn” (Hos. 4:1-3). The word “controversy” literally means a lawsuit. Jehovah had a “lawsuit” against the nation of Israel. Has He taken one out on America?

We boast about our nation’s military defense and how powerful we are against the nations about us. But friends are you aware of the fact that the hand of an Almighty God the smallest nation in the world could destroy us? The nation of Israel came crashing down because of her sins. Will America go down in History as a nation that forgot God and was laid to waste because of her wickedness (Psa. 9:17)? The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, because of their wickedness, were turned into a modern-day ghost town within hours—what about America? It is the inward corruption of a nation that is more harmful than its external enemies. “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he” (Pro. 29:18). “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:34). Keeping the Law is an inward characteristic of one’s love for the Lord (John 14:15; 1 John 2:3-5). Righteousness is an inward characteristic of one’s holiness before the Lord (1 Pet. 1:15-16; 1 John 3:7).

If we want to turn our nation around, we are going to have to start focusing (vision) our attention on internals (righteousness) rather than just externals. We must get into the hearts and lives of people and give them the “engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jam. 1:21). The gospel is able and powerful enough to slice a man’s heart wide open, thus giving him the salvation that he so desperately needs (Heb. 4:12; Rom. 1:16). The question is, are we taking the “sword of the Spirit” and giving it to him (Eph. 6:17)? The late brother Andrew Connally used to say, “Let’s take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and remember that God didn’t give us a butter paddle to play with, and let’s take the shield of faith, and remember that God doesn’t want us to turn it upside down and build a flower planter out of it, and let’s go to work for the Lord.”

The world in which we live is a world fraught with confusion, yet it still has many righteous individuals, who are pursuing those things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report (Phi. 4:8). Remaining neutral, rather than voicing concern, aligns one with the guilty (Oba. 11). We must get involved by coming out of the dark and by letting our “light so shine” in a world of darkness, in a world destined for failure, in a world doomed for destruction (Mat. 5:16).

Many Americans have manifested the same attitude toward the Word of God that the Romans did to which Paul referred to in his letter to the church at Rome. Read carefully verses eighteen and following of the first chapter and notice that they first left God doctrinally and then morally. They refused to honor God (v. 21a), they refused to acknowledge God (vv. 19-21a), they refused to thank God (v. 21) and they exchanged the truth of God for a lie (v. 25). Observe the first letter of each of the above bold words, “Honor,” “Acknowledge,” “Thank,” and “Exchanged.” It spells out very clearly their attitude toward the Lord, HATE! (v. 30a). What was the result of their hatred toward God? Foolishness (v. 22), idolatry (vv. 23, 25), homosexuality (vv. 24, 26-
“TO LIVE IS CHRIST”

Bobby O’Dell

In Philippians 1:21 Paul confidently proclaimed, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Nothing can be more important than being able to say “for me to live is Christ” because if this is not true then to die would be indescribable loss. To die with gain later you must now be able to say “for me to live Christ is...”

Lord of my life. “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36).

Activity of my life. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Message of my life. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart” (2 Cor. 3:3).

Power of my life. “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phi. 4:13).

Courage of my life. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Savior of my life. “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Goal of my life. “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2).

Each of these aspects of life are essential in being able to say, “For me, to live is Christ.” Let each of us build these qualities into our hearts and lives.

119 Ivie Circle; Martin, TN 38237
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Lucille Staples, Tim Lamb, Jennette Nall, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
March 31, 1999
Reading: Horace Myrick
Invitation: Tony Liddell
April 7, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Fred Stancliff

MARK THESE DATES
March 29, 1999—Visitation Group Get-Together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. A pot-luck dinner will precede the meeting. All members are expected to attend.
March 31, 1999—Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
April 25, 1999—Dinner on the Grounds and Singing, after the morning worship service.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

NEW ARRIVAL
Congratulations are extended to Carl and Karen Ayliffe in the birth of their grand-daughter, Abigail Dawn Hoffay, born on March 16, 1999. She weighed in at 8 pounds 6 ounces. Abigail’s parents are Doug and Buffy Hoffay of Lewiston, Maine.
WILL A MAN ROB GOD?

Lynn Parker

The setting for Malachi’s great question can be summed up in this manner. Babylonian Captivity is no longer fresh on the minds of the Israelites. Jerusalem has been restored, the temple has been rebuilt and prosperity has replaced despair. No, they no longer serve Baal, but they are again in very real danger of leaving Jehovah God. The Jews go through the motions of ritualistic religion—saying and doing the right things in form—but their collective heart is just not set on fervent, zealous pursuit of holiness, righteousness, and love of God. Growing spiritually complacent and increasingly worldly, God’s people fall down at the sidols of pleasure, indifference, and materialism.

Rather than honoring God with their firstfruits—their best—Israel was indicted for offering to God “polluted bread” (Mal. 1:7) and sacrifices that were blind, lame, and sick (Mal. 1:8). The Law clearly commanded: “But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein” (Lev. 22:20-21).

In the midst of this message of admonition and rebuke comes the haunting question of Malachi 3:8: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

No person in his right mind thinks of attempting to rob Ft. Knox of the gold stored there. Will man be so arrogant, so presumptuous, so irrational, so stupid to rob Almighty God of that which belongs to Him? The answer, sadly, is “Yes.” Man has robbed God for centuries. The Israelites did it, modern man does it, and some members of...
the Lord’s body do it—often without a pang of conscience. Notice in Malachi 3:8-10 the salient points in this confrontation between Deity and Israel.

1. First, the accusation of sin: “Yet ye have robbed me.”
2. Second, the denial by God’s people: “Wherein have we robbed thee?”
3. Third, note the consequences of their sin: “Ye are cursed with a curse.”
4. Four, see the remedy of repentance: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse.”
5. Last, note the promise of blessing: “prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

You do not have to dig too deeply to see the modern application of ancient principles set forth by the prophet Malachi. An entire society is enthralled with self-gratification. No, we’re speaking not just of ancient Israel, but the contemporary United States as well! Indeed, “One Nation Under God” has become a people that have no time for religion, even though righteousness would exalt it (Pro. 14:34). Hit the golf ball, fish the lake, make time for aerobics, take the two-week vacation, run the kids to Little League, but don’t you dare expect God to get anything but leftovers! It is tragic to see congregations barely make the same budget each year when the brethren comprising those congregation receive raises, take on more charge card payments, buy new cars, and live in finer houses. All the while, mission workers grovel for crumbs that fall from the rich man’s table and preachers cry for more workers to help in the kingdom. In many congregations, the various programs of work are supported by the same blessed few brethren. The majority don’t have the time—or perhaps the zeal—to serve God.

Don’t be too smug when judging ancient Israel. The Lord’s church needs to hear this lesson from Malachi. The Israelites are, at the time of Malachi’s work, the spiritual equivalent of the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:14ff) who were so self-deluded and lukewarm they incurred the sternest of rebukes from the Lord. The Laodiceans were in denial, thinking themselves to be spiritual giants when the Lord portrayed them as “lukewarm.” Israel may have thought that “no one will notice” as they gave God the culls, but the fact is that God’s “eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings” (Job 34:21). Jesus told the Laodiceans, “I know thy works” (Rev. 3:15). God knows what money is in our hands, what effort we could be expending, what opportunities come our way, and what talent we have.

A few examples are in order.

1. A preacher contacted a wealthy brother in another location for help in a new work. The brother declined saying that all of his money was being poured into the local work where he lived. Several months later, it was learned that the man—a millionaire—gave only a twenty-dollar bill each week to the local work and when asked to help in a coordinated effort of the local congregation, he gave not so much as a dime! “Will a man rob God?”
2. A teenage member of the church has his own job, a steady income, a relatively nice car, but does not give of his means at all, saying, “My parents do my giving for me.” “Will a man rob God?”
3. A couple takes on extra jobs to provide for a vacation cottage in a resort area but now are so busy either working to pay for it, or spending every free moment there, that they rarely show up for work efforts and visitation of the local church. “Will a man rob God?”
4. A member of the church has the talent and the knowledge to teach Bible class but because of “burn out,” lethargy, or just plain laziness, he refuses to lift a finger to help in the greatest work
known to man. “Will a man rob God?”

5. A family sits down to an evening of television and telephone until they can barely hold their eyes open, then drag off to bed. They are too tired to study their Bible, too indifferent to discuss spiritual matters, and too carnal to pray together. How often this must happen! They arise up on Sunday morning unprepared for Bible classes and too sleepy to worship acceptably. “Will a man rob God?”

The fact is that we can easily duplicate Israel’s sin in our own lives. Neglect (Jam. 4:17), indifference (Rev. 3:16), and love of the world (1 John 2:15-17) can incur the wrath of Heaven and withhold the blessings of God from our homes and congregations (see Jer. 5:25). God’s promise of blessings are conditional. The beauty of God’s message is that when we become “zealous and repent” (Rev. 3:19), God will open the windows of heaven and shower us with the blessings we need (Mal. 3:10; Mat. 6:33).

It is not enough to attend church services and pronounce yourself faithful. God requires the best from you, and He will accept nothing less. Serve Him joyfully, energetically. Giving sacrifice that cost little or nothing (2 Sam. 24:24) may be a popular way to ease the conscience but it’s also a sure road to hell.

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**WOMAN IN RAGS, GARBAGE REVEALED AS HEIRESS**

So read the headline in the *San Francisco Chronicle* concerning a lady who was known as “Garbage Mary” who was picked up in a shopping mall in Delray Beach, Florida. She appeared to be just another derelict whose mind had faded. Neighbors told stories of her scrounging through garbage cans for food, which she hoarded in her car and her two bedroom apartment. There were mounds of garbage in the small apartment, stuffed in the refrigerator, the stove, the sink, the cabinets and the bathtub. There were paths between the garbage. Other than in the kitchen, there were no chairs to sit in because they were piled with trash.

Police finally identified her as the daughter of a well-to-do lawyer and bank director from Illinois who had died several years earlier. In addition to the garbage, the police found Mobile Oil stock worth more than four hundred thousand dollars, documents indicating ownership of oil fields in Kansas, stock certificates from firms such as U.S. Steel, Uniroyal, and Squibb, and passbooks for eight large bank accounts.

“Garbage Mary” was a millionaire who was living like a derelict. Untold wealth was at her disposal, yet she scrounged through garbage rather than claim the resources that were rightly hers by inheritance.

Perhaps your first reaction, like mine, is to think “How sad!” But it is infinitely sadder to think how many people in our world choose to live in the garbage and degradation of sin when an inheritance worth far more than any earthly millionaire’s fortune is available freely to them in Jesus Christ. He offers unsearchable riches if we will accept His gift and obey the gospel of Christ. Why refuse such a spiritual fortune?

*Author Unknown*

**BELLVIEW LECTURES**

The 24th Annual Bellview Lectures will be held June 12-16, 1999. The theme is *Worldliness*. If you are planning on attending the lectures make your motel reservations now. Further information can be found in the *Defender* and future issues of the *Beacon*. Make plans now.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Lucille Staples, Tim Lamb, Jennette Nall, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Mildred Addison (Ray Dodd’s cousin) has a terminal brain tumor.

READING/INVITATION
April 7, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Fred Stancliff
April 14, 1999
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

MARK THESE DATES
March 31, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
April 5, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 11, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
April 12, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
April 19, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 26, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

TIME CHANGE
Daylight saving time begins at 2:00 A.M., April 4, 1999. Make sure you set your clocks ahead one hour Saturday.
DO FALSE TEACHERS EXIST?

Johnie Scaggs, Jr.

Are there any false teachers today? Someone may think that this question really does not deserve an answer. However, in light of the many false doctrines which are being proclaimed within the body of Christ, I believe the question does deserve an answer!

I wonder how those who are now promoting the “New Hermeneutic” doctrine would answer such a question? Surely they could not be true to their “doctrine” and state that there are false teachers today. How would those who are teaching that we should unite with the First Christian Church and other denominations answer such a question? If these brethren who are promoting their false doctrines today are true to the full thrust of their particular doctrines then they must admit that there are no false teachers today!

However, regardless of what men may say, either directly or indirectly, the Bible still teaches us that there are false teachers even yet today. There have always been false teachers and there always will be. In many cases when the Bible refers to false teachers, it makes reference to those who rise up out of the church and begin to teach their “doctrine” (Jude 3-4; 3 John 9; Rev. 2, 3; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; etc.). These brethren did not announce to everyone that they were false teachers. However, it seems to be the attitude of many today that unless a person walks in and announces to all that he is a false teacher, then he is not one. I wonder how many false prophets of old told everyone that they were false prophets? None! Did the old prophet tell the young prophet of 1 Kings 13 that he was a false prophet? No, not a word! Even in the New Testament days, we do not see false teachers telling everyone that they were false teachers.

Jude describes to us how false teachers conduct themselves. “For there are certain men crept...
in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation" (Jude 4). The idea of “crept in unawares” is the idea of: “To enter secretly, to slip in stealthily, to steal in.” Further study reveals that the complete idea of the verb is to “go down into and alongside.” Thus, teaching that these men who crept in unawares, came in and settled down into a place alongside of those who were already there. They did not tell anyone of their intentions! They did not say, “Folks, we are false teachers.”

Peter said, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you” (2 Pet. 2:1). Paul told Timothy that some would not want sound doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Yes, the Bible clearly teaches that there are and will be false teachers in the church today. Hence, how can we know who is a false teacher? We most certainly cannot leave it up to the false teachers to inform us of their intentions! The only means we have of knowing whether someone is a false teacher or not, is the good book, the Bible. As John said, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1). We must learn to let the Bible be our guide for deciding who is a false teacher and who is not. And then we must act accordingly to that which the Bible instructs us to do with false teachers.

Yes, my friends, there are false teachers among us today. It is time for the church as a whole to wake up and see what is happening around about them. It is time for the church to say, “We will not put up with any more false doctrine being taught in the pulpit or the Lord’s church!” It is our prayer that all of our brethren will come to their senses and realize that false teachers do exist today and be watchful against this threat to the church. Remember Paul’s words to the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:28-31).

BELLVIEW LECTURES

The Twenty-fourth Annual Bellview Lectures, Worldliness, will be held June 12-16, 1999. Twenty-eight men will be speaking: Kent Bailey, David Baker, Danny Box, David Brown, Gene Burgett, Curtis Cates, B. J. Clarke, Daniel Denham, Garland Elkins, Guss Eoff, Noah Hackworth, Ronnie Hayes, David Hester, Tommy Hicks, Roger Jackson, Bobby Liddell, Dub McClish, John Moore, Jerry Murrell, Clifford Newell, Flavil Nichols, Ira Rice, Wesley Simons, Tim Smith, Marvin Weir, Joel Wheeler, Jesse Whitlock, and Eddie Whitten. The following men will be writing lessons for the lecture-ship book but will not be speaking: Harrell Davidson and Mark McWhorter.

The lecture topics include: Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly; Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lust; Causes Of Worldliness; Hedonism; Educational System; The Media; The Occult; Examining One’s Life; Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech; Disobedience To Parents; Pride; Envy; Immodest Apparel; Dancing; Pornography; Fornication And Adultery; Abortion And Euthanasia; Homosexuality; Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use; Covetousness; Materialism; Stealing; Gambling; Anger, Hatred, And Malice; Backbiters And Gossips; Lying And Corrupt Communication; Denominationalism; and Consequences Of Worldliness.

If you are planning on attending the Bellview Lectures be sure to make your motel reservations now. The Hospitality Inn (4910 Mobile Highway; Pensacola, FL 32506) offers the following price (tax not included) $45—1 to 4 people per room. For reservations call 850-453-3333. When calling for reservations be sure to tell them you will be attending the Bellview Lectures.

Pensacola is a great place to take your summer vacation and at the same time attend the Bellview Lectures. For further information please
contact the office by phone, mail or at our e-mail address (m-h@bigfoot.com). Check out our web site listed below for more information. We hope to see you in June.
(http://members.tripod.com/bellviewcoc)

Dinner on the Grounds and Singing
April 25, 1999
A dinner on the grounds will be held immediately after the morning service in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. Singing will be held after the meal in the auditorium. Bring a friend with you and enjoy the fellowship with other Christians.

IF I WERE THE DEVIL...
Paul Harvey
EDITOR’S NOTE: Although we do not agree with Mr. Harvey’s religious beliefs; never-the-less, he has given us some insightful material in this article.

If I were the devil... If I were the Prince of darkness, I would want to engulf the whole world in darkness. I’d have a third of its real estate and four-fifths of it’s population, but I would not be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree—thee. So, I would set about however necessary to take over the United States. I’d subvert the churches first, and I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: “Do as you please.”

To the young, I would teach to pray after me, “Our Father, which art in Washington...”

Then, I’d get organized. I’d educate authors in how to make lurid literature exciting so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting.

I’d peddle narcotics to whom I could. I’d sell alcohol to ladies and gentleman of distinction. I’d tranquilize the rest with pills.

If I were the devil, I’d soon have families at war with themselves and nations at war with themselves until each, in its turn, was consumed.

And with promises of higher ratings, I’d have mesmerizing media fanning the flames.

If I were the devil, I would encourage schools to refine young intellect but neglect to discipline emotions. I’d tell teachers to let those students run wild. And before you knew it, you’d have drug-sniffing dogs and metal detectors at every schoolhouse door.

Within a decade, I’d have prisons overflowing and judges promoting pornography. Soon, I would evict God from the courthouse and the schoolhouse and then from the houses of Congress.

In His own churches, I would substitute psychology for religion and deify science. I’d lure priests and pastors into misusing boys and girls and church money.

If I were the devil, I’d take from those who have and give to those who wanted until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious.

What’ll you bet I couldn’t get whole states to promote gambling as the way to get rich?

I would caution against extremes in hard work, in patriotism and in moral conduct.

I’d convince the young that marriage is old-fashioned, that swinging is more fun and that what you see on television is the way to be.

And thus, I could undress you in public and lure you into bed with diseases for which there are no cures.

In other words, if I were the devil, I’d just keep right on doing what he’s doing.  

Copied

Dinner on the Grounds and Singing
April 25, 1999
A dinner on the grounds will be held immediately after the morning service in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. Singing will be held after the meal in the auditorium. Bring a friend with you and enjoy the fellowship with other Christians.

IF I WERE THE DEVIL...
Paul Harvey
EDITOR’S NOTE: Although we do not agree with Mr. Harvey’s religious beliefs; never-the-less, he has given us some insightful material in this article.

If I were the devil... If I were the Prince of darkness, I would want to engulf the whole world in darkness. I’d have a third of its real estate and four-fifths of it’s population, but I would not be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree—thee. So, I would set about however necessary to take over the United States. I’d subvert the churches first, and I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: “Do as you please.”

To the young, I would teach to pray after me, “Our Father, which art in Washington...”

Then, I’d get organized. I’d educate authors in how to make lurid literature exciting so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting.

I’d peddle narcotics to whom I could. I’d sell alcohol to ladies and gentleman of distinction. I’d tranquilize the rest with pills.

If I were the devil, I’d soon have families at war with themselves and nations at war with

Within a decade, I’d have prisons overflowing and judges promoting pornography. Soon, I would evict God from the courthouse and the schoolhouse and then from the houses of Congress.

In His own churches, I would substitute psychology for religion and deify science. I’d lure priests and pastors into misusing boys and girls and church money.

If I were the devil, I’d take from those who have and give to those who wanted until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious.

What’ll you bet I couldn’t get whole states to promote gambling as the way to get rich?

I would caution against extremes in hard work, in patriotism and in moral conduct.

I’d convince the young that marriage is old-fashioned, that swinging is more fun and that what you see on television is the way to be.

And thus, I could undress you in public and lure you into bed with diseases for which there are no cures.

In other words, if I were the devil, I’d just keep right on doing what he’s doing.  

Copied
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Lucille Staples, Tim Lamb, Jennette Nall, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

SYMPATHY
Our deepest sympathy is extended to Marilyn Hall in the death of her niece, Patty Cody, on April 3, 1999. Please keep Marilyn in your prayers.

READING/INVITATION
April 14, 1999
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
April 21, 1999
Reading: Michael Wilkes
Invitation: Henry Born

MARK THESE DATES
April 11, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
April 11-15, 1999–Gospel meeting at Foley Church of Christ; 202 West Orchid Avenue; Foley, AL. Harrell Davidson of Obion, TN, will be speaking. (Monday-Thursday 7:30 P.M.)
April 12, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
April 19, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 26, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables
MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

A STUDY OF SIN
FROM 1 JOHN

Garry Stanton

The greatest problem facing the world today is not hunger, AIDS, nor cancer. The greatest threat to the world is sin. Jesus said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Mat. 10:28).

Sin is the only thing that can cause our soul to die and be separated from God for eternity (Rom. 6:23; Isa. 59:1-2). Because of sin’s threat God made sure that some things about sin are revealed. In order to avoid sin in our lives let’s notice sin in 1 John.

We see the PREVALENCE OF SIN. “The whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19). Jesus died “for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).

We see the PURPORT OF SIN. “Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). John clearly shows that Christians are under the law of Christ and to overstep its bounds is sin. “All unrighteousness is sin” (1 John 5:17). The standard of right and wrong is the Word which Jesus spoke (John 12:48). “If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God” (1 John 3:21). It is always a sin to go against our heart (Rom. 14:23).

We learn the PREVENTATIVE OF SIN. One help is to be a child of God, a Christian. “Whoever is born of God doeth not commit sin” (1 John 3:9). It is not that a child of God cannot sin, but he or she should have no interest in sin. The child of God must work to guard himself so that the devil is not able to touch him. Another preventative of sin is the Word of God. “Whoever is born of God doeth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him” (1 John 3:9). God’s seed is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). The Word of
God in the heart can prevent sin as David wrote in Psalm 119:11. A third aide is for the Christian to abide in Christ. “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not” (1 John 3:6). Abiding in Christ entails obeying Christ, “whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him” (1 John 2:5). Victory is for the Christian who walks “even as he walked” (1 John 2:6).

We learn the PRICE OF SIN. The price of sin is high, a lot higher than some realize. There is the price we have to pay for sin. There is the price that our loved ones have to pay. But John sets forth the high price of sin in different terms. The price paid for sin was God’s only begotten Son, “Hereby perceive we the love of God, be-

DEATH OF AN INNOCENT

I went to a party, Mom, I remembered what you said. You told me not to drink, Mom, so I drank soda instead. I really felt proud inside, Mom, the way you said I would. I didn’t drink and drive, Mom, even though the others said I should. I know I did the right thing, Mom, I know you are always right. Now the party is finally ending, Mom, as everyone is driving out of sight. As I got into my car, Mom, I knew I’d get home in one piece. Because of the way you raised me, so responsible and sweet. I started to drive away, Mom, but as I pulled out into the road, The other car didn’t see me, Mom, and hit me like a load. As I lay there on the pavement, Mom, I hear the policeman say, The other guy is drunk, Mom, and now I’m the one who will pay. I’m lying here dying, Mom, I wish you’d get here soon. How could this happen to me, Mom? My life just burst like a balloon. There is blood all around me, Mom, I’ll die in a short time. I just wanted to tell you, Mom, I swear I didn’t drink. He was probably at the same party as I. The only difference is, he drank and I will die. Why do people drink, Mom? It can ruin your whole life. I’m feeling sharp pains now. Pains just like a knife. The guy who hit me is walking, Mom, and I don’t think it’s fair. I’m lying here dying and all he can do is stare. Tell my brother not to cry, Mom. Tell Daddy to be brave. And when I go to heaven, Mom, put “Daddy’s Girl” on my grave. Someone should have told him, Mom, not to drink and drive. If only they had told him, Mom, I would still be alive. My breath is getting shorter, Mom. I’m becoming very scared. Please don’t cry for me, Mom. When I needed you, you were always there. I have one last question, Mom, before I say goodbye. I didn’t drink and drive, so why am I the one to die?

Author Unknown
cause he laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16). “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9). God has paid the ultimate price for our sins. It is foolish for us to pay the price for sin after God has already paid it!

There is one more aspect of sin we see, the PARDON OF SIN. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Have you received pardon from your sins, have you been cleansed and forgiven? Jesus has paid the price once, do not let it be wasted because you did not trust and obey him. In order to find “Paid in Full” stamped on the invoice of life we must yield ourselves unto Him who paid the price.

There is one more aspect of sin we see, the PARDON OF SIN. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). Have you received pardon from your sins, have you been cleansed and forgiven? Jesus has paid the price once, do not let it be wasted because you did not trust and obey him. In order to find “Paid in Full” stamped on the invoice of life we must yield ourselves unto Him who paid the price.

2707 Mt. Holly Road; Camden, AR 71701

BELLVIEW LECTURES

The Twenty-fourth Annual Bellview Lectures, Worldliness, will be held June 12-16, 1999. Twenty-eight men will be speaking: Kent Bailey, David Baker, Danny Box, David Brown, Gene Burgett, Curtis Cates, B. J. Clarke, Daniel Denham, Garland Elkins, Guss Eoff, Noah Hackworth, Ronnie Hayes, David Hester, Tommy Hicks, Roger Jackson, Bobby Liddell, Dub McClish, John Moore, Jerry Murrell, Clifford Newell, Flavil Nichols, Ira Rice, Wesley Simons, Tim Smith, Marvin Weir, Joel Wheeler, Jesse Whitlock, and Eddie Whitten. The following men will be writing lessons for the lectureship book but will not be speaking: Harrell Davidson and Mark McWhorter.

The lecture topics include: Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly; Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lust; Causes Of Worldliness; Hedonism; Educational System; The Media; The Occult; Examining One’s Life; Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech; Disobedience To Parents; Pride; Envy; Immodest Apparel; Dancing; Pornography; Fornication And Adultery; Abortion And Euthanasia; Homosexuality; Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use; Covetousness; Materialism; Stealing; Gambling; Anger, Hatred, And Malice; Backbiters And Gossips; Lying And Corrupt Communication; Denominationalism; and Consequences Of Worldliness.

If you are planning on attending the Bellview Lectures be sure to make your motel reservations now. The Hospitality Inn (4910 Mobile Highway; Pensacola, FL 32506) offers the following price (tax not included) $45—1 to 4 people per room. For reservations call 850-453-3333. When calling for reservations be sure to tell them you will be attending the Bellview Lectures.

Pensacola is a great place to take your summer vacation and at the same time attend the Bellview Lectures. For further information please contact the office by phone, mail or at our e-mail address (m-h@bigfoot.com). Check out our web site listed below for more information. We hope to see you in June.

(http://members.tripod.com/bellviewcoc)

Dinner on the Grounds and Singing
April 25, 1999

A dinner on the grounds will be held immediately after the morning service in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. Singing will be held after the meal in the auditorium. Bring a friend with you and enjoy the fellowship with other Christians.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneaoue Dean, Lucille Staples, Tim Lamb, Jennette Nall, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Ira Rice had cataract surgery on April 12. June Joines (Gary Grizzell’s aunt) is scheduled for open heart surgery on April 13 at West Florida Hospital.

READING/INVITATION
April 21, 1999
Reading: Michael Wilkes
Invitation: Henry Born
April 28, 1999
Reading: Ray Williams
Invitation: Paul Brantley

MARK THESE DATES
April 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
April 19, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
April 25, 1999–Dinner on the Grounds and Singing, after the morning service in the general purpose building.
April 26, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
June 12-16, 1999–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is Worldliness. Make plans now to attend.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

1 JOHN 2:2
“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”
In recent weeks the media has enlightened the public about the problems and evils associated with an elected official who lies to his constituency. Indeed, many are dismayed, and rightfully so, about the quagmire of problems surrounding the White House. Admissions of “inappropriate” behavior and “misleading” speeches by the President have caused a maelstrom of controversy in Washington and unsettled feelings of distrust and disgust among the citizens of this nation. Whatever else may or may not have happened in the White House, there is one thing about which everyone is certain—the President lied. What was said in January [1998] to a national audience has, by even the liberal media, been said to have been a lie.

For some, lying may not seem all that wrong, but the Bible makes it abundantly clear that untruths, half-truths, fabrications, and deceit are out of harmony with the will of God. Biblically, it is clear that lying is damning. Those who lie and do not repent will be cast into the lake of fire with the devil and his angels (Rev. 2:18; 2 Pet. 2:4). The telling of falsehoods is a characteristic of the old man of sin, who will not appear in glory when Christ comes again (Col. 3:1-9). It is a transgression of God’s law (Eph. 4:25). It can prevent one from entering heaven. It can damn your soul to an eternal hell.

Lying is also deplorable. It is disgusting to both God and man. In Proverbs 6:16-19, it is listed as something that God hates. It is an abomination unto Him, and can be proven as such by reflecting upon what happened to Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11). It is also deplorable to man, for even the liar himself wants a wife/husband, mom and dad, friends, co-workers, employees, judges, lawyers, politicians, etc., to be honest, trustworthy, and
truthful. We truly think it deplorable when someone lies to us.

Lying is also damaging. It destroys relationships and causes grief. Trust is broken and confidence is ravaged when lies are told. Lies sent our Lord to the cross and, though He was innocent, caused Him to suffer a shameful death. In the Old Testament, a prophet, a man of God, was killed as the result of a lie (1 Kin. 13:11-32). James wrote that the tongue, when it lies against the truth, is a “world of iniquity...and setteth on fire the course of nature” (Jam. 3:6). Lies killed some three million Jews in the Holocaust. Lies kept Communism alive in the Soviet Union. Lies ruined a presidency (as seen more than once). Lies destroy families and marriages. Lies can send you to jail. Lies enslave people to cults, false teachers, and religious organizations. Lies overthrow the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:16-18).

Lying will bring division, distrust, and destruction. Lying is indeed damaging.

Truth is a precious commodity. Truth-telling is a valued and treasured quality above all else to be cultivated in the hearts and minds of every person. Our children and our adults need to acquire the quality of truth-telling. They should be expected to tell the truth. Ever since my sons have been old enough to communicate, they have been told to always tell the truth. No matter what, where, or to whom—tell the truth! Always tell the truth, and remember that “a false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish” (Pro. 19:9).

8900 Manchaca Road; Austin, TX 78748

HOW RICH ARE WE IN AMERICA?

From the standpoint of material wealth, Americans have difficulty realizing how rich they really are. By going through a little mental exercise, suggested by Robert Heilbroner, we can step back and count our blessings.

Imagine, if you will, the following points. In so doing you will have some sense of what daily life is like for as many as a billion people around the world:

1. Take out all the furniture in your home except for one table and a couple of chairs. Use blankets and pads for beds.
2. Take away all of your clothing except for your oldest dress or suit, shirt or blouse. Leave only one pair of shoes.
3. Empty the pantry and refrigerator except for a small bag of flour, some sugar and salt, a few potatoes, some onions and a dish of dried beans.
4. Dismantle the bathrooms, shut off the running water, and remove all the electrical wiring in your house.
5. Take away the house itself and move the family into the tool shed.
6. Place your “house” in shanty town.
7. Cancel all subscriptions to newspapers, magazines, and book clubs. This is no great loss because none of you can read anyway.
8. Leave only one radio for the whole shanty town.
9. Throw away your bankbooks, stock certificates, pension plans, and insurance policies. Leave the family a cash hoard of ten dollars.
10. Move the nearest hospital or clinic ten miles away and put a midwife in charge instead of a doctor.
11. Give the head of the family a few acres to cultivate on which he can raise a few hundred dollars of cash crops, of which one third will go to the landlord and one tenth to the money lenders.
12. Lop off twenty-five or more years of life expectancy.

Now, after all that, by comparison how rich are we? And with our wealth comes responsibility to use it wisely, not to be wasteful and to help others. Think on these things.

Author Unknown
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<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 12</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts</td>
<td>Noah Hackworth</td>
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<td>Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly</td>
<td>John Moore</td>
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<td>Sunday, June 13</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Causes Of Worldliness</td>
<td>Clifford Newell</td>
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<td>Examining One's Life</td>
<td>Tommy Hicks</td>
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<td>Materialism</td>
<td>Ira Y. Rice, Jr.</td>
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<td>Wastefulness</td>
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<td>Humanism</td>
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<td>Immodest Apparel</td>
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<td>Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use</td>
<td>Danny Box</td>
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<td>Monday, June 14</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td>Kent Bailey</td>
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<td>Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech</td>
<td>David Brown</td>
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<td>Pride</td>
<td>Joel Wheeler</td>
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<td>Open Forum</td>
<td>Garland Elkins</td>
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<td>Gambling</td>
<td>Bobby Liddell</td>
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<td>Tuesday, June 15</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>Roger Jackson</td>
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<td>Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech</td>
<td>David Brown</td>
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<td>Backbiters And Gossips</td>
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<td>Denominationalism</td>
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<td>Wednesday, June 16</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Abortion And Euthanasia</td>
<td>Tim Smith</td>
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<td>Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech</td>
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<td>Anger, Hatred, And Malice</td>
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<td>Disobedience To Parents</td>
<td>Jesse Whitlock</td>
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<td>Consequences Of Worldliness</td>
<td>Ronnie Hayes</td>
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SICK AND SHUT-IN

Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Jennette Nall, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Ray Foshee is in West Florida Hospital, room 653 (no visitors at this time).

READING/INVITATION

April 28, 1999
Reading: Ray Williams
Invitation: Paul Brantley

May 5, 1999
Reading: Carl Ayliffe
Invitation: Jeremy Caine

MARK THESE DATES

April 26, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 3, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 9, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 10, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED

Canned Meat

Dinner on the Grounds and Singing

April 25, 1999

A dinner on the grounds will be held immediately after the morning service in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. Singing will be held after the meal in the auditorium. Bring a friend with you and enjoy the fellowship with other Christians.
CHILDREN KILLING CHILDREN

Thomas F. Eaves Sr.

Our hearts weep for the families who have been touched by the tragedy which took place at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. (Our sympathy goes out to all who have suffered because of the shootings in the schools of our land). Perhaps we will never know all the facts of this tragic episode.

Blame for this tragedy will be laid at the feet of parents, gun dealers, young people, teachers, and many others. Perhaps all share in the responsibility. There is one community which should not be overlooked, the educators of our children. Our young people are taught the theory of evolution which holds that:

1. There is no God.
2. If there is no God there is no hereafter—no heaven or hell.
3. If there is no God there is no absolute standard of right and wrong. Cal Thomas wrote in his article, “These youngsters live in a society without values. Why should young people take life seriously when their over-worked, aborting, day-care, euthanasia culture does not? Life is so cheap, relationships are so meaningless—children get the message.” (The Tennessean, Thursday, April 22, 1999, p. 19A).
4. Man is nothing more than an educated animal. Charles Darwin wrote that man descended from the monkey community. He states in the sixth chapter of his The Descent of Man: “The Simiadae then branched off into two great stems, the New World [western hemisphere] and Old World [eastern hemisphere] monkeys; and from the latter, at a remote period, Man, the wonder and glory of the Universe proceeded.”
5. This allows man to do whatever he is capable of doing. Our young people are taught that man is nothing more than an animal and in our generation we are observing and suffering...
because they are acting like animals.

In our crazy mixed up world it would not surprise me if the students who prayed, while their school mates were being slaughtered, will face prosecution for praying in their school. It reminds me of the sign which was placed in a school: “In Case of Nuclear Attack, The Ban On Praying Is Canceled.” Maybe something similar would be appropriate: “In Case This School Comes Under Attack, The Ban On Praying Is Canceled.” America’s problems will not cease until she turns to God (Pro. 14:34).

1350 Carmel Drive; Cookeville, TN 38506

SIX SHORT RULES FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS

1. Never neglect daily prayer and when you pray, remember that God is present, and that HE hears your prayers (Heb. 11:6).

2. Never neglect daily private Bible reading and when you read, remember that God is speaking to you, and that you are to believe and act upon what He says. I believe all backsliding begins with the neglect of these two rules (John 5:39).

3. Never let a day pass without trying to do something for Jesus. Every night reflect on what Jesus had done for you, and then ask yourself: “What am I doing for Him?” (Mat. 5:12-16).

4. If you are in doubt as to a thing being right or wrong, go to your room and kneel down and ask God’s blessings upon it (Col. 3:17). If you cannot do this, it is wrong (Rom. 14:23).

5. Never take your Christianity from Christians, or argue that because such and such people do so and so, that therefore you may (2 Cor. 10:12). You are to ask yourself: “How would Christ act in my place?” and strive to follow him (John 10:27).

6. Never believe what you feel, if it contradicts God’s Word. Ask yourself: “Can what I feel be true, if God’s Word is true?” and if both cannot be true, believe God, and make your own heart the liar (Rom. 3:4; 1 John 5:10-11).

Author Unknown

SILENCE...

Dave Dugan

Denies Justice! Allows Moral Wrongs To Continue And Flourish! Allows Sin To Reign And Good And Right To Lose! Allows Minorities To Become Extreme And Majorities To Run Roughshod Over The Minorities!

Too many people are too silent about many subjects. There are so many today who WILL NOT:

- STAND FOR TRUTH AND RIGHT; but allow millions to go to eternal damnation because they did not want to offend anyone (Mat. 26:31ff; 11:6; 13:57).
- TELL SOMEONE THEY ARE LOST IN SIN; because it is just not politically correct these days (Mark 16:15-16).
- CONTEND FOR THE FAITH because they do not want to be judgmental (Jude 3).
- CORRECT FALSE TEACHING when it is spoken, done, or endorsed in their presence, because we all want to get along (Mat. 10).

Now go to your Bible. Start reading in Matthew and continue through John. See and learn how many times our Lord would stand for truth and right. See and learn how many times He would point out sin and convict the sinner. See and learn how many times He would contend for the faith. See and learn how many times He would immediately address false teachings.

We cannot be silent about sin. We cannot be silent about religious error with anyone. We cannot be silent when it comes to proclaiming the gospel.

WE WILL NOT BE SILENT IN 1999!!

4614 South Broadway; St. Louis, MO 63111
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 12</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts</td>
<td>Noah Hackworth</td>
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<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly</td>
<td>John Moore</td>
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<td>Sunday, June 13</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Causes Of Worldliness</td>
<td>Clifford Newell</td>
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<td>Examining One's Life</td>
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<td>Materialism</td>
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<td>Immodest Apparel</td>
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<td>Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use</td>
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<td>Monday, June 14</td>
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<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td>Kent Bailey</td>
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<td>Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech</td>
<td>David Brown</td>
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<td>Pride</td>
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<td>Lying And Corrupt Communication</td>
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<td>Tuesday, June 15</td>
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<td>Dancing</td>
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<td>Backbiters And Gossips</td>
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<td>The Media</td>
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<td>Wednesday, June 16</td>
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<td>Abortion And Euthanasia</td>
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<td>Disobedience To Parents</td>
<td>Jesse Whitlock</td>
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<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Consequences Of Worldliness</td>
<td>Ronnie Hayes</td>
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SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Jennette Nall, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
May 5, 1999
Reading: Carl Ayliffe
Invitation: Jeremy Caine
May 12, 1999
Reading: Elward Brantley
Invitation: Bill Cline

MARK THESE DATES
May 3, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 9, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 10, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 16, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 17, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 24, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 31, 1999–Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. Bring a covered dish meal. The meeting will be held after the dinner. All members are encouraged to be there.

June 12-16, 1999–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on: Worldliness. Make plans now to attend.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat
WITCHCRAFT DEFENDED; THE BIBLE ATTACKED

Gary W. Summers

Nothing gets by the American Civil Liberties Union. If there is any anti-Christian cause to champion, they are eager to charge in, like a junkyard dog sensing trespassers. Their latest client is an incensed high school student with apparently too much free time on her hands. Crystal Siefferly says her religious freedoms are being trampled into the dust because she cannot openly wear a pentagram necklace, which the school has barred, along with symbols of white supremacy groups, gangs, and various Satanic images (Denton Record-Chronicle, 2-10-99, p. 6A).

One of the reasons public education continues to decline is that frivolous lawsuits like these have forced parents into putting their children into private learning institutions or joining the legions of home-schoolers. Many have grown weary with school policies being set by radical groups like the ACLU; they wish to return to some semblance of sanity.

“Christian students can wear crosses, and Jewish students can wear stars of David, but Wiccans can’t wear the pentagram,” whined the ACLU spokesman, as if the Old. Sorcery is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21); sorcerers shall have their place in the lake of fire (Rev. 21:8).

“To be forced to conceal one’s religious symbol under one’s shirt is a feeling of shame,” Crystal opines. She is apparently unaware that...
displaying it in public would bring shame, too, if she had any sense of propriety. Anything Satanic stands opposed to goodness, God, and decency. Oh, sure, she would probably argue that there is good witchcraft and bad witchcraft and that she is one of the good kind. The Scriptures do not agree with this kind of hocus-pocus.

What good have any witches ever done? Whose life has been enriched and made better because of this ancient superstition? Since the Bible condemns the practice, they are not going to be friendly toward it or follow its teachings. They do not contribute to the betterment of society, and they harbor the potential of doing much harm. They certainly left MacBeth in the lurch.

People do not particularly appreciate seeing symbols of horror and death. If schools can outlaw the wearing of swastikas, they certainly have a right to ban Satanic symbols. If they want to eliminate stars of David and crosses, that would be fine, also, though these symbolize the rich spiritual heritage upon which this nation rests. Christians could best honor their Lord—not by wearing a symbol—but by being pure in heart (1 John 3:3), speaking things which edify instead of being guilty of corrupt communication (Eph. 4:29), dressing modestly, instead of the way the world does (Rom. 12:12), and participating only in wholesome activities. No one will bar a good example or a shining light. Now how will the witch manifest herself without a symbol?

The Bible Is Barred

While the ACLU is busy helping their witch friends, a rapist’s “51-year prison sentence has been overturned on appeal because the judge turned to the Bible while deciding punishment” (Denton Record-Chronicle, 2-1999, p. 8B). How horrible—to quote the Bible! In determining the therapist’s sentence, the judge read from Matthew 18:6: “But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

The reason the judge quoted this verse was that the defendant had molested his fiancee’s 8-year-old daughter.

The appeals court ruled that the convicted rapist can seek a lesser sentence since that verse was cited. Let all judges take note. You can probably use a Ouija board to determine a sentence—or the daily lottery number, or a dart board (“Sorry, the dart just missed the 3; you get 17 years”). Probably a judge could even consult the high school Wiccan queen for a recommendation, and nobody would complain (least of all, the ACLU), but the Bible? We are too civilized to be influenced by anything God might have to say on a subject.

Our already failing justice system keeps finding ways to take steps backwards. The rights of law-abiding citizens continue to lose ground in the wake of laws that overly protect the guilty, who oftentimes run roughshod over the innocent. December’s Reader’s Digest contains an article about the way witnesses are intimidated because of the law that says the names and addresses of witnesses who will testify must be given to the defense attorney (86-91). Recently a boy and his mother were shot to death in Massachusetts once that information was given out by a judge, but in Florida it is a state law. Small wonder that people refuse to testify.

So a judge cannot ponder the Scriptures before sentencing someone. How long will it be until someone realizes the Bible condemns stealing and murder? Should we overturn all of our laws against those crimes because they are in the Book? Or should criminals only be set free or re-sentenced because an attorney mentions a biblical reference? Would the same attitude prevail if someone cited Shakespeare, Locke, or Gandhi?

When law becomes so perverse as to champion the devil and rebuke God, it is no wonder that people lose confidence in the system and balk at serving on juries (“May I be excused due to this hangnail?”). Which of our founding fathers would have ever dreamed that a child
molester could appeal for a reduced sentence because the judge quoted from the Bible? In the Old Testament a rapist would have been put to death. Although we are not under the Old Testament, that penalty still seems appropriate—especially for the gutless wonder who would attack an 8-year-old.

Abby: God Belongs in the Dark Ages

Another attack upon God and the Bible came from “Dear Abby” in her February 3rd column. Here are her exact words: “Being gay (or straight) is not a matter of choice. People who do not know this belong in the dark ages” (Denton Record-Chronicle, p. 17A).

Apparently, Abby is not aware that all homosexuals do not agree with her; many proudly pronounce that they are homosexuals by choice. Furthermore, if homosexuals were such by birth, is the same true of bisexuals? And what about those who practice bestiality? Are they that way by birth? Or just consider plain, old-fashioned adulterers: are they that way from birth, too? And what about the child molester previously mentioned? Perhaps it is by birth, not choice, that he is attracted to 8-year-olds.

There has never been any concrete evidence that anyone is homosexual by birth rather than choice. Abby is a victim of the new “dark ages” dominated by political correctness. And if her assertion were true, it would prove that God is incorrect. When He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for their homosexuality, did He fall victim to Dark Age thinking? It seems unlikely since the Dark Ages were 3,000 years yet in the future.

When He commanded homosexuals to be put to death (Lev. 20:13) as part of the Law of Moses, was God wrong? Did He not possess Abby’s “wisdom” and modern enlightenment?

When Paul called the practice vile and against nature (Rom. 1:26), was he inspired of God? Or was the Dark Age mentality already creeping in? When Paul observed that some in Corinth had repented of homosexuality (1 Cor. 6:9-11), was he unaware that people (allegedly) cannot change what they are by birth?

Abby has clearly overstepped her bounds in this latest pronouncement. If she is going to be arrogant enough to disagree with God, she ought to give a little more evidence (it will make good practice for her for the day of judgment). In her column she frequently talks about such noble concepts as love, respect, and responsibility, which are all important and valid precepts. But the same God who commands love condemns homosexuality. No one has the right to select the things with which they agree concerning God and denounce those things with which they personally disagree.

It would be nice if Abby received a lot of mail from her readers protesting her insulting remarks against God and the Bible. She has perfect liberty to defend the perversion of homosexuality, but when she attacks God and His Word, her wisdom has exceeded her grasp. An apology is in order.

312 Pearl Street; Denton, TX 76201

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TO BUILD UP THE CHURCH

Let all lukewarm members get fired up!
Let all bitter critics sweeten up!
Let all absentees show up!
Let all sleepers wake up!
Let all the peeved ones make up!
Let all who have prospered lay up!
Let all the discouraged look up!
Let all of us cheer up!

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Marilyn Hall is in Sacred Heart Hospital, room 428B.

READING/INVITATION
May 12, 1999
Reading: Elward Brantley
Invitation: Bill Cline
May 19, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Bill Crowe

MARK THESE DATES
May 9, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 10, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 16, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 17, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 24, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 31, 1999–Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. Bring a covered dish meal. The meeting will be held after the dinner. All members are encouraged to be there.
June 12-16, 1999–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness. Make plans now to attend. If you have any questions please contact the office at: 850-455-7595.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
LESSONS FROM LITTLETON

Steve Ellis

Our nation was shocked and horrified on Tuesday, April 20, 1999, to learn of yet another massacre at one of our public schools. Two seniors at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, gleefully murdered twelve of their fellow students and a heroic teacher, wounded several others, and then, cowards that they were, committed suicide.

These two young killers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, were admirers of Adolf Hitler and members of a death and violence obsessed clique known as the “Trench Coat Mafia.” While some of their victims were seemingly chosen at random, others were targeted because they belonged to the three groups the killers loved to hate: believers in Christ, athletes, and minorities.

While there are numerous lessons to be learned from this terrible tragedy, three of the most obvious will be mentioned here. The first one is, that which we put into our hearts and minds definitely affects our behavior. God has told us: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life” (Pro. 4:23). These terribly spiritually contaminated young men had filled their minds with violent computer games, violent movies, violent songs, and violent vengeful fantasies, and then, quite predictably, they committed horrible acts of violence themselves.

A second lesson to be learned from such atrociously wicked behavior on the part of these young men is that the world truly is filled with shepherdless masses who felt this was the only way they were going to get
any attention in life.

A third lesson to be learned is that our nation is continuing to reap the bitter harvest of permitting our public schools to be dominated by bitter enemies of divine morals and values who have taught our children that there is no God and no absolute standard of right and wrong. Those who have been taught that they are just highly-evolved apes, answerable to no higher power than themselves, who should reject and despise the “traditional values” of former generations, are mentally and spiritually prepared to kill their classmates and laugh about it.

May God help us honestly and scripturally to evaluate what we are putting into our minds and permitting our children to put into their minds (cf., Phi. 4:8). May God help us to do more to reach the masses of misguided people all around us and to bring them to the Good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ (John 10:14). And may God help us to do more to combat the destructive influence of the agents of Satan who currently control public educations in America (Eph. 5:11).

FROM WHERE I STAND

A Teenager’s Voice from Inside the Culture of Death
Sarah Roney

On April 20, 1999, there was yet another gruesome shooting in Littleton, Colorado. Kids killing kids. And again, the entire nation in its uproar is trying to figure out why I am eighteen years old. I live in a small town near Madison, Wisconsin. A small town just like the ones where these horrifying shootings always seem to take place. Every time those stories come on the television, I cannot help but notice how easily it could be my small town next. And I want to know why this is happening just as badly as any parent or police chief or anchorman. The thing is, I am right in the middle of it. I am in the same age group as all of these high school kids. So I may have some insight for the world that has been otherwise unattainable since these shootings started some years ago.

The night of the Littleton shooting, as I was flipping through the various news channels that were covering the story in Littleton, Colorado, I heard something that struck a chord in me. An anchorman was interviewing the mother of a victim in the Jonesboro shooting. His question was: “If you look at America in the 1950s, you will find that this kind of thing never happened; whereas if you look at America today, this kind of thing is becoming more and more frequent. Why do you think this is happening?” The woman, of course, could not answer the question. In fact, she did not really even try. But I did. I thought about it for a long time that night. And again the next morning, when my favorite morning radio talk show asked its listeners why they thought this has been happening. Many people said it is the parents of the kids. Many people suggested television and video games. Many people even turned to popular musicians, looking to put the blame somewhere.

But I will tell you what I think it is—what I, a regular teenager riding on the coattails of Generation X—blame it on. It is not the parents or the movies or the rock stars. It is AMERICA. It is this culture of death, this culture in which liberals and feminists and activists are so anxious to let anything be “OK” that the once tightened, knotted rope of society is unraveling right beneath us.

Do you not see? There can be no order without discipline. All of those things people think are causing children to run into a school and shoot their teachers and peers and even kids they do not know—the movies, the video games, the
parents, the rap artists—they are only REFLEC-
TIONS of our society. Society breaks down, from one big metaphorical family into 50 meta-
phoric families and so on and so on, until you have the actual family, the one with the parents and the kids and the dog. It is not one thing or two things; it is the attitude of an entire familiar nation being reflected back at us in the kids. Just as that anchorman suggested, something was different about the 1950s. **We were conserva-
tive.** We had boundaries; we had a definite knowledge of right and wrong throughout the entire nation. We did not have feminists pushing women so hard to go get a job that a woman who did not have a job was somehow bad, thereby leaving kids at home with inadequate parental guidance and oftentimes with parents who were truly unhappy. We did not have liberals fighting so avidly to legalize everything that it was at the point of completely blurring the line between good and bad. We did not have a nationwide media surge dedicated to sex and violence so intense that if you were not playing killing video games at age 14, then you were trying to choose between contraceptives beforehand or abortion afterwards.

We did not have disputes over whether or not we should help someone who is dying die sooner—over whether or not we should assist them in committing suicide. And we certainly did not have a President who was in favor of NATO bombing and killing children in Serbia come on the television to grieve the loss for the families of children killed in America. We live in a loosely tied society, a culture dedicated to death. If you do not want the kid, kill it. If you do not want to live out the rest of your God-given days, kill yourself. Or better yet, have someone else come help you do it. I guess, no matter how horrible or gruesome or gut-wrenching it may be, it was just a matter of time before someone got that “killing-as-a-means-to-an-end” idea stuck in their head for the part between birth and death as well. Everything that happens in families and cities and states and countries is the mirror image of the big picture.

We are falling apart as a society. Am I—one random normal teenager in Farmertown, U.S.A.—the only one who sees that? It is sad and it is hard to believe, but what is worse is that it is scary. I think it is time for our—America’s—Mom and Dad to ground us—to say, “If you don’t shape up by the time I count to three...” And then really count to three. Because we are running wild and pretty soon we are going to be too far from home to ever get back.

There was once a great saying by a famous man that has rung true throughout the history of mankind—in every family and in every society and in every social group and in every reli-
gion—it was a frighteningly true statement that cannot be disputed. I am reminded of it now, in the wake of yet another indescribably tormenting result of a nation gone haywire: “By their fruits you shall know them.”

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**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES**

Our congratulations are extended to the following students who will be graduating from high school this month.

**Talisha Brantley** graduates from Tate High School on May 28, 1999. Talisha plans on attending the University of West Florida.

**Brantley Johnson** graduates from Tate High School on May 28, 1999. Brantley plans on attending Pensacola Junior College.

**Andrew Hatcher** graduates from the Home Schooling Program in May. Andrew plans on attending Pensacola Junior College.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Alice Williams, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Marilyn Hall is in Sacred Heart Hospital, room 428B.

READING/INVITATION
May 19, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Bill Crowe
May 26, 1999
Reading: Jerry Caine
Invitation: Dale Cunningham

MARK THESE DATES
May 16, 1999– Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
May 17, 1999– Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 24, 1999– Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 31, 1999– Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. Bring a covered dish meal. The meeting will be held after the dinner. All members are encouraged to attend. If you have any suggestions on how to improve our visitation program this will be your opportunity to put forth those suggestions.

June 12-16, 199–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness. Make plans now to attend. If you have any questions please contact the office at (850) 455-7595.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
TINKY WINKY IS GAY

Tyler Young

“Tinky Winky is out and proud. It’s a great message to kids...that it’s okay to be gay.” So said homosexual columnist Michael Musto. For the uninitiated, Tinky Winky, along with pals Dipsy, Laa-Laa and Po are the stars of the children’s program Teletubbies, which was imported last year from Britain by the federally subsidized (that means you are paying for it with your tax dollars) Public Broadcasting System. Tinky and his friends are called Teletubbies because television screens embedded in their bellies broadcast programming aimed at toddlers.

According to Terence R Jeffrey, “Tinky speaks in an effeminate, but male, voice, carries a red purse, is colored purple, and has a triangle grafted to his head. Purple is a gay pride color; the triangle is a gay pride symbol. The purse and the voice speak for themselves (Human Events). Jeffrey quotes a Washington Post article: “Tinky Winky...carries a red purse, which has won him popularity among gay viewers. Pretty wild for a show that was designed for such little kids.” In answer to the question, “How dare the BBC...or PBS for that matter, actively recruit such tender-age viewers,” the Post cited Alice Cahn, director for children’s programming at PBS, as answering: “I feel this show is developmentally appropriate for children as young as one.”

“The British producer of Teletubbies admitted Tinky is designed to teach children the virtues of boys carrying handbags. ‘The idea is to break down stereotypes,’ Itsy Bitsy Entertainment President Kenn Viselman told Entertainment Week.” Leading cable-news network CNN, owned by anti-Christian bigot and Ten Commandment-hating Ted Turner, labeled Tinky as a “gay icon.”

The major television media put the public on notice that any criticism of such efforts to steer our little ones into the acceptance of perversion will not be tolerated. When Jerry Falwell in his own publication advised parents of what CNN reported on Tinky’s gender bending, he was
busted on the network news. Tom Brokaw misrepresented Falwell in a headline story on the evening news, announcing, “They skip, giggle and delight toddlers around the world. But now a prominent member of the American religious right claims one of the Teletubbies is gay.” Though the report asserted it was Falwell who claimed Tinky is gay, in reality the influential preacher was merely passing along to his readers what was already announced by CNN.

But facts matter little to the liberal media when attacking the evil “religious right.” The following morning NBC’s Katie Couric continued the mockery of Falwell for daring to express alarm over the use of our tax money to fund programming being used to brainwash young children. The pro-homosexual Human Rights Campaign and the chairman of the Democratic National Committee were among those who lined up to ridicule and spew intolerance for Falwell’s intolerance. According to one source, about 300 stories from major newspapers and television networks attacked Falwell for his crime of having an opinion contrary to what is allowed by the Thought Police of the politically correct powers that be.

Do we realize the extent to which the homosexual agenda dominates the institutions which shape public opinion and in turn the direction of the culture? Are we not subtle—the minds of our children? “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). Are we even aware of what they are doing?

Teletubbies to the contrary, the Moral Judge of the universe tells us it’s not okay to be gay. The practice of homosexuality is an abomination in the sight of God from which only Christ can save (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Parents need to take note of the efforts of those who hate what is good to indoctrinate their children and undermine in their young minds the credibility of the Word of God. We must be prepared—and prepare our children to be scorned for daring to take the sword of the Spirit in hand to fight with humility, with love and with boldness for the souls of our children against the ungodly who would turn them to hell.

A cuddly giggling Teletubby may seem harmless enough. But the use of Tinky to “break down stereotypes” and tell kids, “it’s okay to be gay,” should be a wake-up call for the faithful to work with renewed vigor and vigilance to keep the minds of our children pure from the pollution of the perverse who not only love evil themselves, but want our precious babies to grow up to love it as well.

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WHO’S FAULT IS IT?

A minister and an atheistic barber were walking through the city slums. “This is why I cannot believe in a God of love,” said the barber. “If God was as you say, He would not permit all this poverty and disease. He would not allow these poor bums to be addicted to drugs and other sinful habits. No, I cannot believe in a God who would permit these things.”

The minister was silent until they met a man who was especially unkept and filthy, his hair was hanging down his neck and he had a half-inch beard on his face. Said the minister: “You can’t be a very good barber or you would not allow a man like that to live in this neighborhood without a hair cut and shave.” The barber replied sharply: “Why blame me for this man’s condition. I can’t help it, and besides, he has never given me a chance to help him. If he would only come to my shop I could fix him up.”

The minister said, “Then don’t blame God for allowing people to continue in sin when He is constantly inviting them to obey the gospel.”

Author Unknown
## “WORLDLINESS”
**June 12 - 16, 1999**

### Saturday, June 12
- **7:00 PM** Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts  
  Noah Hackworth
- **8:00 PM** Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly  
  John Moore

### Sunday, June 13
- **9:00 AM** Causes Of Worldliness  
  Clifford Newell
- **10:00 AM** Examining One’s Life  
  Tommy Hicks
- **11:00 AM** Lunch Break
- **2:00 PM** Materialism  
  Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
- **3:00 PM** Wastefulness  
  Eddie Whitten
- **4:00 PM** Humanism  
  Daniel Denham
- **5:00 PM** Dinner Break
- **7:00 PM** Immodest Apparel  
  David Baker
- **8:00 PM** Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use  
  Danny Box

### Monday, June 14
- **9:00 AM** Homosexuality  
  Kent Bailey
- **10:00 AM** Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  
  David Brown
- **11:00 AM** Pride  
  Joel Wheeler
- **12:00 PM** Lunch Break
- **1:30 PM** Covetousness  
  Wesley Simons
- **2:30 PM** Envy  
  Flavil Nichols
- **3:15 PM** Open Forum  
  Garland Elkins
- **4:00 PM** Dinner Break
- **7:00 PM** Gambling  
  Garland Elkins
- **8:00 PM** Lying And Corrupt Communication  
  Bobby Liddell

### Tuesday, June 15
- **9:00 AM** Dancing  
  Roger Jackson
- **10:00 AM** Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  
  David Brown
- **11:00 AM** Backbiters And Gossips  
  David Hester
- **12:00 PM** Lunch Break
- **1:30 PM** Pornography  
  Stanley Ryan
- **2:30 PM** Hedonism  
  B. J. Clarke
- **3:15 PM** Open Forum  
  Dub McClish
- **4:00 PM** Dinner Break
- **7:00 PM** Denominationalism  
  Dub McClish
- **8:00 PM** The Media  
  Jerry Murrell

### Wednesday, June 16
- **9:00 AM** Abortion And Euthanasia  
  Tim Smith
- **10:00 AM** Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  
  David Brown
- **11:00 AM** Anger, Hatred, And Malice  
  Marvin Weir
- **12:00 PM** Lunch Break
- **1:30 PM** Stealing  
  Guss Eoff
- **2:30 PM** Fornication And Adultery  
  Curtis Cates
- **3:15 PM** Open Forum  
  Curtis Cates
- **4:00 PM** Dinner Break
- **7:00 PM** Disobedience To Parents  
  Jesse Whitlock
- **8:00 PM** Consequences Of Worldliness  
  Ronnie Hayes
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Alice Williams, Geneauve Dean, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Tim Lamb is in Sacred Heart Hospital, room 424.

READING/INVITATION
May 26, 1999
Reading: Jerry Caine
Invitation: Dale Cunningham
June 2, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Ray Dodd

MARK THESE DATES
May 24, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
May 31, 1999–Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. The meeting will be held after the dinner. All members are encouraged to be there.
June 12-16, 199–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness. Make plans now to attend. If you have any questions please contact the office at (850) 455-7595.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly

PSALM 25:1-3
“Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause.”
**MEETING TIMES**

**SUNDAY:**
- 9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
- 10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP

**WEDNESDAY:** 7:00 P.M.

**BISHOPS:** Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
- Michael Hatcher

**MINISTER:** Michael Hatcher

**DEACONS:** Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

**MISSIONARY:**

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**THE IMPORTANCE OF VISITING**

Sometimes we fail to see the importance of visiting others. But, consider the following situations, and see how we respond to them.

A new couple visits our service; maybe a non-Christian. A few people act friendly to them, a few speak to them. The preacher even sends a letter to them expressing our appreciation for them coming to worship with us. We are thankful for them visiting us, but, will they come back again?

Or, there is a lonely person sitting in the nursing home. The days grow longer and longer for that person. Days, and then weeks, and then months go by. Occasionally a member of the church drops by for a brief visit, but most of the time, they feel lonely and seem to have been completely forgotten.

An elderly church member is at home, unable to assemble with the saints. Because of health and advanced years, he or she can not attend worship. In years gone by, that saint never missed a service, but now, through no fault of their own, no one seems to remember them in their time of trial. It’s just them and the nursing home.

A new family moves into town. They are complete strangers to the town. They have no family or relatives here; they “do not know a soul.” They have no church preference. If we will visit them, and make them feel welcome, just maybe they will come to services and learn the truth.

A new family “places membership.” Maybe the preacher pays them a visit, but in the eyes of so many, “that is what the preacher gets paid for.” Would it not mean a lot more if several different members of the congregation dropped by and paid them a visit? Would that not show that we are in fact concerned for their spiritual well being?
A member of the church loses a family member, a spouse, a child, a brother or sister. So what happens? We are usually very prompt to visit that person and express our sorrow with them, we tell them we “know just how you feel.” So, at the time of the loss, and just before the funeral, we “do what we are supposed to do.” But what about those long hours, and those endless days which come after the funeral is over, when all the relatives have gone home? Do we continue to help that member through that time of grief and sorrow? Or is our feeling “Oh well, they are just going to have to get over it?”

A member of the local congregation begins to miss services. Maybe it is “just a Sunday morning Bible class.” Maybe it is “just mid-week services.” But no one goes for a visit to express concern. That occasional miss becomes a pattern; he misses Bible class more and more often. Then, he begins to miss an occasional Sunday morning worship service. And still no one is concerned enough to go visit that missing saint. Finally, that person is seldom seen; oh, maybe he is seen at the local grocery store, and when he is, we speak to him, but we seldom take the time to go to his home and visit him and talk about his “forsaking the assembly.” And whether we want to use the words or not, that person is “fallen away.” He is in a lost condition. And we need to ask ourselves, “what might have happened if some concerned Christians had made the proper, much needed visits into the home back then?”

So, is visiting important? Is it a Christian duty? Are we doing our Christian duty?  

Author Unknown

NEW BIBLE CLASSES BEGINNING

Bible classes for the summer quarter will begin Wednesday, June 2 and Sunday, June 7. Make plans now to attend these classes.

Sunday Schedule

| Adults I  | John             | Paul Brantley   |
| Adults II | Denominational Doctrines | Michael Hatcher |
| Adults III| Luke             | Louis Herrington|
| New Converts | Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living | Bill Gallaher |

Wednesday Schedule

| Adults I  | Law I (Leviticus & Numbers) | Michael Hatcher |
| Adults II | Law II (Numbers & Deuteronomy) | Fred Stancliff |
| Adults III| Joshua                | Ray Foshee    |
| New Converts | Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living | Bill Gallaher |
WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

Dave Rogers

What does it take to be a genuine Christian? Sadly, for some of the Lord’s church the answer comes back: “Why, all ya gotta do is get baptized!” While it is true that baptism is an absolutely essential part of God’s scheme of salvation, many “Christians” speak and act as if this is all that is required! Some of these are the “Christians” who are scarcely seen in worship once a month (Heb. 10:25). Some are the “Christians” who are regularly seen entering or leaving dance halls, liquor sales outlets, and similar establishments of disrepute (Gal. 5:19-21, especially v. 21, “and such like”). Some of these “Christians” are well-known in the community (and the church) for their eager desire “either to tell or to hear some new thing” (gossip, Eph. 4:31; Acts 17:21). Some of these “Christians” have never stopped letting “evil things” proceed from their mouths (Eph. 4:29; Mat. 15:18-19). Some dress and act so as to encourage and entice those whose “eyes [are] full of adultery” (2 Pet. 2:14), thus causing both to sin! Truly “many are called, but few are chosen” (Mat. 22:14).

It takes much, much more to be a true Christian than simply “getting baptized.” Many who have been baptized give no evidence in their lives that they ever repented of the sins of which they were supposed to be washed! Others, like the dog and pig of 2 Peter 2:22, seem to have returned eagerly to the sins they once left. These are NOT the marks of Christ, nor of His people! Christians must be known as pure, clean, holy people (Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:16)! The beauty Christ, seen in us, should be drawing men to us; too often, the beastliness of the devil is all too obvious! Peter told the children of Israel in Acts 3:19 to “repent ye therefore, and be converted,” and so should all of us! If we are not putting away the filth of the flesh (Col. 3:8-9) and striving to live more like Christ each day, we are not walking as true Christians should, and we will not go to heaven! Now what does it take, for you to go to heaven?

Anheuser-Busch has developed an advertising campaign that presents two “Bud”-drinking homosexual men in a hand-holding posture. Anheuser-Busch opened a toll-free number for people to call in and register their support of this ground-breaking homosexual campaign. Originally they did not have a number whereby someone could express opposition to it. However, so many called their toll-free customer service number to object that within 24 hours they had established a toll-free number for people to call if they disapprove of this new Bud Light commercial featuring the two homosexual men. The toll-free number to call is: 1-888-227-8783. We can let Anheuser-Busch understand that pro-family Americans are terribly concerned about homosexual images coming into our homes through advertising campaigns. Call today and have your friends and family call as well! You do not have to say anything. When you reach the switchboard, a voice will say something like: “By calling this number, you have registered your opposition to the Anheuser-Busch advertising campaign.” That is all you have to do. It takes about ten seconds...now where is that redial button?

P.O. Box 285; Lawton, OK 73502

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PSALM 18:2

“The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Tim Lamb, Geneauve Dean, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
June 2, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Ray Dodd
June 9, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Ray Foshee

MARK THESE DATES
May 31, 1999–Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. Bring a covered-dish meal. The meeting will be held after the dinner. All members are encouraged to be there.
June 12-16, 1999–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness. Make plans now to attend. If you have any questions please contact the office at (850) 455-7595.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly

MIND SPARKS
Once while lecturing in Utah, Mark Twain got into an argument with a Mormon on the subject of polygamy. “Can you find a single passage of scripture that forbids polygamy?” asked the Mormon. “Certainly,” Twain replied. “No man can serve two masters” (Mat. 6:24).
WHY WE FAIL TO BE INVOLVED IN PERSONAL EVANGELISM

Barry M. Grider

All of us have heard sermons admonishing us to be faithful in fulfilling the Great Commission (Mat. 28:18-20). Because of our failure to do so, we often soothe our consciences by financially supporting preacher training schools or missionaries overseas. While these are truly noble endeavors, it does not excuse our roles as individuals to be personally involved in winning new converts to Christ. Others may say they live a good moral life in front of friends and co-workers and that is enough. While it is commendable to live such a life, this alone will not save the lost. Personal evangelism means opening our mouths and distinctively expressing to others what they must do to be saved. Yet, how often do we fail to show the way to others. Perhaps we even cringe when someone asks us a Bible question. Remember Peter said, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15). Why do we often fail to heed this divine admonition? Here are some possible reasons:

1. Fear of Embarrassment. Nothing can bring more pain to an individual than being embarrassed. Many times, because we fail to study, we cannot provide adequate Bible answers to questions that might arise. Sometimes we may be embarrassed to admit we are Christians. If this be the case, we need to personally self-examine our
BELLVIEW LECTURES

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one to read—and I still have them and still read them. And it does nothing but please me that my wife also loves to read, and our girls seem to be inclined in that direction. I will let you in on a little secret, one of the first things I do when I enter a person's home, study, or office is glance around to see what books they have on the shelf.

Brethren, a good library, especially a religious library, will provide you with a wealth of information collected by men through decades of study. Surround yourself with good books that will better equip you in your study of God's Word. With the proper tools for serious study a man's knowledge cannot do anything but increase. Though always remembering that the Bible itself is to be the principal volume studied. There is little doubt that the apostle Paul knew the value of books, consider the following from Bible scholar F. F. Bruce:

It was just before the last winter of his life, while he lay in prison in Rome awaiting the death-sentence and the executioner's sword (according to the traditional account), that he sent a message to his friend, Timothy, in Asia Minor: "Do your best to come to me soon...When you come, bring the cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments...Do your best to come before winter" (2 Tim. 4:9, 13, 21) (The Books and the Parchments, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1984, p. 2).

Volume 14 of The Living Word Commentary series adds this interesting and informative note: What were the books (biblio) or papyrus rolls which he had left at Troas? Paul's experience as a student in the school of Gamaliel and his missionary journeys, would have given him many opportunities to gather such materials. They might have included portions of the sacred Scriptures. But we do not know what these books were. But the parchments (membrane) seem to have been more precious for some reason. Were they pieces of skin or vellum which Paul needed for his own writing purposes? Such materials were somewhat precious. Or they may have been writings which Paul wanted for his own personal study. Being confined to prison gave him much time for study" (Carl Spain, The Letters Of Paul To Timothy And Titus, ACU Press, 1984, p. 157).

My judgment would be that it is not the number of volumes but the quality of the books as tools that makes the difference. At the same time, a large religious library does not necessarily imply that quality books are not present. My Pa Gould had an excellent religious library though it was not immense in size (approximately 800 volumes). I have read on a number of occasions that the late brother Guy N. Woods' library contained approximately 10,000 volumes.

In his massive 1880 volume titled, Lands of the Bible, brother J. W. McGarvey writes on page 387:

On Monday when the carriage drove to the door, and the moment came for bidding farewell to my home and household. I had already been upstairs in my library to take a last look there, and as I gazed upon the rows of familiar books I said within myself, "Good-by, my dear old friends; and if I never see you again, GOD bless you for the good you have done me and the happy hours we have spent together."

May GOD bless everyone who has an appreciation for the study of the Word and the self-discipline and foresight to build a library.

959 Alford Ave; Birmingham, AL 35226

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hearts. John warns us to “love not the world” (1 John 2:15); and the Lord Jesus said, “But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 10:33).

2. **Fear of stirring anger and resentment.** Most everyone wants to be liked by others. As a result, we often tend to avoid confrontation. Yet the Bible is clear, Christianity is confrontational. Jesus did not seek strife, but He was not afraid of it, as evidenced when He drove the money changers from the temple (Mat. 21:12). Some have avoided confrontation by declaring we are just to love others. Often what is meant by this statement is we should tolerate error and evil. Again, hear the apostle Peter: “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified” (1 Pet. 4:14).

3. **People are not interested.** Too often we take it upon ourselves to judge whether or not someone would be interested in the gospel. While we live in an increasingly indifferent and apathetic world, we still have the command to take the gospel to the lost. Jesus did not say go only to those who are interested. Our job is to plant and water, God will give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6). I have heard Christian young people express disdain when someone disreputable from school is invited to a church activity. Such an individual is the one most in need of our love and teaching. I am so glad our Lord did not give up on Saul of Tarsus, the great persecutor who became the great preacher.

4. **We are not converted ourselves.** One other reason we may not be involved in personal evangelism is we simply fail to see the need. Perhaps we are not certain those outside of Christ are really lost. This may stem from our own lack of conversion. Remember Jesus said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat” (Mat. 7:13). How sad it will be that some individuals will be lost because we did not see the need of sharing the gospel with them.

Indeed, personal evangelism is essential for the church to grow and for souls to be saved. Do not lack confidence in the message of the cross, nor make rash judgments concerning the souls of others. Remember Jesus’ words: “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few” (Mat. 9:37). None of us want to hear the words contained in the chorus of the following song, written by James Rowe: “You met me day by day and knew I was astray, yet never mentioned him to me.” Paul admonished, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoved, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). A major part of this work is personal evangelism.

**BOOK-LOVER**

*Mel Futrell*

The famed author and orator, Henry Ward Beecher said, “A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.” And I could not agree more. Brethren, I am a book-lover which Webster says is: “a person who likes books and is fond of reading.” As far as I am concerned that is putting it mildly. I was privileged to grow up in a home where books were appreciated, and where my dad had a fine library which he still adds to to this day. Some of the most pleasant memories I have of growing up were those times of reading and studying books. Books at home, books at the school library, books at the county library, but there were always books. Every time the late brother Foy E. Wallace, Jr., put out another book my dad made a point of giving me
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Tim Lamb, Geneauve Dean, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Larry McDaniels is undergoing medical tests for possible cancer.

NEW ARRIVAL
Our congratulations is extended to Paul and Phyllis Brantley in the birth of their grandchild, Rice Paul-Travis Silcox, on May 26. The parents are Preston and Tonya Silcox of Martin, TN. Rice weighed in at 4 pounds 11 ounces.

READING/INVITATION
June 9, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Ray Foshee
June 16, 1999
Bellview Lectures

MARK THESE DATES
June 12-16, 199–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly

DIRECTORY CHANGES
Louis and Jane Herrington’s new address is: 2507 Brooklyn Street; Pensacola, FL 32514. Their telephone number remains the same. Allen and Diana Brazell’s new address is 654 Valley Ridge; Pensacola, FL 32514. Their telephone number remains the same.
WATCHING OVER THE FLOCK

Joel Wheeler

The Lord said to Ezekiel “Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them” (Eze. 3:4). Israel was so rebellious that it was difficult for them to hear much less obey God (Eze. 2:7-8). God gave Ezekiel a great and grave responsibility. The Lord uses the illustration of the Watchman over the city to assure Ezekiel’s understanding of his responsibility over Israel (Eze. 3:18-19). If Ezekiel failed to warn Israel, God would hold him accountable, but if he did warn Israel and they failed to respond to God’s Word, then the blood of Israel would be on their own heads.

This same theme is taught in the New Testament with the elders as watching over the congregation. The inspired writer said, “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17). It is by inspiration that tells us the elders have a serious responsibility. God says through the inspired apostle that the elders watch for the souls of the church and that they must also give an account. Can you imagine watching over 100 individuals and then giving an account to God for it? As the verse indicates there were some in the church that caused problems.

The elders of a congregation cannot change doctrine or what is written in the Scriptures. But, they do rule (Heb. 13:17) and watch over (Acts 20:28) the flock for its protection. Many individuals have caused the eldership great grief by their rebellious and selfish determinations. Many times the elders request that the church abide by certain guidelines which are matters of expediency and judgment. Many of the decisions that the eldership makes are
things that will prevent the church from going into apostasy.

The eldership may restrict the use of the building to prevent trouble and error from creeping into the church. For example, bringing in a musical instrument into the building would simply give approval of its use even if it were only used for weddings or funerals. This would simply be an open door to invite instrumental music into the worship. Not only that, but what would the world think if they saw a piano being escorted through the front door.

The eldership has an obligation (to God and to the church) to know what a person believes before he or she is used as a teacher. Do you think that God will hold an eldership responsible if they allowed a person to teach that the Bible is not inspired? How would God judge the elders if they allowed a teacher to teach that drunkenness is acceptable? What if they taught our young people that dancing, fornication, or gambling were not sins? God would indeed hold them accountable. James wrote, “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (Jam. 3:1). The word master means teacher or leader. God will truly hold an eldership responsible for false doctrine being taught and not corrected.

Some in the church do not like the decisions that are made by the eldership. Many bring personal attacks upon them. God holds those who resist the judgment of the elders, in contempt. God will also judge those who criticize and condemn the eldership. We are to respect their judgment and decision because “they watch for your souls” (Heb. 13:17). God has ordained the eldership as watchmen over the flock and the church must allow them to exercise their judgment and wisdom for the benefit of the church.

P.O. Box 714; Foley, AL 36536

HOW HYPOCRITICAL CAN WE BE?

On August 8, 1996, The Daily Oklahoman reported that NASA researchers had formally presented their case for the existence of life on Mars and related the Washington response. “With excitement in the U.S. scientific community President Clinton announced he will convene a space summit in November to ‘discuss how America should pursue answers’ to questions raised by research on a meteorite, apparently from Mars, that was recovered in Antarctica.”

The tests were made on particles in the meteorite that were one billionth the size of a pinhead. The scientists reported that the conclusion drawn from more than two years of study of these particles was that the “simplest explanation is that they are the remains of early Martian life.” The 4½ pound rock is “thought to have formed on Mars 4.5 billion years ago, to have been blasted out of the planet 16 million years ago and then to have landed in an Antarctic ice field 13,000 years ago.” It was discovered 12 years ago.

Isn’t that amazing! The president just recently vetoed a bill that would have banned late term abortions, which pleased that group of people who call themselves “pro-choice.” Many of them are scientists who are thrilled with the prospects of life on Mars, on the basis of evidence one billionth the size of a pinhead, but they cannot recognize a 4½-pound baby in the womb of a 120-pound woman six or seven months pregnant.

We need a summit all right. We need a soul-searching summit to pursue answers to the millions of babies that have been aborted in the last few years without so much as a cringe of conscience.

Via “North Penn” bulletin
“WORLDLINESS”
June 12 - 16, 1999

Saturday, June 12
7:00 PM  Denying Ungodliness And Worldly Lusts  Noah Hackworth
8:00 PM  Living Soberly, Righteously, And Godly  John Moore

Sunday, June 13
9:00 AM  Causes Of Worldliness  Clifford Newell
10:00 AM  Examining One’s Life  Tommy Hicks
11:00 AM  Lunch Break
2:00 PM  Materialism  Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
3:00 PM  Wastefulness  Eddie Whitten
4:00 PM  Humanism  Daniel Denham
5:00 PM  Dinner Break
7:00 PM  Immodest Apparel  David Baker
8:00 PM  Alcohol, Tobacco, And Drug Use  Danny Box

Monday, June 14
9:00 AM  Homosexuality  Kent Bailey
10:00 AM  Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  David Brown
11:00 AM  Pride  Joel Wheeler
12:00 PM  Lunch Break
1:30 PM  Covetousness  Wesley Simons
2:30 PM  Envy  Flavil Nichols
3:15 PM  Open Forum  Garland Elkins
4:00 PM  Dinner Break
7:00 PM  Gambling  Garland Elkins
8:00 PM  Lying And Corrupt Communication  Bobby Liddell

Tuesday, June 15
9:00 AM  Dancing  Roger Jackson
10:00 AM  Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  David Brown
11:00 AM  Backbiters And Gossips  David Hester
12:00 PM  Lunch Break
1:30 PM  Pornography  Stanley Ryan
2:30 PM  Hedonism  B. J. Clarke
3:15 PM  Open Forum  Dub McClish
4:00 PM  Dinner Break
7:00 PM  Denominationalism  Dub McClish
8:00 PM  The Media  Jerry Murrell

Wednesday, June 16
9:00 AM  Abortion And Euthanasia  Tim Smith
10:00 AM  Purity Of Mind, Life, Speech  David Brown
11:00 AM  Anger, Hatred, And Malice  Marvin Weir
12:00 PM  Lunch Break
1:30 PM  Stealing  Guss Eoff
2:30 PM  Fornication And Adultery  Curtis Cates
3:15 PM  Open Forum  Curtis Cates
4:00 PM  Dinner Break
7:00 PM  Disobedience To Parents  Jesse Whitlock
8:00 PM  Consequences Of Worldliness  Ronnie Hayes
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneauve Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
June 16, 1999
Bellview Lectures
June 23, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Louis Herrington

RESTORED
Harold Maxey was restored on June 7, 1999. Please keep Harold in your prayers and offer him encouragement.

MARK THESE DATES
June 12-16, 1999–24th Annual Bellview Lectures. This year’s theme is on Worldliness. Make plans now to attend. If you have any questions please contact the office at (850) 455-7595.
June 20, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
June 21, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
June 27, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
June 28, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes. Make plans now to attend and invite others to come with you.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
THE FOUR-FOLD JOY OF SOUL-WINNING

Dub McClish

Soul-winning is the most important work in the world. It alone was the sufficient cause for the Word to become flesh and dwell among men (John 1:14; Luke 19:10). After Jesus provided the means through His atoning blood by which souls may be won and saved from sin, He sent His disciples out upon the incomparable task of soul-winning. But soul-winning is not merely a task or duty, although it is certainly that. It is a surpassing privilege that brings a manifold joy each time a soul is won by the gospel.

Soul-winning brings joy to heaven.

“Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10). Since the first sin, the whole interest of heaven has been the redemption of the human race. God spent several centuries bringing His plan of redemption to fruition (Gal. 4:4). Would it not be the wonder of all wonders if the heavenly hosts were indifferent when men choose to obey the gospel and be saved? The populace of heaven is no less thrilled when the redeemed go out seeking the souls of those yet lost. How much joy have you brought to the angels?

Soul-winning brings joy to the soul-winner.

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him” (Psa. 126:6). There are many joys and thrills to be experienced in the Christian life, but only one outshines that of becoming a Christian—sowing the seed and reaping the harvest of the soul of another!

Soul-winning brings joy to all the saints.

When Paul and Barnabas reported the conversion of many Gentiles, “they caused great joy unto all the brethren” (Acts 16:3). There are some few who could care less if the gospel is taken to the lost, but most saints rejoice greatly
at the news of every soul won, regardless of who won it. The genuine heart can never be jealous or indifferent to the success of others in winning souls.

**Soul-winning brings joy to the soul won.**

After his baptism the eunuch "went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:39). The joy of discovery and obedience of truth, the release from the guilt of sin, the entering into a new life, and the hope of eternal life all combine to make the moment of conversion a source of incomparable rejoicing! No wonder Solomon said, "he that winneth souls is wise" (Pro. 11:30)!

**WE DON’T CARE WHAT GOD WON’T ALLOW WE’RE GONNA PLAY OUR ORGAN ANYHOW**

*Steven D. Cline*

A well-known song that has been adapted to Country, Bluegrass, Pop, and Swing music is entitled *Momma Don’t Allow No Music Playing Round Here*. Each verse is identical to the one preceding it, save that a different instrument is named. To clarify, a line in the song says, "We don’t care what mama won’t allow, we’re gonna play our guitar [or banjo, snare drum, trombone, etc.] anyhow." Those who are familiar with this song know that it is a real toe-tappin’ tune. Of course, it does not say much concerning one’s respect for mon’s authority, does it? "So what if mama doesn’t allow it? Why, we’re gonna do exactly what we want! Who cares what she thinks? We like it, so we’ll do it!"

The rebellious attitude of many in the church toward the use of mechanical instruments of music in praise to God is growing faster than toadstools in a dark and damp cellar. So many brethren are deserting the scriptural position of singing songs of honor to God apart from the instrument (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16) and are now seeking the companionship of denominationalists and digressive who have long been saying, "We don’t care what God won’t allow, we’re gonna play our organ anyhow." Brethren once vigorously, skillfully, unflinchingly, and courageously defended the truth. Currently, however, they seek out their former opponents as their companions, compatriots, cronies, and bosom buddies. They seem to want to fellowship anyone and everyone except their own brethren in the Lord’s church. I wonder what their erstwhile disputation think of our brethren’s new found allegiance to the instrument? Perhaps the denominationalists and digressive are saying "I told you so!" After all, our brethren who at one time adamantly and correctly opposed this innovation of man in worship to God have conceded their position by capitulating to and endorsing those in error.

Jehovah is our Heavenly Father and as such, He is not a mother. Notwithstanding, there is one verse (and one verse only) in the Bible in which God is compared to a mother. In Isaiah 66:13 we read, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." And just like the mother in the song, God has children who rebel against Him, having ceased to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), and having ceased to serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear (Heb. 12:28).

In December 1944, during the Battle of the Bulge, Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe and his American troops were surrounded by the Germans at Bastogne, Belgium. The Nazis demanded his surrender, General McAuliffe’s reply went down in the annals of war history. He said tersely, succinctly, and conclusively, “Nuts!” Many in the denominational world think
that our rejecting the instrument is “one of the most ridiculous assertions and one of the silliest of the church of Christ heresies.” Others have gone out from us (1 John 2:19) and ask that we surrender and accept the instrument for the sake of an ersatz “unity.” Finally, some claim allegiance to the church, but say that we are wrong to oppose the instrument; that instruments are acceptable to God. To all three we give the same classic comment that General McAluliffe delivered to his Fatherland foes: Nuts! Or, as Paul said of the Judaizers, “to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. 2:5).

“We don’t care what God won’t allow, we’re gonna play our organ anyhow.” Really? The bottom line is this: are we going to be trusting sheep and lovingly follow Him, or are we going to be goats, shaking our horns, bleating our protests and butting our heads against His authority? Well, even a casual reading of Matthew 25:31-46 tells us of the two eternal destinies awaiting the sheep and the goats. One had better care what the Lord will not allow. One had better try to bend his own iron-stubborn will to God’s rather than making a flagrant display of “will worship” (Col. 2:23), and in so doing, depart from the living God due to a rebellious and evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12), for God does not allow mechanical instruments to be used in worship of His High and Holy Name in these New Testament days.

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BIBLE PREACHING

B. C. Goodpasture

Many in this generation berate and downgrade the man who preaches the Bible. This is not altogether surprising. Naturally, those who do not believe the Bible and those who undervalue it’s authority do not think well of the preaching of it. But, there are those within the church who have reached the point where they do “not endure sound doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:3). Paul, with inspired prophetic insight predicted that such would happen. Again, men sometimes seem to feel that, considering their vast learning (whether real or imaginary, does not greatly matter), it would be an act of intolable condescension on their part to preach the simple principles of New Testament Christianity. They want something that sounds scholarly and philosophical. Such were not the preachers of apostolic times.

On Pentecost, Peter, an inspired preacher, delivered a great sermon, more than a third of which was composed of quotations from the Old Testament. Paul, in his great speech in Pisidian Antioch, drew heavily upon the same source. He even told where to find one passage he quoted—“the second psalm” (Acts 13:33). Now, they say, such practice is not in “Good taste.” What a pity that Peter, Paul, and Jesus, who frequently referred to portions of the Old Testament (Luke 24:44), did not know this! They were “Bible preachers.”

Times may change; times do change; but the time will never come when the gospel of Christ will be out of date. Methods of preaching and teaching may change; means of transportation may be improved and used, but man’s need for “the truth” that makes men free will not cease. Lost men must hear the truth that saves. It is a crime against God and man not to deliver such truth—the gospel. Preaching which does not reveal to lost men the way of salvation is not what they need. “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread?” (Isa. 55:2).

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Deceased
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, and Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
June 23, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Louis Herrington
June 30, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Tim Lamb

MARK THESE DATES
June 20, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
June 21, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
June 27, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
June 27, 1999–a meeting will be held after the evening service to critique the lectures. Meet in room 1. All members are invited to attend.
June 28, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
June 30, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes. Make plans now to attend and invite others to come with you.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit

PSALM 128:1
“Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.”
IS THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CHURCH

Stephen P. Waller

In studying the Bible one learns that God has ordained several institutions: the home (marriage), the church, and civil government.

In regard to the home, it is the duty of the home to provide food, clothing, shelter, care, protection, comfort, education, training, a Christian atmosphere, and love. It is to help those within it grow spiritually, morally, socially, and emotionally (Luke 2:52). A school (public or private, secular, religious, or Christian) exists as an adjunct of the home to educate children. A Christian school, in particular, exists as an adjunct of the home to educate children in a Christian environment and thus, help parents fulfill, in part, the command in Ephesians 6:1-4. The home can and must teach the Bible to its children.

The New Testament authorizes a three-fold mission of the church, namely: (1) Evangelism (Mark 16:15; Mat. 28:19-20), (2) Edification (teaching which informs and builds up the spiritual body of Christ, Eph. 4:12, 16, 29), and (3) Care of the needy (Jam. 1:27; Gal. 6:10).

The church has not been charged with the responsibility of financially supporting secular education. Nor has the church been charged with the responsibility of supporting a liberal arts program of a Christian school. It is not the authorized task of the church to financially support the Science, Math, Drama, Psychology, Home Economics, Foreign Languages, and Physical Education departments of Christian schools. It may be possible for the church to support one who is a Bible teacher (who teaches Bible only, and nothing else) in such a school. He might be looked upon as one might look upon a mission-
The Christian school, in the proper role as a work of the home, is not a missionary society. It does not do the work of the church and it cannot, for it is not authorized to do so. As a part of the home, it must teach the Bible, though. Such a school is not, and cannot be, an integral part of the church. Why? Look at the definition of the word *integral*. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines it as: “1. Essential or necessary for completeness; constituent. 2. Possessing everything essential; entire.” The Christian school does have a right to exist as a part of the home. But, if every Christian school were to vanish off the face of the earth today, the church would still exist and prosper! The church does not need the Christian school for its existence, edification, completeness, or anything else. The Lord’s church existed long before any Christian school. The school’s connection to the church is that its instructors are Christians, the Bible is taught in it, and a Christian atmosphere is maintained.

A preacher training school, on the other hand, exists solely to train men to preach and women to teach and be Christian workers. Only Bible and Bible-related subjects are taught. This kind of school, under the oversight of an eldership, has the scriptural right to exist and be supported by a church or churches. It is an integral part of the church and helps the church fulfill the obligations found in Matthew 28:20 and 2 Timothy 2:2.

Too many times we have observed that there are those who either do not know or do not care what the work of the home is, or what the work of the church is, and who have no problem mixing up God’s plan of work for each. There are those who think that their local church has a God-given obligation to announce and support every money-making project and activity of a Christian school (grade school, high school, college, or university). It does not. The Christian school is a work of the home, not of the church. The principles that apply to the Christian school here also apply to the Christian Bible camp.

Brethren, we need to go back and read carefully the debates by our brethren who dealt with some aspects of these matters back in the 1950s and 1960s in the anti-cooperation discussions. Men like G. K. Wallace and Guy N. Woods, and others, showed the clear lines of distinction between these institutions.

I had the privilege of attending a Christian high school and a Christian college. I owe much to my family and my teachers in these institutions which, when I attended over 30 years ago, stood for the purity of God’s Word. As much as I am the product of such an environment, I am disappointed that many of the schools have betrayed the trust that our parents and we had in them. And, I am disappointed that some may even look upon the schools with greater awe than they do the Lord’s church.

NOTE: The foregoing article should not be construed as a condemnation of Christian schools per se, nor of the principles upon which Christian schools or Bible camps are established if such is done according to God’s Word. On the contrary, it supports the concept of Christian schools and camps. However, each school and camp must be evaluated individually as to its doctrinal soundness and faithful adherence to the Scriptures in all areas. The majority of the foregoing article was written several months ago in response to questions asked by brethren over the internet.

Jakarta, Indonesia
PRACTICAL ATHEISM

Mike McDaniel

When you think of atheist, you may think of someone you know who does not believe in God such as a neighbor, college professor, or Madeline Murray O’Hair. However, it may be that you know some practical atheists. Practical atheists are those who live as though there is no God! They might profess a belief in the existence of God, but when one considers their lives, it is obvious that God is not a major factor in their thinking or actions. God is left out of their lives.

It is especially easy to leave God out in an age of prosperity and promise. The Israelites were warned just before entering the promised land, concerning the danger of forgetting about God when their houses were full of good things and their stomachs were full (Deu. 6:10-12). In spite of this warning, after they had been in the land for only a relatively short time, they forgot God and left Him out of their lives. In Judges 3:7, “And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.”

Evidently, some of those in James’ day were making the same mistake that Israel made earlier. James wrote, “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” (Jam. 4:13-15). There is no indication in these verses that they were slightly interested in what God might think of their plans. They had carefully planned their business trip to the last detail, but they had left God out of their planning. They had failed to take into account (1) the uncertainty of life (Jam. 4:14; Luke 12:16-21), and (3) the will of God (Jam. 4:15; 1 Cor. 4:19).

As we make life’s decisions, what considerations have top priority: Convenience? Money? A promotion? Personal preference? Are we giving the will of God the foremost consideration? Are we guilty of the same sin? Could it be that you are a practical atheist? Has God been left out of your life? Let us not merely give lip service to God’s existence, but acknowledge His presence and our dependence upon Him in thought, in word, and in deed.

SEVEN WAYS TO GET THINGS DONE

There is not so much a need for more opportunity as there is to see the ones we have.
There is not so much a need for greater ability as there is to utilize the abilities we have.
There is not so much a need for stronger power as there is to tap the power we have.
There is not so much a need for better resources as there is to use the resources we have.
There is not so much a need for superior knowledge as there is to direct the knowledge we have.
There is not so much a need for longer time as there is to seize the time we have.
There is not so much a need for the help of others as there is for the individual will to do.

If we could just learn to do what we can, with what we have, where we are, when we can, then we can be confident that the job will get done.

If there is a decision you need to make or a task you need to do, do not wait for a better time, more help and better opportunities. Do it Now! “Behold, now is the acceptable time” (2 Cor. 6:2).

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Lori Johnson (Joyce Johnson’s daughter). Ray Wilcoxson is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.

READING/INVITATION
June 30, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Tim Lamb
July 7, 1999
Reading: Cliff Carroll
Invitation: Tony Liddell

MARK THESE DATES
June 27, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
June 28, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
June 30, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes. Preston Silcox from Martin, TN, will be teaching the adults class. Make plans now to attend and invite others to come with you.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit

1 TIMOTHY 4:12-13
“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”
MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY: 9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
DEACONS: Henry Born, Elward Brantley, Jerry Caine,
Bill Crowe, Louis Herrington, James Loy,
Richard Parker
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

INTERESTING FACTS
ABOUT THE BIBLE
B. C. Goodpasture

About forty men were engaged in the writing of the Bible during a period of about sixteen hundred years—that is from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 100. These men wrote as the Holy Spirit moved them (2 Pet. 1:21). They wrote not in words of human wisdom, but in words divinely taught (1 Cor. 2:13).

The Bible contains 3,566,480 letters, 773,746 words, 31,102 verses, 1,189 chapters and 66 books. The Old Testament contains 39 books; the New Testament, 27 books. In point of length, the average word of the Bible contains fewer than five letters. What a lesson for the fellow who has a mania for big words! The word Jehovah occurs 6,855 times. The word Lord occurs 1,853 times. The word and occurs 46,277 times, and the word reverend but once (Psa. 111:9). The book of Esther contains ten chapters, but neither the word Lord nor God is to be found in it.

The middle chapter and the shortest are Psalm 117. It contains only two verses. The middle verse of the Bible is Psalm 118:8. The middle book of the Old Testament is Proverbs. The middle chapter of the Old Testament is Job 29. The middle verse of the Old Testament is 2 Chronicles 20:13. The shortest verse in the Old Testament is 1 Chronicles 1:25.

The middle book of the New Testament is 2 Thessalonians. The middle chapter in the New Testament is between Romans 13 and 14. The middle verse in the New Testament is Acts 17:17. The shortest verse in the New Testament, in English, is John 11:35; in Greek, 1 Thessalonians 5:16. The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9; it contains ninety words. The longest word in the Bible is found in Isaiah 8:1. All of the letters of the alphabet, except j, are in Ezra 7:21. The nineteenth chapter of
2 Kings and thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah are nearly identical.

The Old Testament was translated into Greek in Alexandria, Egypt, about 270 B.C. The Bible holds the distinction of being the first printed book; it was first reprinted in 1450. The first Bible printed in this country was in the Indian language in 1663. John Eliot, the so-called “Apostle to the Indians,” made and published this translation. This is the earliest example of the whole Bible translated and printed in a new language for evangelization. The first English Bible printed in this country was in 1782. The first translation of the Bible made in America was printed in 1808. It was the work of Charles Thomson. Alexander Campbell printed the first translation of the New Testament published in America in 1826. It first appeared under the title, Sacred Writings; later, Living Oracles. It was largely a compilation of the works of Doddridge, Macknight, and George Campbell. It is not generally known that Noah Webster, author of the famous Webster’s Dictionary and the Blue-Back Speller, made a translation of the Bible, which he published in 1833. The King James Version of the Bible was published in 1611. The Revised Version of the whole Bible was issued in 1885. The American Standard edition was published in 1901.

Cardinal Hugo divided the Bible into chapters in 1250. Sir Robert Stephens divided the New Testament into verses in 1551. The whole Bible, divided into chapters and verses, first appeared in 1560 in what we know as the Geneva Bible. It was so called because the Reformers in Geneva prepared it. It is also called the Breeches Bible, because Genesis 3:7 is translated: “They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves breeches.” The Bible is the most translated book in the world. It has been translated into more different languages and dialects than any other book that has been written. The Bible continues to be the best seller in the world.

The Bible is the best book in the world. It is the only book that reveals the origin, mission, and destiny of man. It is a textbook on salvation. There is no conflict between the Bible and the facts of science. There may be many conflicts between the Bible and the theories of so-called scientists, and between the facts of science and the theories of so-called “Bible scholars.” Above all things, the Bible should be studied and obeyed and taught.

TELL THE GOSPEL TO A FRIEND!

My friend I stand in judgment now
And feel that you’re partly to blame some how.
On earth I walked with you day by day
And never did you show me the way.
You knew the Lord in truth and glory,
but never did you tell the story.
My knowledge then was very dim,
you could have led me safe to Him.
Though we lived together here on earth,
You never told me of the second birth.
And I know I stand this day condemned.
To me you failed to mention Him.
You taught me many things, that’s true.
I called you friend and trusted you.
But I learned, now that it’s too late,
That you could have helped me from this fate.
We walked by day and talked by night.
You let me live and love and die,
Knowing that I’d never live on high.
Yes, I called you friend in life,
And trusted you through joy and strife.
But coming to this dreadful end,
I cannot now call you my friend.
(Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16)

Author Unknown
Plan now to bring your children and invite your friends to our Family Bible School. We will have classes for all ages (cradle roll through adults). Preston Silcox from Martin, TN, will be teaching the adult class. FBS is a great outreach to those who may not come to our regular services. Come and invite others. Let us all pray and work together to have a great Family Bible School!

“Champions For God”

Monday — Gideon: Champion Of Obedience
Tuesday — Nehemiah: Champion Builder For God
Wednesday — Esther: Champion Of Courage
Thursday — Peter: Champion Of Christian Growth
Friday — Paul: Champion Of Evangelism
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Lillian Hilburn (Marge Williams’ mother), and Emmanett Hughes (Shelby Nall’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
July 7, 1999
Reading: Cliff Carroll
Invitation: Tony Liddell
July 14, 1999
Reading: Brantley Johnson
Invitation: Fred Stancliff

MARK THESE DATES
June 30, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes. Preston Silcox from Martin, TN, will be teaching the adults class. Make plans now to attend and invite others to come with you.
July 5, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
July 11, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
July 12, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
July 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
July 26, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Fruit
AIDS TO REMEMBRANCE

In 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 Paul gave a solemn charge to the church to remember the Lord’s Supper. He said that they were to bring to mind the serious matter of observing this memorial feast. Far too often the real meaning of this part of worship is overlooked or even abused. I want to list some things that will help keep our minds on track as we observe this supper. Please concentrate on each of these things as you partake of this supper commemorating the death of our Savior. As we survey the scenes of Calvary let us observe:

1. **One Lord** (Eph. 4:5). The word Lord emphasizes “ownership.” We truly have been bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:20). Jesus Himself said that He was “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). His death gave us life.

2. **Two Thieves** (Mat. 27:38). Isaiah had prophesied that the Messiah would be “numbered with the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12). The innocent was crucified for the guilty.

3. **Three crosses**. One cross was of rebellion (Luke 23:39); one was the cross of repentance (Luke 23:40); and the other that held our Lord, the cross of redemption (1 Pet. 1:18).

4. **Four parts of His garment** (John 19:23). These men seemed to want a memorial of this event, and of course it was He who was on the cross that should be remembered.

5. **Five wounds**. He was nailed to the cross. Both hands and both feet were held secure by the nails and then His side was pierced (John 19:34).

6. **Six hours** (Mark 15:25-34). Six long hours in agony. Hanging there, suspended between heaven and earth, for such a long period of time. There was darkness for three hours and then He died (Mat. 27:45).

7. **Seven sayings**. (1) “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34); (2) “shalt thou be with me” (Luke
Baby Shower for
Tonya Silcox
July 25, 1999,
4:00 - 5:15 P.M.
in the zone room.
A money tree in lieu of gifts is requested. See Diana Brazell or

THE KING JAMES VERSION
Joseph D. Meador

Although the majestic King James Version of the Bible has come under repeated attack, a summary of the textual evidence demonstrates that this translation of God’s Word is far superior to the numerous would-be translations and versions of today. Yet, the criticism is heard that “the newer versions are more reliable because they use better Greek manuscripts.” Indeed, how do we respond to the sincere critics of the KJV on these grounds?

Are the newer versions really based upon superior Greek manuscripts? A critical examination of the evidence does not yield that conclusion. According to current figures (1992), the Greek manuscript base supporting the Authorized (KJV) Version has some 5,210 textual witnesses (papyrus fragments, uncial and cursive manuscripts and lectionaries). However, the textual witnesses supporting the Western or Nestle/Aland readings number only 45 papyrus fragments, uncial and cursive manuscripts. These 45 texts provide the foundation for all modern critical scholars. Both of these Greek Testaments are based upon the Nestle/Aland text.

According to Kurt Aland there are now some listed 5,225 known Greek manuscripts, about 90% have been found to contain the Traditional text (Textus Receptus). In 1992 that figure was increased to 99% by textual scholar D. A. Waite. He explains that “the vast majority of extant New Testament manuscripts all use the Received Text. This includes about 99% of them, or about 5,210 of the 5,255 manuscripts.”

Accordingly, the Authorized (KJV) Version is in complete agreement with 90% to 99% of the textual evidence, as opposed to the modern versions. Why would anyone knowingly criticize the KJV for its Greek textual base? Indeed, why do so many promote and strongly advocate the modern versions which can only claim a mere 1% to 10% of the actual textual evidence; and what does such a disagreement with the majority of textual witnesses say about the Greek texts upon which these modern versions are founded?

In the marginal notes of most modern versions it is stated in writing that the best and oldest manuscripts omit certain verses or even entire sections of Scripture. We humbly ask: “By what authority?” Indeed, to the modernist, his idea of best is that which only equals from 1% to 10% of the overall textual evidence!
Bellview Church of Christ
Family Bible School
July 19 - 23, 1999
7:00 - 8:30 P.M.

“Champions For God”

Plan now to bring your children and invite your friends to our Family Bible School. We will have classes for all ages (cradle roll through adults). Preston Silcox, who works with the Bethal Church of Christ, Martin, TN, will be teaching the adult class. FBS is a great outreach to those who may not come to our regular services. Come and invite others. Let us all pray and work together to have a great Family Bible School!

“Champions For God”

Monday — Gideon: Champion Of Obedience
Tuesday — Nehemiah: Champion Builder For God
Wednesday — Esther: Champion Of Courage
Thursday — Peter: Champion Of Christian Growth
Friday — Paul: Champion Of Evangelism
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Jerry Lindesmith, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Lillian Hilburn (Marge Williams’ mother), and Angela Bartys (Diana Brazell’s niece).

READING/INVITATION
July 14, 1999
Reading: Brantley Johnson
Invitation: Fred Stancliff
July 21, 1999
Family Bible School

MARK THESE DATES
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes.
July 11, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
July 12, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
July 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
July 26, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

NEW ARRIVAL
Richard and Linda Parker are pleased to announce the birth of their granddaughter, Kristie Ashleigh Thompson, born to Steve and Lee Ann Thompson on July 4, 1999. Kristie weighed 7 lbs. 11 oz. and was 20 and 1/8 inches long. Our congratulations is extended to everyone.
MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
DEACONS: Henry Born, Elward Brantley, Jerry Caine,
Bill Crowe, Louis Herrington, James Loy,
Richard Parker
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

WHAT TO DO DURING WORSHIP SERVICES
Sam Willcut

In James 1:21-22, James gives us a wonderful commentary on what to do during worship services.

James tells us what to do before the worship service: “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness” (Jam. 1:21). When we assemble to worship God, we are to begin by eliminating everything that would hinder or defeat our purpose for assembling with the saints. “Filthiness” is a form of the word that appears in Zechariah 3:3-4 where the reference is to filthy garments. The idea given is one of detestation and abhorrence. We know that God detests and abhors all forms of sin (Isa. 59:1-2; Prov. 6:16-19). Many passages in the New Testament show we are to remove sin from our lives (Col. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:1). Therefore we are to “put away” (ASV) these things from us before we worship God. God in all His holiness is in our presence when we approach Him in worship (Mat. 18:20). We should be holy when we worship as well. Jesus taught this in His sermon on the mount: “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Mat. 5:23-24). For this reason, Paul said, “let a man examine himself” as he partakes of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:28).

James tells us what to do during the worship service: “and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (Jam. 1:21). One of the purposes of assembling for worship is to receive the Word of God. Not only can this be done through our songs (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), but also through the sermon
preached (Acts 20:7). Those who are not singing or paying attention to the words are not receiving the Word of God. Their singing is void, since it must be from the heart through the voice. Hence, their worship is void in the sight of God (John 4:24). We also receive the Word by listening to the preaching of the gospel. Those who fall asleep, write notes to others or simply are not paying attention, are not receiving the Word, making their worship void. There are other things that disturb worship for others. Talking, whispering, and clipping fingernails should not go on. Even getting up to go to the bathroom should not be a habitual problem during the worship service. There are many who can go to the movies and watch a two or three-hour movie without going to the bathroom, but as soon as the preacher begins his sermon, these same people end up distracting others as they cannot motivate themselves to go before worship. I was taught to use the restroom before worship began. Why? Because it can be a distraction to others who are trying to "receive...the engrafted word." Certainly there are those who cannot help it, but let us make sure our motives are pure and our worship is acceptable! Do we not realize the importance of singing and focusing on the sermon, since it "is able to save your souls?"

James tells us what to do after the worship service: “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (Jam. 1:22). We enter the building to worship, we should exit the building to serve. We must make sure we are applying the lessons we learn to become better servants of Christ. Other passages show this to be critical to our salvation (Mat. 7:21; Luke 6:46; Rom. 2:13). Else, as my mother would say, “it is going in one ear, and out the other!” Let us remember these valuable lessons from James to improve our worship for our Lord.

Adamsville, AL

TOO CLOSE TO CALL

At a baseball game once, it was very obvious that the batter was a great big fellow, the catcher was also very large, but the umpire was a very small man.

When the first ball was thrown, the small umpire called out: “Strike one!” The BIG batter turned around and gave the umpire a dirty look. The second ball came and the umpire called: “Ball one!” The BIG catcher turned and stared at the umpire. When the next ball was thrown, the umpire called out: “Two!” Both the catcher and the batter turned, looked at the umpire, and said: “Two what?” The umpire said, “Too close to call!”

We often find ourselves in that predicament in life. Seems as though we constantly strive to please the world. On the other hand, it is easy to say yes, and then in a similar situation with another person to say no. But when in the presence of both, it is difficult to be honest and open about our convictions. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Mat. 6:24).

Author Unknown
Plan now to bring your children and invite your friends to our Family Bible School. We will have classes for all ages (cradle roll through adults). Preston Silcox, who works with the Bethal Church of Christ, Martin, TN, will be teaching the adult class. FBS is a great outreach to those who may not come to our regular services. Come and invite others. Let us all pray and work together to have a great Family Bible School!

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SICK AND SHUT-IN
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READING/INVITATION
July 21, 1999
Family Bible School
July 28, 1999
Reading: David Kelly
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

MARK THESE DATES
July 19-23, 1999–Family Bible School for cradle roll through adult classes. Preston Silcox from Martin, TN, will be teaching the adults class. Make plans now to attend and invite others to come with you.
July 18, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
July 26, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

PSALM 43:1-3
“Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For thou art the God of my strength: why dost thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.”
THE WAY OF THE CROSS LEADS HOME

Lennie Reagan

The cross of Christ is the central theme of the Bible. The Old Testament looks forward to the cross and the New Testament is founded on the cross of Christ. The message of the first century preachers was centered around the cross. Paul told the Corinthians: “But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness” (1 Cor. 1:23).

There are good reasons why the preaching and the teaching of the first century church was centered around the cross. First, the cross of Christ reveals what man is. As a sinner we have transgressed the law of God (1 John 3:4). Our sins have separated us from God; therefore, man stands in need of a Savior. Read what has been divinely written in relationship to Christ and His role: “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Mat. 1:21). In fact Christ said of Himself: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

Second, the cross of Christ reveals what God is like. As we view the cross we are able to behold the matchless love God possesses for mankind. Throughout the Bible we read of God’s great love for the human race. The words of Christ as recorded by John reveals so great a love that God was willing to give His only begotten Son on the cross (John 3:16). Paul states, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). The apostle Peter reveals the love of God for all men in these words: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). The cross shows us the great love that God
has toward all men.

**Third, the cross reveals just how terrible sin is.** When a man, who is guilty of a crime, receives the just penalty for that crime there is a sense of justice which prevails. However, when a Man (Christ), who is innocent, a Man who is not guilty dies for the crimes of others, we can see how awful sin is. As we examine the cross of Christ, we see sinful men killing the innocent Son of God.

How truly sad it is when we fail to understand that the justice of God required the cross. Many will question the necessity of the bloody cross, but the Bible teaches that the cross was necessary in order that sinful mankind, condemned because of sin, might be saved. It is from Paul’s writings that we learn that to some the cross is intellectual foolishness and to others the cross is offensive. In contrast, the child of God views the cross as the revelation of the love, power, and wisdom of God. The cross is at the very heart of the gospel message:

> For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:18-24).

The cross of Christ was necessary for many reasons. **The cross of Christ was necessary because of the nature of God and the nature of sin.** God is absolute goodness, power, holiness, purity, righteousness, and perfection. The prophet Habakkuk said of God: “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil” (Hab. 1:13). Satan and those who follow are evil and sinful. If man is going to be in the presence of God, man will not be sinful (Rev. 21:8).

Another reason the cross of Christ was necessary is that the cross is God’s divine solution for the sin of all men. Without the cross and on the basis of pure justice God would have to destroy man just as He did the unrepentant wicked during the flood of Noah’s day. As God’s grace and Noah’s obedience to the commands of God saved Noah and his family, so the cross of Christ makes salvation available and possible to all who obey God.

**The cross is necessary because Jesus is the Way home.** “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). It was the apostle Peter who declared that salvation is found only in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). If we are going to be saved, we must do it by the means that God has made possible in the cross of Christ. Within the cross we see a mighty paradox in that the cross stands for the judgment of God against sin; it also shows the grace and mercy of God toward all men.

P.O. Box 321, Coldwater, MS 38618

**WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?**

**Jack W. Carter**

Several years ago a very sweet Christian girl told me about a incident with a young man who had been asking to date her.
He was not a member of the church and they just did not have anything in common. She had turned him down twice and now she had said "no" to attending a rock concert with him.

In mock exasperation the young man asked: "What do you do for fun? You don’t dance, you don’t drink alcohol, you don’t attend rock concerts...What do you do for fun?"

Her response was a classic message from all Christians with conviction. She told him: “For fun I get up in the morning without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, and guilty about what I did the night before.” The young man had nothing more to say.

It is true. That is fun! Come to think of it, there are many things in her life that are fun. She is married now to a fine Christian man. They have a little girl and are building an outstanding Christian home together.

She is having fun every day not having to live with the affliction of deep scars and regrets from her past. It is fun getting all prettied up each afternoon to receive a husband home from work, knowing that he will not be stopping off at a local bar for a few drinks with the fellows.

It is fun knowing that while he is away from her, his Christian conduct will not allow infidelity or even flirting. It is fun watching him hold his little girl on his lap with loving protecting arms. It is fun knowing that her little girl will never see her father in a drunken stupor or experimenting with drugs. It is fun living with the assurance that the home will be led by a spiritual leader who will guide each family member toward heaven.

The list of fun things for Christians is endless...*What do you do for fun?*  

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**GOD OR HUMANISM?**

*Al Brown*

Society is fragmented, and it is growing worse all the time. Few people know why, and those who do are ignored for the most part. A few years ago, many thought the implementation of humanistic theories would usher in a veritable utopia. This has not only not occurred, the very opposite is true.

There is more polarity between different classes today than at any time in the last thirty or forty years. Many have a relatively high standard of morality, but the mores of a very large segment of our population have sunk to an all-time low. Few respect any form of authority. Our people are hedonistic (worshippers of pleasure), worldly oriented, and think only of the here and now.

Most people know nothing about humanism. Humanists have been very successful in indoctrinating the leaders of the nation with its principles—from political and judicial authorities to the boards of education and teachers in our schools. The denominational world is saturated with it. And they have done this without revealing to most people the nature and goal of humanism.

Humanism is atheism under a new name. Its goal is to destroy faith in God and His Word. A key principle of humanism is the doctrine that science and education can furnish all man’s needs, so God is superfluous. It may sound good, but it has not worked. If there is no God, man is not accountable for his actions. He has no moral code by which to live. Life is survival of the fittest. Hitler was not immoral; abortion is not immoral. Murder is not wrong if it is done for a good reason, but who can say what a good reason is if there is no standard by which to judge?

This world will not improve until men abandon humanism and return to God in the obedience of faith. Living by his standard is the only way men will ever live in peace (Isa. 2:4).  

*Deceased*
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Tina Foshee, Lou Gafford, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Lillian Hilburn (Marge Williams’ mother), and Angela Bartys (Diana Brazell’s niece).

BAPTIZED
Tony Hall was baptized into Christ on July 6, 1999, while attending Indian Creek Youth Camp. Please keep Tony in your prayers and offer him encouragement.

READING/INVITATION
July 28, 1999
Reading: David Kelly
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
August 4, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Henry Born

MARK THESE DATES
July 26, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 2, 1999—Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 9, 1999—Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 16, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 23, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 30, 1999—Visitation Program Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat
A “PERSONAL” RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST

David P. Brown

Peter declared: “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11). Paul instructed Timothy to “hold fast the form of sound words” (2 Tim. 1:13). He also told Titus to “speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (Tit. 2:1). Is it possible to have a “personal” relationship with Jesus? Is the terminology in our time in harmony with the afore cited Scriptures?

A SUBJECTIVE TERM

If the phrase serving as our title means anything more than assenting to true propositions concerning Jesus, just what more does it mean? We certainly do not find such terminology in the Scriptures. In fact, “A ‘Personal’ Relationship With Christ” is a meaningless phrase. It means anything to anybody. Therefore, its meaning is subjective, i.e., “better felt than told.” This lack of objectivity belies the root and source of the phrase under consideration.

THE HEART IS THE INTELLECT AS WELL AS THE EMOTIONS

Such terminology derives from the “heartfelt religion” that makes an erroneous difference between “the heart” and “the head.” This false concept declares that one must not only believe the gospel with one’s “head,” but also with one’s “heart.” The truth of the matter is found in the inspired statement: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Pro. 23:7). The heart is the head and vice versa. This separation of heart and head is from the deluded imagination of modern secular psychologists, charismatic, and modern theologians. It has no foundation at all in the Bible.

What the modern preachers mean by a
“‘Personal’ Relationship With Christ” is some sort of “warm feeling.” (Never mind that a cup of hot tea would accomplish the same feeling). They promote something **beyond biblical faith** (Rom. 10:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:17). Thus, the terminology of our title is not the wholesome teaching authorized in the verses of our first paragraph.

In looking round about our secular and religious world, also the Lord’s church, we notice all manner of “charismatic” and “modernist” churches. What do they have in common? In one way or another they reject the rational nature of man. Thus, they teach doctrines that really are nothing more than mindless confrontations and emotional experiences that have **nothing** to do with the faith that comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6).

**JUDAS ISCARIOT HAD A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

Just remember, no person could have a closer personal relationship with Christ than the apostles, John, the son of Zebedee, and Judas Iscariot. John was **faithful**; he **believed** and **obeyed the truth** that Christ taught. Judas **did not believe** (have faith) in the truth Jesus taught (John 8:31-32; 2 John 9). What kind of relationship do you have with Christ?

25403 Lancewood; Spring, TX 77373

**IS THE WORD OF GOD ALL SUFFICIENT?**

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

The night that Jesus was betrayed, He told the sorrowing apostles that a Being was to come who would teach them all things (John 14:26). Jesus called the one who would be their guide, “another Comforter” (John 14:16). The term, another, is **allos** which means “another of the same kind.” The Comforter is the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) who is the “Spirit of truth” (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit, since He was another being of the same essence as the Christ but not in the flesh as the Christ was, could not be “received” (**lambano**, taken by force) by the world, since the world could not see Him nor did the world know Him (John 14:16). Therefore, the apostles would not be left **comfortless** (orphans) when Jesus left them, but would have a Guide who would teach them all the truth they would need to establish the church of Christ on earth (John 14:26; Mat. 16:18; 18:18).

The Holy Spirit not only would teach the apostles all truth, but He would be sure not to speak of Himself nor glorify Himself (John 16:13-14). The apostles could later write the following: “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that **pertain** unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Pet. 1:3).

“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:13). “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (2 Cor. 4:7). The inspired apostles, New Testament writers, claimed that they had all truth in earthen vessels. The apostles were walking New Testament writers, who were infallible in their teaching of New Testament truth (1 Cor. 2:16). The early church thus “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42).

The apostles, and two especially chosen men—Mark and Luke—recorded all the truth necessary to establish one as a man of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Peter equated the writings of the inspired apostles with the Scriptures produced by the Old Testament prophets. “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in **both** which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy
prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour” (2 Pet. 3:1-2). Paul also joined the Old Testament and New Testament together as Scripture (1 Tim. 5:18).

Since the Bible record is that written record as given in the first century was and is all-sufficient for life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3) and that Scripture furnishes the man of God completely for all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17), why do men want more than the Bible in matters religious? “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). Some try to limit Hebrews 4:12 to the Christ and not the written Word, but Jesus, Himself, said: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). One cannot separate Jesus from His message nor can one separate the message from the Spirit. In fact, those who try to follow Jesus without following the Bible will be lost. “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

Despite all of the above Bible evidence that the Holy Scriptures are all truth and that they furnish everything needed for true faith in God, some argue that the Scriptures are all sufficient for knowledge but not for understanding and that one needs the direct, literal, supernatural, non-miraculous Holy Spirit in order to understand the Scriptures. However, Peter said that one gets understanding through knowledge (2 Pet. 1:3), and Paul wrote that when one read one could understand (Eph. 3:4). Does anyone really believe that the Holy Spirit could not inspire the writing of a Book that could be understood? Can the reader of this article understand what is written here? Is the writer of this article smarter (I speak as a man) than the Holy Spirit? To argue that the Holy Spirit must activate the Word of God is to dilute the all-sufficiency of that Word that is so plainly taught in the Bible. No one needs more than the Bible in order to go to heaven. One does not need the Koran or Book of Mormon nor any other creed written by man. The written record is all-sufficient.

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He told His apostles to go and make disciples of all nations by teaching them (Mat. 28:18-20). Paul wrote to Timothy and insisted that Timothy teach to others exactly what Timothy had been taught by Paul (2 Tim. 2:2). How could Timothy teach exactly if the Word of God needs extra help to be understood? Should not Timothy have written back to Paul and told him that the Holy Spirit had to help or Timothy could not possibly follow Paul’s command? Christianity is a taught religion and there is no extra help needed beyond preaching the Word of God in order to make disciples and to edify Christians.

Any religious teacher who exalts the Holy Spirit over the Christ is a false teacher (John 16:13-14). Any teaching that negates the all-sufficiency of the Word of God through which the Holy Spirit works (Eph. 3:17) is a false teaching. One so teaching would not plant a garden without seed and one cannot make a Christian without the seed of the kingdom—God’s Holy Word (Luke 8:11).

PROVERBS 3:4-6

“So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Wanda Batten, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), Lillian Hilburn (Marge Williams’ mother), and Angela Bartys (Diana Brazell’s niece).

BAPTIZED
Peggy Watts was baptized into Christ on July 21, 1999. Please keep Peggy in your prayers and offer her encouragement.

RESTORED
Brandon Watts was restored on July 20, 1999. Please keep Brandon in your prayers and offer him encouragement.

READING/INVITATION
August 4, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Henry Born
August 11, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Paul Brantley

MARK THESE DATES
August 1, 1999–Farewell reception for David, Angie, Savannah, and McKenna Kelly after the evening service, in the general purpose building.
August 2, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 9, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat
FATAL EXPOSURE

Carl G. Hecker

A recent ad in a sport’s magazine encourages the use of liquor. It also says a lot about the product’s influence in the lives of those that imbibe. Much more than is really intended.

We all know that alcohol deadens the ability to distinguish between bad behavior and personal morality. Everyone has a moral standard of some kind. The drug of alcohol, though legal to consume, when consumed, often causes illegal conduct. Why? Simply because it works on the mind’s ability to see the difference between what is right and what is wrong.

One of the great social problems of our day is the failure of the American home. Along with it comes all the associated abuses of the mother and child and the violent crime that results. From where do murders, adulteries, fornication, perverted sexual conduct, and the host of related evils come? They come from the corrupted homes of our nation.

Now note the ad (a full page ad with only these words): “We all know that the guys who don’t drink with us are the same guys who protest the swimsuit issue.” (Then follows a small picture of a glass of the identified liquor.)

Anyone in his right mind would protest that shameful treatment of women with such pictures. Who is at fault? Well, some of the fault lies with those who sell poor judgment in bottles!

First, What Is At Stake?

The dignity of the individual is at stake. The beauty and moral purity of womanhood is at stake. The honor and decency of manhood is at stake. The sanctity of the home is at stake.

Because of these obvious considerations, the welfare of our nation is likewise at stake. And the sociologist, the criminologist, the politician
The library has recently added several new books for members of the congregation to check out. Those books are: Life & Lessons Of J. W. McGarvey, by John Waddey (editor); Types And Shadows, by W. Gaddys Roy; Does The Holy Spirit Operate Upon The Heart Of A Saint?, by Curtis A. Cates; The Holy Spirit And The Human Mind, by Ashley S. Johnson; Sounding Brass And Clanging Cymbals, by J. E. Choate and William Woodson; The Witness Of The Spirits, by James W. Zachary; Among The Scholars, by David W. Hester; A Practical Handbook For Singing And Songleading, by Burt Jones; and, Worldliness (24th Annual Bellview Lectures), Michael Hatcher (editor). The following reference books have also been added: The Complete Word Study Old Testament and Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible. Reference books can only be used in the library.

If you are interested in any of these books or any of the others in the library please see the librarian (secretary) to check them out.

all call for a stronger crime bill! “We need stricter laws on gangs, women abusers, and drugs.”

Women are being abused by the little boys that they failed to teach properly in the home. Little boys grow up to honor all women when they come from homes guided by mothers of honor! “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price” (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

No one can rightly expect good, kind, obedient, little boys to become gentle men when they come from the homes of the swimsuit edition. These beautiful young women have allowed themselves to become “things” in the minds and mores of a sordid society. Their greatest reward is the few filthy dollars and a moment of notoriety! All mankind will eventually pay the price (Rom. 6:23)!

The liquor industry is a significant part of the total problem in which our beloved America now finds itself engulfed. When the leaders of our land sit down to attempt a solution, the alcoholic beverage does not contribute to sound thinking. Their minds are soaked in the same substance that gave impetus to the crimes they seek to curb. Yes, we are one of those who vehemently protest the swimsuit issue and the liquor ad, too!

There Has To Be A Better Way!

This generation seems to have accepted that the loose lives of our society are normal. They portray all men as just naturally over-concerned with sexual activities. They indicate this is their total interest in all social life. It is just not true. But who is saying otherwise? Young people are being misled by the media. When they find out, it is always too late.

We remember stopping at a major gas station and going inside to pay our bill. We noticed the walls decorated with these terribly degrading pictures. The response to my complaint, “You have to spice up things around here somehow.”

How about a picture of your mother? Maybe
a nice picture of your wife would be appropriate. A picture of your children would cause any customer to appreciate doing business at such a place. There still is decency among the public. All men are not heels.

There is still respect for women among men, real men! The morals of our country are not as low as Hollywood would have us think! Good people are not the cause of crime.

It is true that the large percentage of those who have obtained notoriety among us, those who get awards, those who are paid huge sums of money to make havoc of all decency and proper conduct are identified with success. But that is not true success. They are a miserable lot. Do not be misled into thinking that those moral degenerates are happy.

We protest the ad, the pictures, and the whole worldly attitude that lie behind the present crisis in our country.

Women don’t give up. The hope of stable families lies with you. Love and respect for you and your place in the destiny of us all, still thrives in the hearts of good men. And more important than even that, you are approved of God!

THE EXTENT OF THE CONFESSION

Bill Jackson

Question: “Is it essential, in a Christian’s confessing faults, to go into great detail, and especially when it might involve others, and to their hurt?”

This calls for judgment, pure and simple. The confessing of faults is scriptural, without question (Jam. 5:16). I do not think, in the case where the details are lurid, or when others might be involved, and bringing them into it is unnecessary and hurtful, that such details are necessary. After all, while it helps, surely, to know the general status of the person—(Has the person not been attending, etc.?)—I, as a Christian, do not have to have a detailed account of the person’s misbehavior to pray for them, for their restoration, etc. And, as to any lurid details, why should I want to know them, and what real purpose does it serve? In general, those who come and who really need to confess faults, state “lack of attendance, or improper exampleship, or sinning in tongue, etc.” Surely that is sufficient. Those who may have personal knowledge of details thus know; those who do not nevertheless have basis for joining their prayers with the penitent one—That’s enough.

Copied

TEEN COMMANDMENTS

1. Do not let your parents down; they brought you up.
2. Choose your companions with care; you become what they are.
3. Be master of your habits or they will master you.
4. Treasure your time; do not spend it; invest it.
5. Stand for something or you will fall for anything.
6. Select only a date who would make a good mate.
7. See what you can do for others; not what they can do for you.
8. Guard your thoughts; what you think, you are.
9. Do not fill up on this world’s crumbs; feed your soul on Living Bread.
10. Give your all to Christ; He gave His all for you.

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Geneave Dean, Ray and Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Angela Bartys (Diana Brazell’s niece).

PLACED MEMBERSHIP
Scot Brazell has placed membership with the Bellview congregation. His address is 854 Valley Ridge Circle; Pensacola, FL 32514. The telephone number is 477-1622. Please update your directories.

READING/INVITATION
August 11, 1999
  Reading: Harold Maxey
  Invitation: Paul Brantley
August 18, 1999
  Reading: Horace Myrick
  Invitation: Jeremy Caine

MARK THESE DATES
August 8, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
August 9, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 30, 1999–Visitation Program Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables

MOVED
Wanda Batten has moved. Her new address is Berryhill Manor; 5544 Swanner Road; Milton, FL 32570. Her telephone number is 623-6550. Please keep Wanda in your prayers.
IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

On the anniversary of their wedding day, a young wife said to her husband, “I have been a very happy woman for a number of years, but if you could do just one thing for me, I would be the happiest woman in the world.” “Well,” her husband said, “I love you, and would do anything for you; what would you have me to do?” She replied, “If you became a Christian, I would be the happiest woman in the world.”

Then her young husband asked, “Are you a Christian?” “Yes, I certainly am,” came her answer.

“Well, I didn’t know it,” he remarked; and then after a pause, he put his astonished wife through a series of questions. “Do you swear?” “No!” “Neither do I,” he said. “Do you get drunk?” “Why do you ask such questions—I certainly do not!” “Well, I don’t either,” he replied.

Then her husband said, “You don’t attend Bible study and worship very often, do you?” “Well, I, uh, no,” she said. “And neither do I,” said her husband. “You never attend the extra activities of the church, do you?” “No...but you know that I don’t have the time to attend them.” “Neither do I,” countered her husband.

“You don’t read your Bible very often, do you?” “No, I’m too busy trying to help you make financial ends meet,” she answered. “You drink a little wine, now and then, do you not?” “Yes” she admitted, “I do too,” he said. “You dance, don’t you?” “Certainly!” she replied indignantly. “There’s no harm in dancing; I love it!” “So do I,” he added. “You have time for social visiting through the week, and for many of the TV programs. You also have time for a ride in the country or some other recreation on Sunday, don’t you?” “Well, yes!” “I do, too!” he answered. “Now,” he responded, “if you will show me the DIFFERENCE between the kind of life you are living and the kind of life I am living, I have no objection to
The above dialogue could well be a conversation between many couples regardless of which was a “church member.” This same conversation could be held between many friends or neighbors, regardless of which is a “Christian.” Can anyone see that Christian distinctiveness in you? If they cannot then is there any difference between being or not being a Christian? God said, “come out from among them, and be ye separate” (2 Cor. 6:17). We are to be “a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Tit. 2:14).  

Author Unknown

styles and our social problems

J. T. McClung

It appears that the clothing designers have some kind of desire to downgrade the lovely women of our world. To say the least, it is degrading for a girl or woman to wear mini skirts, low cut uppers, bikini bathing suits, costumes like the cheerleaders and skaters. Oh, I fully realize that girls and women have become accustomed to these garments to some extent. I also note that many females sit and tug and pull at the hem of their mini skirt trying to cover their hips and thighs, but to no avail. It is evident that most women feel some degree of awareness that they are suggestively dressed.

I am unaware of statistics that would show the number of rapes these garments have contributed to. When a woman walks and her legs show within a very few inches of her pelvic area and it catches the eyes of numbers of men, and I have seen women raise their eyebrows at the sight.

On May 6, 1996, on the news, a man had been arrested for taking pictures of cheerleader girls at a sports event. He took pictures of the girls as they bent forward and showed their crotch. He sold these pictures as pornographic productions. All of us are ready to condemn that man, but can we overlook the fact that the typical costume worn by cheerleaders is a thing that has contributed to thoughts of lust? These costumes, bikini bathing suits, mini skirts, and bosom displaying uppers are making bait of girls and women for rapists and looks of lust.

The costumes worn by women skaters who are in competition are beautiful, but they also contribute to the downgrading of the women in that they become sex objects in the eyes of many other people. How many spectators are watching the feet or face of a woman skater when she is performing on one leg and is holding the other leg high, showing the narrow strip of her costume that goes between her legs?

I am not making accusations against the women who wear mini skirts and these other scanty garments, but I am saying these garments encourage rape and other crimes that are against the girls and women who wear them. This also includes pornography against unsuspecting girls and women.

I know one man who quit passing the Lord’s Supper to the congregation because of the display of women’s legs who wore mini skirts.

Whether you are thrilled to see a woman’s legs up to and including most of her hips when she sits with crossed legs or see her undergarments if her legs are not crossed, or even if you are disgusted with the sight, there is no alternative but to say these garments are making rape and murder victims of far too many innocent girls and women.

I realize I may be criticized for writing this, but I also know people everywhere who take my view when a young girl or woman is found raped, perhaps murdered, and her body dumped in some isolated place.

My point is to spare girls and women of any crime encouraged by the styles they have pushed out to them. Millions of girls and
women are being victimized due to the styles they wear.

How often do men and some women look at a woman who is wearing a dress that comes below her knees with their eyes bulged out like a Boston Bulldog? Clothing like this does not suggest that the women is advertising her body.

Someone is sure to say, “There are not enough rapes due to mini skirts, etc., to condemn the styles.” Will you agree that ONE RAPE IS ONE TOO MANY? If you were a victim would your opinion be for or against these styles?

What we wear truly does say a lot about us. If you are not what your clothing says about you—do you think it is time for a change?

Via “Patterns For Living”
16599 SW Inverurie; Lake Oswego, OR 97035

MORE ON PREACHING
Don Deffenbaugh

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2).

The sacred charge given to ministers of the gospel is to “preach the word.” And no greater responsibility has been given to any man. Preachers have been entrusted with the gospel which is God’s power to save the lost (Rom. 1:16).

Preaching the Word is the work of gospel preachers. But, with the passing of time, the brethren have placed other responsibilities upon them. For example, these men are now expected to fill the pews as well as the pulpit. If the preacher cannot fill the pews he is moved out and another man is moved in who is also expected to fill the pews. Many a preacher who has been asked to leave (fired) by elders has been told that “we have nothing against your preaching.” The reason the elders have nothing against his preaching is because the man was preaching the truth—he just did not fill the pews. This “pew filling” pressure has caused more than one man to abandon the preaching of the gospel for the preaching of the “feel good in our sin” philosophy.

Preaching the Word is the work of gospel preachers, but now they are expected to visit all the sick, shut-ins, newcomers, visitors to services, those in the hospital, the newly married, those who have been married for a long time, those who are having trouble in their marriage, those who are happily married, and everyone in between. If the brethren’s expectations are met, there is no time left to preach the gospel.

Preaching the Word is the work of gospel preachers but now there are ministers of education, involvement, youth, music, family life, etc. It actually came as no surprise to recently learn that a congregation wants a man in office administration, financial oversight and reports, personnel supervision, facility maintenance, public relations, and liaison with elders. With staffs doing everything except preaching the gospel, it is no wonder that we are losing our identity and becoming like the denominations around us.

Preaching the gospel is not only the work of gospel preachers but it is the work of the church (1 Tim. 3:15). We should call both preachers and congregations back to doing the task that God has given to them—preaching the gospel.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Geneave Dean, Martha Wilcoxson, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister), and Angela Barty (Diana Brazell’s niece). Ray Wilcoxson is in the ICU at Baptist Hospital. Tim Lamb will be undergoing medical tests and possible heart surgery this week.

READING/INVITATION
August 18, 1999
Reading: Horace Myrick
Invitation: Jeremy Caine
August 25, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Bill Cline

MARK THESE DATES
August 15, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
August 16, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 23, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 30, 1999–Visitation Program Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. A covered-dish meal will be held before the meeting.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables

ADDRESS CORRECTION
Allen and Diana Brazell’s address should be 854 Valley Ridge Circle; Pensacola, FL 32514. Please make this correction in your directory.
IDOLATRY—
AND MAN’S LOVE
AFFAIR WITH IT

Al Brown

Anyone reading the Old Testament will not get very far before he encounters the problem of idolatry. When Israel was given the Law of Moses, the subject of the first two of the ten commandments was idolatry. Jehovah told them not to make any likeness of anything in heaven, on earth, or under the earth as an object of worship, nor to worship any other gods. Their obedience was short-lived—just over a month (while Moses was still on the mountain receiving the law).

In the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, God repeatedly warned His people about practicing idolatry and what would happen to them if they did. The warning was repeated so often probably think it was excessive. It was not. In spite of the repetition, Israel carried on a long-time love affair with this most despicable of all sins.

Since they were determined to practice idolatry, God allowed them to be oppressed by their heathen neighbors time after time. Jehovah raised up judges to deliver them when they repented. Following their deliverance, they quickly lapsed back into the worship of false gods. Later in their history, God used prophets to warn the nation, but to no avail.

Some of the prophets ridiculed the absurdity of using part of a tree as firewood for warmth or to cook a meal. Then, carving a god out of the remainder and falling down to worship Him at the same time they stubbornly continued the practice of idolatry. Only the complete collapse of the
nation brought an end to Israel’s worship of images.

A more subtle form of idolatry persisted in Israel throughout her long, often-stained history. It was also soundly condemned in the New Testament (Gal. 5:20; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5), indicating that it was a problem in the Lord’s church in the first century. It is still a barrier, standing between man and the one, true God in the twentieth century.

Someone has said, “Whatever your heart clings to and relies upon; that is properly your god.” It need not involve images of wood or stone. Jesus warned us about trying to worship wealth and God at the same time: “where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also...No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Mat. 6:21, 24-25).

Anything that lures us away from our heavenly Father functions as an idol. Whatever supplants Jehovah and obedience to His will as being of first importance in our lives is an idol. Any allegiance that takes precedence over responsibility to God is idolatry. Whatever is of highest priority in our life is the god we worship. Replacing the wisdom of God, revealed in the Scriptures, with the world’s wisdom (including the foolishness of theology) is a form of idolatry God despises. (Read the first four chapters of 1 Corinthians.)

Our highly secularized society is dominated by an almost universal desire for status and image. Such idols come in many different forms. Mammon (wealth), beauty, pleasure, physical health, political correctness, success, and plain old worldliness are some of the deities we worship. Intellectual, cultural, national, or racial superiority can be other gods we worship. Other, more sinister gods in our pantheon are greed and power. Over all of them, reigning like Zeus of old, is the worship of self. Still farther back in the recesses of darkness lurks the source of our estrangement from Jehovah and the true object of our idolatry—our adversary, Satan.

It is easy to see and condemn the idolatry of the Canaanites, Greeks, and Romans—and the nauseating depravity to which it led (Rom. 1:21-32). Our patience with Israel wears thin. It is difficult to understand how these people could be so incredibly gullible and stupid.

They had witnessed marvelous displays of divine power. They had been given the Spirit-inspired Word to guide them in their lives. They had been recipients of God’s endless bounty. Yet, they repeatedly turned from the living God to worship a block of wood.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves the same question (or series of questions) Paul asked the Jews in Romans 2:17-24. At one point, he queried: “Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?” While we seem to have no difficulty finding fault with others, it is not so easy to identify our own. Idolatry can be deceitful. A Christian can practice it and never be aware of what he is doing. It is only by constant vigilance and sincere heart-searching by the light of God’s Word that the Christian can keep himself free from this evil.

Deceased

THE PARABLE OF THE WINGED DUCK

“Behold a hunter went one day to hunt a duck. He had expensive equipment and a good guide. His aim was to kill a duck. About the break of day, lo and behold, a group of ducks came flying over. The hunter took aim and fired. He killed one duck and winged another, yet he shot at the whole group. He knew he only winged one because he heard its squawking.
Visitation Program
Get-Together
August 30 at 6:00 pm

We will be discussing our visitation program. A covered-dish meal will be held before the meeting. All members are encouraged to be there.

Had it not been winged, it would not have squawked.”

“Behold, also a preacher went one day into the pulpit to preach. About 10:30 A.M., lo and behold, a group came to church. The preacher took his text and delivered the shot. He killed the old man of sin in one person because he repented, but he only winged some others. He knew he had only winged some because he heard them squawking. Had they not been winged, they would not have squawked.”

“BEHOLD, WINGED DUCK WILL SQUAWK.”

Author Unknown

NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

Tim Smith

A man is driving down the road, perhaps he is going to work, when he is stopped by a law enforcement officer. The officer points out that the man has just failed to stop at a clearly marked stop sign. The man argues that he has been out for a long time, and that he is tired, busy, and not in the mood to be bothered by stop signs or law enforcement officers, and that he has already stopped at dozens of stop signs and that the officer is totally out of line bothering him with such trivial details as a stop sign. The officer says...

A man is shopping at the local market. He decided to slip some bacon in his coat pocket and walk out of the store. The security guard seizes him at the door and inquires as to why he is stealing the bacon instead of paying for it as he should. The man points out that for many years he has shopped in this store, and that he has always paid in full for all he bought. He further argues that this one time he feels he should get the bacon free based on all his past purchases. He reasons that good customers are hard to come by. The guard says...

A man gets off work and heads toward home. On the way, he decides to stop at another house where another woman (other than his wife) resides. He likes it there and decides to stay. In time, his wife finds him. He reasons that he has been faithful to her for many years, and that now he feels he should be allowed to “play around” for a while. Of course he feels she should continue to care for the children and do his laundry and even cook for him on occasion. The wife says...

A man is standing in judgment. He has wasted all his time on earth in selfish living. He did not attend to the work of the Lord as he should have. He was slack in attendance to the services, did not give as he should, never or seldom studied his Bible, and was altogether undependable for the work of the Lord. The Lord says to him, “Depart...I know thee not.” He argues that he always intended to do right, that he was full of faith and good will, and that there were several others who were worse than himself in life. He further points out that he was awfully busy in life, and that he had to make a living for his family, and what about the quality time he spent with the wife and kids instead of worshiping God? Don’t those things count for anything? The Lord said, “depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mat. 7:21).

1272 Enon Road; Webb, AL 36376

Visitation Program
Get-Together
August 30 at 6:00 pm

We will be discussing our visitation program. A covered-dish meal will be held before the meeting. All members are encouraged to be there.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Geneave Dean, Martha Wilcoxon, Tim Lamb, Agnes Denney (Tina Foshee’s sister). Ray Wilcoxon is in Baptist Hospital ICU (no visitors).

READING/INVITATION
August 25, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Bill Cline
September 1, 1999
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Bill Crowe

MARK THESE DATES
August 23, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
August 30, 1999–Visitation Program Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.
September 12, 1999–Attendance Drive and Dinner on the Grounds, after the morn-ing service. Bring a covered-dish meal.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables

MOVED
Diana McDaniel’s new address is: 5337 Bellamy Street; Pensacola, FL 32503. Her telephone number is 479-4887. Please update your directory.
David and Angie Kelly’s new address is 1429 Ramblewood Road, Apt. #201; Norfolk, VA 23513. Keep the Kelly family in your prayers.
CONVERSION OR HARDNESS OF HEART

David Brown

In admonishing Christians of their responsibility to continue to speak the God-saving truth that they “may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2), the apostle Peter reminds them of how the Jews did not accept Jesus as the only begotten Son of God. Peter declared: “They stumble at the word, being disobedient” (1 Pet. 2:8). We learn from the Greek word translated being disobedient that its meaning is “not to allow oneself to be Persuaded.” (see Thayer or any reputable Greek lexicon). Implied is the fact that man has the power to reject obvious truth. He can close his understanding to adequate evidence if he does not love the truth above everything else (2 Thes. 2:10-12).

When the truth is offered to an honest man in error, one of two things can happen:

(1) He will keep his honesty by giving up his error and embracing the truth, or
(2) He will reject the truth, give up his honesty, and keep his error.

Speaking for God, Isaiah said to Israel: “Come now, and let us reason together” (Isa. 1:18). God created man a rational creature and has never bypassed man’s rationality in seeking to lead and guide him. God does not force Himself upon man against man’s will (Rom. 1:28). If man will not receive the abundant and adequate evidence regarding man’s spiritual needs, God is not going to force it on him. The people in Isaiah’s day were unreasonable and would not accept God’s Word. They simply would not allow themselves to be persuaded (Isa. 6:9-13). Thus, they lost their honesty and retained their error. In the words of Peter:
“They stumble[d] at the word, being disobe-dient.” Hence, Paul’s request to the Thes-salonians that they pray “that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith” (2 Th. 3:2). If you want to become wicked, just stop being rea-sonable. In doing so, you will lose your honesty and harden your heart as you embrace the strong delusion of error.

P. O. 39; Spring, TX 77383

IN MEMORY
Raymond Clyde (Ray)
Wilcoxson
1920-1999
Ray was a native of Oklahoma. He was a Navy Veteran of World War II, after which he resided in Texas, Alabama, and here in Pensacola, Florida. Ray has been a member of the Bellview Church of Christ for 28 years.
Our sincere condolences go out to his grieving widow Martha, his daughter JoAnna Baker, his step-son Johnnie McGuire, as well as to his two brothers and one sister. Ray will be missed by many.

HE PLEASED GOD
Garry Barnes
There is a man named Enoch in the Bible that is a unique person. All that we know about him is found in five verses of the Bible (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5). He was the father of Methuselah, the oldest man to ever live according to the Bible. But, this fact is not what makes him unique.

PARABLE OF THE LIFESAVING STATION
T. O. Wedel
On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks were frequent, a crude little lifesaving station was built. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted crewmen kept a constant watch and vigil over

There are two characteristics that make him stand out. It is said of him that he “walked with God,” and “he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” The only other person that was said to have “walked with God” is Noah (Gen. 6:9). Abraham was called a “Friend of God” (2 Chr. 20:7; Jam. 2:23). David was said to be a “a man after his [God’s] own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). Enoch because he “walked with God” and had the testimony that “he please God” was one of two Bible characters that did not die (Heb. 11:5; Gen. 5:24). Elijah was the other person to not see death (2 Kin. 2:11).

What enables one to walk with God? He must be in agreement with God. Amos 3:3 asks “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” Also, the context of Hebrews tells us Enoch was a man of faith. Verse five begins, “By faith Enoch was translated.” He, by faith, was translated because he walked with (pleased) God. Much may not be said about us in the annuals of man, but how wonderful it will be if it can be said of us: “They had the testimony that they pleased God!” Today we can walk with God spiritually by agreeing with Him in obeying His will. Are you walking with God?

110 Lancashire Dr; Bossier City, LA 71111

P.O. 39; Spring, TX 77383

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Attendance Drive and Dinner on the Grounds
September 12, after the morning service in the general purpose building.
Bring someone to Bible class and the worship service, then stay for the dinner on the grounds. Members will be providing the covered-dish meal.

the sea. With no thought for themselves, they went out day and night, tirelessly searching for any who might need help. Many lives were saved by their devoted efforts. After a while, the station became famous. Some of those who were saved, as well as others in the surrounding area, wanted to become a part of the work. They gave time and money for its support. New boats were bought, additional crews were trained, and the lifesaving station grew. Some of the members of the lifesaving stations became unhappy that the building was so crude and so poorly equipped. They felt that a larger, nicer place would be more appropriate as the first refuge of those saved from the sea. So they replaced the emergency cots with hospital beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Soon the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members to discuss the work and to visit with each other. They continued to remodel and decorate until the station more and more took on the look and character of a club. Fewer members were interested in going out on lifesaving missions, so they hired professional crews to do their work.

One day a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in many boatloads of cold, wet, half-drowned people. They were dirty, bruised, and sick; and some had black or yellow skin. The beautiful new club was terribly messed up, and so the property committee immediately had a shower house built outside the club where shipwreck victims could be cleaned up before coming inside.

At the next meeting there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club’s lifesaving activities altogether, as being unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. Some members insisted on keeping lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that, after all, they were still called a lifesaving station. But those members were voted down and told that if they wanted to save lives they could begin their own station down the coast somewhere.

As the years went by, the new stations gradually faced the same problems the other one had experienced. It, too, became a club, and its lifesaving work became less and less of a priority. The few members who remained dedicated to lifesaving began another station. History continued to repeat itself; and if you visit that coast today you will find a number of exclusive clubs along the shore. Shipwrecks are still frequent in these waters, but most of the people drown.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Geneave Dean, Martha Wilcoxson, Tim Lamb, Dot Dodd, and Dagmar Crosswait (Peggy Watts’ great-grandmother).

READING/INVITATION
September 1, 1999
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Bill Crowe
September 8, 1999
Reading: Michael Wilkes
Invitation: Dale Cunningham

MARK THESE DATES
August 30, 1999–Visitation Program Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building.
September 1, 1999–New Bible Classes will begin.
September 12, 1999–Attendance Drive and Dinner on the Grounds, after the morning service. Bring a covered-dish meal.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables

EPHESIANS 4:5-7
“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”
MEETING TIMES

SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
DEACONS: Henry Born, Elward Brantley, Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Louis Herrington, James Loy, Richard Parker
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

CHRISTIAN ARMY CAMPS

Paul Fisher

Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian during the first century A.D., wrote about the Roman armies and their camps in his book, The Wars of the Jews. In chapter five he described the Roman army camps, how they were set up, and how they were maintained. The Roman army had learned early that confusion alone could defeat the finest of troops. The design of their camps was followed by all their troops all over the empire. This was so that a freshly arriving recruit would know his place of duty though an attack might come on his first night. This design was not only for the benefit of the new recruits, but the familiarity of the design proved reassuring to officers and men alike camped in the most distant, barbarous land.

Christ set up His church in the same way so that no matter where in the world a Christian is, he can benefit from the familiarity of the design of the church. Each congregation is a camp of the army of Christ, and so as to avoid confusion Christ gave it a plan to follow. His plan included not only the organization, but the terms of entrance and worship.

Sadly today, not every congregation that claims to be the Lord’s church and goes by the name church of Christ follows the plan that Christ left. Now when one travels across the state or the country and is on the road on the Lord’s day, he must search carefully for a true congregation in which he can worship. Gone are the days when if the sign in front of the building said, “Church of Christ,” you could feel confident that you would find the familiar worship to God in spirit and truth that you once would have found. Instead, increasingly now you are finding a worship that is foreign to the New Testament plan which Christ gave. Instead of congregational singing as commanded (Col.
NEW BIBLE CLASSES BEGINNING

Bible classes for the summer quarter will begin Wednesday, September 1 and Sunday, September 5. Make plans now to attend these classes.

**Sunday Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults I</th>
<th>Acts I</th>
<th>Louis Herrington</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adults II</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Paul Brantley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults III</td>
<td>Denominational Doctrines</td>
<td>Michael Hatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Converts</td>
<td>Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living</td>
<td>Bill Gallaher</td>
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**Wednesday Schedule**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Adults I</th>
<th>Law II (Numbers &amp; Deuteronomy)</th>
<th>Bill Crowe</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adults II</td>
<td>Joshua</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults III</td>
<td>Judges &amp; Ruth</td>
<td>Michael Hatcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Converts</td>
<td>Studies In Christian Doctrine And Practical Christian Living</td>
<td>Bill Gallaher</td>
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But the medical evidence for the child being a human being is also compelling. Consider the following factual information derived from the book, *The Rites of Life*, by Landrum Shettles, M.D., and David Rorvik (pp. 47-57).

1. Within the first 30 days, “the embryo has already developed a beating heart and put down the foundations of its nervous system, including brain, nerves, and spinal cord. The eyes have begun to develop, as have most of the major organs” (p. 47). All of this has begun to occur even before a woman knows for sure that she is pregnant.

2. During the fifth week “leg and arm buds are becoming prominent” (p. 52); “the jaw has begun to form” (p. 53).

3. During the sixth week bone begins forming”; “the heart becomes more complex as its chambers are completed” (p. 53).

4. During the seventh week “the tongue takes shape, and the stomach assumes its final position. Muscles are strengthening, nerve fiber is rapidly growing” (p. 53); “differentiation is occurring in the sex glands” (p. 54).

5. During the eighth week “the digits of the hands and feet are now well-formed.... The lungs and heart are now in an advanced state of development. Major blood vessels are in permanent place. Taste buds and olfactory apparatus, serving the sense of smell, are present” (p. 54).

6. During the ninth week the face becomes quite “appealing, exhibiting large eyes, button nose, and expressive lips which often as not are sucking a tiny thumb. The internal organs are in place” (p. 54). “Teeth, fingernails, toenails, and hair follicles are all forming. The fetal heartbeat can now be detected through the mother’s abdominal wall by listening through a stethoscope” (p. 55).

7. During the tenth week “palms close into fists if something brushes across them...Bone growth is rapid.”

8. At the end of the twelfth week “the limbs are well-shaped,” and the “rib structure is visible through the skin. The digestive system is complete. Blood is beginning to be produced in the bone marrow” (p. 55).

From this point onward nothing new is formed. The baby begins to grow rapidly and to mature. Is this fetus a human life? The baby has had brain waves that can be measured by an EEG since the sixth week (p. 56).

More importantly, the child has been a unique individual since conception, at which time 23 male chromosomes united with 23 female chromosomes to produce a unique individual with his own distinctive DNA. Medically, as well as biblically, the “fetus” is a human being.

312 Pearl Street; Denton, TX 76201

SPRING SALE

God has no Spring Sales. He never offers spiritual benefits in the bargain basement of the world. This means that to be a spiritual person you have to pay the full price. Most of us have read the price tags as we admired the spiritual character of who were used of God. When we turn the price over, we know the price will be the same—and we really do not want it to change—but somehow we pass up quality spiritual things when we read these familiar prices.

**Prayer.** No truly great work for God has been done without prayer.

**Bible Study.** We do not obtain spiritual knowledge by osmosis. Bible truths are the reward of those who seek diligently.

**Service.** “Present your bodies” nothing less is satisfactory. Christianity is both being and doing.

The price tags are the same as they have always been. There will be no Spring Sales on Spiritual Character. You will just have to pay the full price...or settle for less and live a disappointed life.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, and Dagmar Crosswait (Peggy Watts’ great-grandmother).

READING/INVITATION
September 8, 1999
Reading: Michael Wilkes
Invitation: Dale Cunningham
September 15, 1999
Reading: Ray Williams
Invitation: Ray Dodd

MARK THESE DATES
September 6, 1999–Visitation Group 1 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 12, 1999–Attendance Drive and Dinner on the Grounds, after the morning service. Bring family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and any others to Bible class and worship service. A covered-dish meal will follow the morning service in the general purpose building.
September 12, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 pm, in room 7.
September 13, 1999–Visitation Group 2 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 pm, in room 7.
September 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 26-30, 1999–Gospel meeting at Foley Church of Christ, Foley, AL, with Eddie Whitten preaching. Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6:00 pm; Monday-Thursday: 7:30 pm.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetables
TAKING OUT THE TRASH
2 Chronicles 29
Joel Wheeler

Hezekiah is known by the fact that God added fifteen years to his life. He began to reign as king at the age of twenty-five and ruled for twenty-nine years. He became sick and the prophet told him to get his house in order because he would soon die. Hezekiah prayed to the Lord to spare his life and God answered his prayer by adding fifteen years to it. One of the greatest things that he did was to clean house, that is the House of the Lord.

The first thing that Hezekiah did was open the doors of the House of the Lord and repair it (2 Chr. 29:3). He then called the Levites and the Priest to sanctify themselves and the House of the Lord (2 Chr. 29:4-5). The next thing was to carry the filthiness out of the Holy Place of the Temple. The Temple was in dire need of repair because it had been defiled and polluted by the previous generations. There is a valuable lesson in which we must learn. We must clear the trash from our lives in order to be pleasing to God.

We must clean out Strife. Strife is destructive to the church. James wrote, “For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (Jam. 3:16). No congregation can endure strife. It will quickly destroy it. The cure for a strife infested congregation is to “let each esteem other better than themselves” (Phi. 2:3).

We must clean out Pride. This is not self-respect but arrogance, haughtiness and leads to self-destruction. This kind of pride causes us to be swollen with conceit and look down on others with contempt. “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Pro. 16:18).

We must clean out Complacency. The church at Laodicea had become lukewarm and
complacent in their Christianity. The Lord directed them to be zealous and repent (Rev. 3:14-19). According to the Lord, lukewarmness is sickening (Rev. 3:16).

**We must clean out Greed.** Greed is defined as covetousness which Paul said by inspiration is idolatry (Col. 3:5). Greed was the downfall of Achan, Gehazi, and Judas.

**We must clean out Racism.** God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). Paul wrote, “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him” (Rom. 10:12).

Our lives oftentimes becomes cluttered with the garbage of the world. Hezekiah did the right thing by cleaning out the trash from the temple and making it presentable to God. There is a need to remove the clutter and garbage from our lives in order that we may be presentable before the Lord (Rom. 12:1-2).

**WHY I DO NOT FELLOWSHIP THOSE IN ERROR**

Tim Smith

**DEFINITION OF TERMS**

WHY: The reason, the explanation.
I: Me, Tim Smith, a faithful gospel preacher; faithful to the truth in thought, in word, and in deed.
DO NOT: Refuse to, knowingly, engage in the activity under consideration.
FELLOWSHIP: Participate with, engage jointly in.
THOSE IN ERROR: Specially, in the case at hand, men who preach things other than sound doctrine. Those who have turned to the left and/or the right.

Recently, I was invited to speak in a lectureship with men known to be unsound in doctrine. While I have no ill will toward the one who asked, nor toward any of the speakers personally, I was unable to accept the invitation, and I will not advertise in a positive light the lectureship. The following are my biblical reasons:

1. “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom. 16:17-18).

2. “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? ... the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleane ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1).

Would I not be “unequally yoked together” with those not preaching the truth in accepting such an invitation? What part does a faithful and sound gospel preacher have encouraging and
“going along with” those who preach other things? Could I “come out from among them, and be separate” and accept the invitation? Would I be cleansing myself from filthiness and perfecting holiness by accepting such an invitation?

3. “Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us...And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed” (2 Th. 3:6, 14).

Could I “withdraw myself” from those brethren walking “disorderly” (a term indicating “not in accordance with the truth, in a fashion contrary to principles of truth”), and still appear along side of them? If they are teaching things contrary to the truth concerning church cooperation, fellowship with denominations, and the like, am I at liberty to “walk along with” them? If they refuse to submit to the authority of God as vested in the pen of Paul, may I company them? Will my appearing with them do any thing to call their attention to the sinful course they have pursued in order that they might be led to repent?

4. “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11).

To transgress is to go beyond, and to abide not in the doctrine of Christ is to find authority for one’s teachings outside the doctrine of Christ, which is, incidentally, found on the pages of the Word of God. Given that the men with whom I will not appear have erred on the part of “anti-isim” and “liberalism,” we see that they are “abiding not in the doctrine of Christ,” for the doctrine of Christ authorizes neither “anti-ism” nor “liberalism.” Am I therefore at liberty to jointly participate with them in this effort? Should I do so, I surely exclude from my side God. Not only am I forbidden from appearing with them, but faithful and sound churches are forbidden from having them. False teachers are not to be received, nor are they to be encouraged (bid God speed).

I love the brethren who have invited me, and I love the other speakers who have been invited, but my love is not blind to the truth. The truth forbids faithful servants from fraternizing with those who have left the truth. My prayer is that this matter will be resolved with no sin, but the only way that can happen would be for: (1) The false teachers to repent, or (2) The meeting to be confined to only faithful and sound speakers.

1272 Enon Road; Webb, AL 36376

Attendance Drive and Dinner on the Grounds
September 12, after the morning service
in the general purpose building.
Bring family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to Bible class and the worship service, then stay for the dinner on the grounds. Members will be providing the covered-dish meal.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, and Dagmar Crosswait (Peggy Watts’ great-grandmother).

READING/INVITATION
September 15, 1999
Reading: Ray Williams
Invitation: Ray Dodd
September 22, 1999
Reading: Carl Ayliffe
Invitation: Ray Foshee

MARK THESE DATES
September 12, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 pm, in room 7.
September 13, 1999–Visitation Group 2 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 pm, in room 7.
September 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 26-30, 1999–Gospel meeting at Foley Church of Christ, Foley, AL, with Eddie Whitten preaching. Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6:00 pm; Monday-Thursday: 7:30 pm.
September 27, 1999–Visitation Group 1 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Fruit Juice

ACTS 20:27
“For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”
MEETING TIMES

SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
DEACONS: Henry Born, Elward Brantley, Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Louis Herrington, James Loy, Richard Parker
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

CONCERN...
A NEED TODAY!

Toney L. Smith

The New Testament abounds with lessons from which we can profit concerning the church of our Lord. One of the very best examples we have concerning New Testament Christianity in action and at work is that of the church in Jerusalem. This is the very first congregation established by our Lord upon earth through the apostles (Acts 2). By studying this infant congregation of the Lord’s people, we can learn many principles that should be applied today.

The church in Jerusalem was a church that was concerned. It was concerned in their efforts to do God’s will in all things. That concern was so high, that nothing else really mattered. Great was their concern for apostolic teaching. The Scripture shows that they continued “stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” (Acts 2:42). They were concerned for the fellowship with their brethren, and in their worship of God. Verse 42 states that they “continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

They were concerned with meeting the needs of others. When there was a need, many sold their possessions and gave what they had to those in need. But most outstanding of all was when opposition to the gospel came, and persecution was upon those good brethren because of their unwavering faith in Jesus, they did not give up. They did not wallow in self-pity and despair. They were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the Word (Acts 8:4). They grew in spite of persecution. When they were tested, they withstood the trials. James stated, “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (Jam. 1:3). The church will grow when we stand and pass the test of our faith. And our concern for the truth and one another will add to our strength.

Lessons are of no value unless they are
applied. So, let us notice that the early church grew because they were dedicated to the cause of Christ, and were concerned for the lost. They did not simply offer lip-service, but were doers of that which was good and true (Jam. 1:22). When we just talk about our Christianity, we deceive ourselves and those around us. We think that we serve Christ, but in reality, we serve Satan when we do not act.

Do you want to be a genuine Christian? Do you really want the church to grow? Sometimes the way is hard, but we can be encouraged by Paul: “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phi. 4:13). There will be trials, but there is no life which offers so many blessings and rich rewards. The Lord expects the church to grow. Concern is the way to make it possible. Be concerned for your own soul and for the souls of all mankind. When we really get concerned—just watch the church grow.

If any man will serve Christ, the way is clear. You begin by taking up the cross of submission and obedience to Him. Then repent of your sins, confess Jesus as Lord, and then be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38). It is now that you will be added to the church of Christ (Acts 2:47). You are now to be faithful (Rev. 2:10).

Concern is a vital part of the Christian’s life. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

TO THE ONE-TALENT DISCIPLE

If more Christians in our society were honest with themselves and God they would discover that they have more ability to serve in God’s vineyard than they give themselves credit for. “There are more two-talent and five-talent disciples than will own up to it.

But what about the one-talent disciple? What about the disciple who cannot preach a sermon, teach a class, lead a song, head a committee, organize a function, or open the Bible to teach a lost soul? Jesus knew mankind well: the one-talent disciple will more likely than not squander this talent by burying it (see Mat. 25:14-30).

The church desperately needs your one talent! Do not bury it!

Do you know how to write? Then why not use that talent to drop a note to an elderly sister, ailing brother, new Christian, or teenager who needs encouragement?

Do you know how to cook? Why not bake a plate of cookies for someone who could use a lift?

Do you know how to drive? Why not drive over and visit someone in the hospital or someone who cannot get out much?

Do you know how to use a telephone? Why not use one finger to spend one minute to cheer up one lonely person who would love to know that at least one person cares?

There are too many people in the world and even in the church who need what a one-talent disciple can give. It is a shameful waste to make excuses and bury it. Use your one talent to share God’s love!

Author Unknown

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOUND DOCTRINE

B. J. Clarke

To hear some tell it, sound doctrine is really not all that important in the overall scheme of things. We ought not emphasize it very much. It is Jesus that matters and not doctrine. At least that is the impression many are leaving in their writings. But, is this really in harmony with

“John 13:34

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

501 Evergreen; Dresden, TN 38225
Recently, this author studied carefully Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus. I was amazed at how much emphasis Paul gave to truth versus error. Consider the following evidence and decide for yourself whether or not sound doctrine really matters. Space limitations forbid comprehensive analysis. Open your Bible, read the passages listed and follow along.

1. 1 Timothy 1:3, 10—If sound doctrine is not significant, then why did Paul exhort Timothy as he did?
2. 1 Timothy 1:18-19—Paul pondered sound doctrine in view of eternity and related his concerns to the destructive doctrines of Hymenaeus and Alexander, who through their doctrine shipwrecked the faith of others.
3. 1 Timothy 2:7—I speak the truth and lie not.
4. 1 Timothy 3:1—This is a true saying.
5. 1 Timothy 3:15—The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. Contrast this statement by sarcastically calling them “the truth squad.”
6. 1 Timothy 4:1-6—Paul speaks of the danger of doctrines of devils, speaking lies, the importance of believing and knowing the truth and continuing in good doctrine. This same apostle wrote of the possibility of believing a lie and being damned (2 Thes. 2:9-10; Mat. 15:13-14).
7. 1 Timothy 4:13—Give attendance to doctrine!
8. 1 Timothy 4:16—Take heed to thyself and the doctrine for in doing so you will save both thyself and them that hear thee. Paul couples taking heed to doctrine with salvation. If that is not proof that sound doctrine is a matter of eternal consequence, how else could you prove it?
9. 1 Timothy 6:1—Paul warns those who would blaspheme the doctrine.
10. 1 Timothy 6:3-5—Paul speaks of those who consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. He mentions doctrine and those who are destitute of the truth.
11. 1 Timothy 6:21—Some have erred concerning the faith.
12. 2 Timothy 1:8—Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.
13. 2 Timothy 1:13—Hold fast the form of sound words.
14. 2 Timothy 2:15-18—Paul mentions the word of truth and false teachers who concerning the truth have erred.
15. 2 Timothy 3:7-8—Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They do resist the truth.
16. 2 Timothy 3:10—You have know my doctrine.
17. 2 Timothy 3:16—All Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction.
18. 2 Timothy 4:2-4—Preach the word, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Some will not endure sound doctrine. Some will turn their ears away from the truth (cf., Acts 7:51ff).
19. 2 Timothy 4:14-15—Alexander did evil by withstanding apostolic doctrine.
20. Titus 1:1—Acknowledging truth which is after godliness.
21. Titus 2:1—Speak the things which befit sound doctrine!
22. Titus 2:7-8—In doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, and sound speech.
23. Titus 2:15—Speak, rebuke, exhort with all authority.
24. Titus 3:9-10—How to deal with a heretic. If a study of these verses has not convinced you of the importance of sound doctrine, then I honestly do not know what could. Let us unashamedly, uncompromisingly, and everlastingly preach sound doctrine.

P.O. Box 128; Southaven, MS 38671
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Dagmar Crosswait (Peggy Watts’ great-grandmother), Pauline Hatcher (Michael Hatcher’s grandmother), and Wanda Thorpe.

BAPTIZED/RESTORED
Joshua Wilkes was baptized into Christ on September 8, 1999. Please keep him in your prayers and offer him encouragement.
Geneave Dean and Dale Cunningham were restored to Christ on September 12, 1999. Please keep them in your prayers.

READING/INVITATION
September 22, 1999
Reading: Carl Ayliffe
Invitation: Ray Foshee

September 29, 1999
Reading: Elward Brantley
Invitation: Louis Herrington

MARK THESE DATES
September 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 pm, in room 7.
September 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 will meet at 7:00 pm, in the zone room.
September 26-30, 1999–Gospel meeting at Foley Church of Christ, Foley, AL, with Eddie Whitten preaching. Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6:00 pm; Monday-Thursday: 7:30 pm.
September 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Fruit Juice
WHY PEOPLE QUIT

Dub McClish

Ever since the church began there have been those who became part of it, but who failed to remain faithful. I am sure that there are some reasons with which I am not familiar. However, I have heard several in the third of a century I have preached. In hopes that these might prevent someone from dropping out, I want to discuss a few of them.

Because of guilt. When one knows he is not living during the week as Christ teaches he should feel guilty and ashamed when he comes into his Bible class or into the worship assembly. His guilt and shame leave him with two choices: He can confess and repent of his sin (Jam. 5:16), or he can continue in sin. One who continues in sin will not long remain faithful in attendance where his sin is going to be taught and preached against. Such a person feels more and more out of place and eventually quits. Of course, quitting the church does not remove the guilt; it only removes one of the constant reminders of it. Many take this route.

Because they dislike someone. It may be the preacher, an elder, a teacher—it is usually someone in a leadership role. We all have enough faults to be unlikeable to someone else (e.g., I do not like the behavior of those who quit because they do not like someone). Guess what? You do not have to like every member of the church to be a Christian! God must dislike even the best of us often, but He still loves us and seeks the best for us. So, we can dislike one another at times, as long as we still love one another enough to seek the good of each other. Quitting the church (thus losing your soul) is a high price to pay because you do not like someone (Eph. 4:32).

Because there are too many hypocrites. I suppose all Christians (including preachers) have been hypocrites (at least, inconsistent) at
times. It is impossible to perfectly live up to the message we preach. Sometimes we fail. The one who charges, “There are too many hypocrites,” is himself hypocritical once in a while! I do not defend hypocrisy, but which is worse, to continue to assemble faithfully and work with other imperfect saints, knowing that one’s own life is not perfect or to drop out and not even make an effort? Besides, the presence of one or a hundred hypocrites has nothing to do with my relationship to God unless I let it. Do you come to the assembly to judge your brethren (Mat. 7:1-2), or to worship (John 4:24)?

Many other “reasons” are observable, but they all stem from letting selfish pride get out of hand. When selfishness drops out, the quitter will drop back in!

A LIFE OF ABSOLUTE NEWNESS
Roger Johnson

Paul’s poignant statement in 2 Corinthians 5:17 graphically describes the life of a Christian: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” The expression “in Christ” sums up as briefly and profoundly as possible the inexhaustible significance of man’s redemption. The apostle describes that redemption in absolute terms as a “new creature.” The Christian life is not our old, failing, sinning life at all. The old man of sin and corruption is destroyed and all things are become new.

Our standing before God is a new one, for now we are forgiven and justified (Acts 13:38-39). Before becoming a Christian we were dead in our sins (Eph. 2:1), separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2), having no hope (Eph. 2:12). Because of the renewal provided by Christ, we have access unto God’s throne of grace (Heb. 4:16).

We enter into God’s presence in worship and praise by a new and living way (Heb. 10:20). The veil of the tabernacle and temple prevented man’s accessibility into the presence of God, but upon Jesus’ death the veil was rent and man was allowed the privilege of coming before God in the “new and living way” provided by Christ.

We are given a new command to love one another even as Christ loved us (John 13:34). This love is the “most excellent way” (1 Cor. 12:31) which is so vital to the spiritual life of any person. Jesus’ death on the cross exemplified the selfless love that Christians ought to possess for one another.

We received a new name—“Christian” (Acts 11:26). This new name indicates the one to whom we give our allegiance and love.

We feed on new food—the spiritual milk of God’s Word (1 Pet. 2:2). We are to feed upon it; be governed by it; and be taught from it. The husks of human opinion are tasteless and unsatisfying.

SUMMERTIME, TRIPS, VACATIONS—AND MY CONTRIBUTION

We say something along these lines each year, and still feel it is needful. Some brethren, we know, do not think seriously about church membership, and consequently do not think seriously about their giving, and about responsibilities in the home congregation. We would make these points in this regard:

1. I may be visiting Timbuktu, but my membership is back home.
2. I may be visiting Timbuktu, but the
Timbuktu church and elders did not plan their work with me and my contribution in mind, but the home congregation and elders did.

3. I may be visiting Timbuktu, but I have little or no knowledge of their work, and no responsibilities toward their yearly program.

4. There is no way that the home congregation and elders can plan for the year’s work based on the variables of families in-and-out, here-and-gone, if I am not supportive of the work each and every week.

5. I need to give at home, and I need to give at home each and every week with the only exception being those years when there are 53 Sundays in a year—and then I give 53 times!

6. Oh, yes, while visiting Timbuktu, let me give something there, too, over-and-beyond my regular contribution at home (1 Cor. 16:2); if I can afford the vacation, with all the attendant extra expenses, then I can afford a little more for the Lord that week!

Author Unknown

CAN ONE BE A GOOD CHRISTIAN AND NOT BE A PART OF ANY CHURCH?

Marvin Rickett

Many people pose this question. Not a few are actually trying to make their way to heaven and not be a member of any church. They wish to just live an individual, autonomous “Christian” life. They may keep the ten commandments, abstain from any really evil practices, donate to some good charities, be good family members and good citizens; but are not part of any church. May they by this obtain the favor of God and eternal life?

It is readily conceded that one may be a good Christian and not be a part of any denomination. If fact, the Lord never authorized, nor approved of, anyone being a member of a denomination. The Lord never required that one be a member of a denomination. That is a far cry from admitting that one can be a good Christian and not be a part of any church. The Lord’s church is not a denomination. The one who is a Christian will be a part of the Lord’s church (Mat. 16:18). If he is not a member of the Lord’s church, he is not a Christian in any sense. The Lord adds all the saved to His church (Acts 2:47). The saved are the only ones who are Christians.

Perhaps the confusion which prompts this question is caused by a misunderstanding of what the church is. Many view the church as a kind of social club, an organization to hand out food from the pantry to anyone who asks and to pay rent and utility bills for those who get themselves into a bind. They see it as a group of fallible (even hypocritical) people whom one may voluntarily choose to associate with, or he may choose not to. They see that it makes demands of its members and places obligations on them of which they desire to be free.

They fail to see the church as the Bible pictures it: the blood-bought body of the saved (Acts 20:38; Eph. 5:23), the object of Christ’s love (Eph. 5:25), a part of God’s eternal purpose (Eph. 3:10-11), the product of God’s planning and inseparably tied into God’s scheme of redemption (Eph. 1:22-23). The church is the Lord’s doing, not a mere association of claimants who follow Christ based on human wisdom.

Apart from the church, one’s spiritual vitality will wither and die. He just will not thrive and live. Even with the faults which are invariably found in some church members, the church is still necessary for anyone who lives a Christian life.

PO Box 159; Bay, AR 72411
SICK AND SHUT-IN

Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Lorraine Stephen (Iris Gallaher’s sister), and Wanda Thorpe.

SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Sarah Martin and her family in the death of her grandfather, William Martin, on September 13, 1999. Please keep Sarah and her family in your prayers.

READING/INVITATION

September 29, 1999
Reading: Elward Brantley
Invitation: Louis Herrington

October 6, 1999
Reading: Jerry Caine
Invitation: Tim Lamb

MARK THESE DATES

September 26-30, 1999–Gospel meeting at Foley Church of Christ, Foley, AL, with Eddie Whitten preaching. Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6:00 pm; Monday–Thursday: 7:30 pm.

September 29, 1999–Visitation Group 1 will meet after the evening service.

September 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing.

November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED

Fruit Juice
Noah A. Hackworth

Parenting

Every child born into this world deserves an attractive, warm, friendly, loving classroom where he or she can get a “grip on life.” This classroom is the home. A well-adjusted, knowledgeable, patient, good-natured teacher should be the instructor in this classroom. This teacher should be the parent. This is not always the way it is, but it is always the way God would have it. The young, formative years are the time to teach the important, basic lessons of life. These things include:

- **Values.** The ultimate worth of people and things must first be taught in the home. If they are not taught here they may never be taught anywhere! Children must learn that people are more important than things. A failure on the part of parents to distinguish between people and things may be the reason why so many young people grow up wanting to accumulate things instead of helping people.

- **Responsibilities.** Parents are the ones to begin teaching responsibilities. Young people are doomed to failure if they have to wait until they enter a “formal classroom” to learn about responsibility. Children have to be taught that they will be held to account for certain things. Every young person needs to be assigned a job at home and be held accountable for it. Parents are going to fail if they do not take the lead. Children do not manage the home, parents do. Who pays the bills and provides the food and shelter has to be established early in life. If these things are not taught by the parent, the children will not go and do likewise. Dependability is of the utmost importance in the development of character. It is heartbreaking to have our children grow up and leave home not being ready to face life.

- **Discipline.** Our children really want to be told what to do and how to act as they are growing up. It is unfortunate to have them think manners are
some kind of disease. They have to learn how to take disappointment and face pain and that adversity is part of every person’s life. Children have to be admonished (Eph. 6:4). To admonish literally means “a putting in mind.” This process involves “training by word whether of encouragement, or, if necessary, by reproof or remonstrance” (Vine). It must be remembered, however, that our children need to be trained not by word only, but also by act.

Appreciation. It fills the hearts of parents with gladness to see their children display appreciation. Thankfulness for who we are and what we have has almost become obsolete in many homes today. Too much is taken for granted. To stop, identify, and reflect upon our blessings are among the things sorely needed by us all, and the process is a part of parenthood. Children simply cannot be deprived of the knowledge of appreciation. Appreciation is giving, not just receiving (Col. 3:15). So many children today are unloved. They really do not know what love is, because they never see it displayed in the home. When love is replaced by “feuding,” “fussing,” and “fighting,” the results will be exactly what we expect them to be—catastrophic. Infants feel love very quickly, and they respond to it. Among our greatest needs is love, and some of the most successful people in life are those who were shown love, when they were children (1 Cor. 13).

PARENTS AND PROVERBS 22:6

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” The orthodox view of this passage is that if the child becomes a Christian as a result of parental teaching, then when child is old he will never depart from the faith. If the child does depart from the faith, then the parent has failed and is to blame for the child’s behavior. It is freely conceded that this could happen. The child may become a Christian while under the direct influence of the parent, then fall away from the faith at a later time and it could be that the parent would have to shoulder the responsibility. But this may not be what this passage is teaching at all. This writer grew up under this kind of teaching, not from my parents, but from the teaching of the more seasoned members of the church.

The Bible says we must all give account of ourselves (Rom. 14:12). Our children must act wisely on their own. We as parents cannot always make decisions for them. They must learn to make decisions, and learn to make the right ones, or suffer the consequences. But what does this passage teach? It is more reasonable to think that a child who is trained or brought up according to his natural instincts will continue to follow that for which he is best suited. If a person’s natural talent is more artistic than mechanical, it would probably be a mistake to expect him to become an automobile mechanic. It is affirmed by some that the “training” of this passage involves laying the groundwork of character, the installation of principle. It is also believed that this passage obligates parents to train their children in harmony with their natural disposition and character. If this is done, it is far less likely that the child will abandon his natural calling. Proverbs 22:6 is still true: “Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

THE GLORIOUS CHURCH

The book of Ephesians sets forth the church as the fullness of God (1:22-23), and reconciled all men to God in it (2:13-16). The church of Christ is glorious. This fact is clearly seen in a number of things.

1. It is Purchased with a glorious price. It is bought with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; Eph.
Bellview Church of Christ
Gospel Meeting with Ken Willis
October 24-29, 1999

Ken Willis began preaching in 1960 during his freshman year at Freed-Hardeman College. Upon graduation he spent eight years in mission work in the mountains of North Carolina. In 1971, he and his family moved to Singapore to teach at Four Seas College of Bible and Missions while awaiting visas for work in Malaysia. In the fall of 1971, the Willis’ moved to Malacca, Malaysia, to pioneer a congregation in that city. In 1974, they began a congregation in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. In late 1975, the Islamic government of Malaysia refused to grant any further visas. However, the Willis’ have returned several times on tourist visas preaching a month each time. For the past three years they have also worked in Bible training schools in India.

In addition to mission work in North Carolina and Asia, Ken preached at Pinellas Park, Florida, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and is currently in his seventh year with the church in Morrison, Tennessee. He has also preached in New Zealand, Fiji, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, India, and the Bahamas. Ken is married to the former, Clyde Ann Fitzpatrick, and they have two children: Melodee Lynn (Willis) Nash, and Christopher Willis.

1:7). Paul said in Colossians 1:13-14; “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

2. The glorious blessings in it. Man is redeemed and reconciled to God in the church. “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph. 2:16). Only in the church can men be reconciled to God. This comes by obedience (Acts 2:38-47) and then as we go through life we confess and repent of sins (Jam. 5:16).

3. The church has a glorious destiny. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God” (1 Cor. 15:24). Ephesians 5:23 says that Christ is the “saviour of the body,” which is the church (Col. 1:18). Heaven is our destiny, if we obey the gospel of Christ and live therein. The church is from the mind of God.

“Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat. 16:18).

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Marge Williams, Lorraine Stephen (Iris Gallaher’s sister), Wanda Thorpe, and Betty Cripps (Joyce Johnson’s cousin).

READING/INVITATION
October 6, 1999
Reading: Jerry Caine
Invitation: Tim Lamb
October 13, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Tony Liddell

MARK THESE DATES
September 29, 1999–Visitation Group 1 will meet after the evening service.
September 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing.
October 4, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
October 10, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
October 11, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
October 17, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
October 18, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
October 24-29, 1999–Gospel meeting with Ken Willis.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Fruit Juice

MATTHEW 11:28
“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
SPORTING activities have been called the “second religion of America.” Whether it is the fast-break, jump-shooting, and three-point shots, or the 55-yard pass for the winning touchdown on the last play of the game, we love sports. It can be ice hockey, hockey with horses (smart horses!), or air hockey, but it still has its appeal. Hunting moose, elk, deer, quail, doves, and varmints (the four-legged kind) attracts a following. Fishing holes are sometimes marked by nearly as many fishers as fish! They can be the “boy’s of summer” that win it in the last inning or the sprinter who wins by a nose, but it makes no difference. Football, fishing, baseball, hunting, basketball, track—our society loves it all.

But may we call a “time-out” to consider a fairly common problem in light of the Bible? Sporting activities are not the “second religion” of some—the collective sporting activities are the first. Some view sports as of the utmost value and concern in life. Sadly, even some professing to be children of the Heavenly Father implicitly tell the God of heaven to “take a number (other than 1) and we’ll be right with you after the last quarter.” Sports can be wholesome and good for all that participate and all that watch, but Christians are careful to keep such activities in their proper place. The Bible still teaches: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mat. 6:33) and, “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).

One brother, speaking to a preacher’s workshop, “justified” his son missing Wednesday evening services to play ball by asking the teen if
he would be willing, come next week, to attend both the regular Wednesday evening services and an area gospel meeting on Thursday night. Of course, if it is right for a Christian to miss worship assemblies and Bible classes to participate in sports, does it not follow that all the brethren can miss the assemblies and classes to watch the ball game or other sporting activity? And if we can “make up” forsaken assemblies like a student makes up a missed test, then surely we can justify shutting down the church building during the hottest part of the summer and do “make-up” work every night for a few weeks this autumn.

Bible classes and worship assemblies in some places take a tremendous nose dive in attendance because some brethren worship at the idol of sporting activities. We cannot help but wonder though, how important our sporting achievements will seem when we stand before God in judgment. Suddenly, the “one that got away” will be insignificant, and the state championship trophy will provide as much comfort as a crash helmet to a kamikaze pilot.

I like sporting activities. I have played in organized sports. I try to instruct my children in sports. But when the church is working, meeting in assemblies, or studying in the Bible classes, my family needs to be present—learning the Bible, promoting the work, exhorting the brethren, and receiving exhortation. “For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (1 Tim. 4:8).

P.O. Box 39; Spring, TX 77383

REPUTATION

Al Brown

The wise man wrote: “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Pro. 22:1). This should be a matter of concern to every child of God. One’s reputation has never been a primary goal for many people of the world, but a few years ago, it was a more attractive quality than it is today. It seems the last decade of the twentieth century has seen Americans at their lowest level of concern for reputation and integrity, along with many other good character traits.

Humanism is responsible for this in large measure. Humanism is a polite term for atheism. It has saturated every aspect of our society. Its principle of situation ethics has destroyed the desire for a good reputation and the character that goes with it. When there is no definitive standard of right and wrong; when the present situation determines whether a thing is good or evil; reputation itself becomes a relative thing. This is only one more indication of the moral decay which has become so common in our land that even ungodly hosts of TV talk shows are getting concerned about it.

God’s moral standard never changes. Guarding one’s reputation is just as important and necessary as it was in biblical times. A man was not qualified to be a servant in the Lord’s church unless he had a good reputation (Acts 6:3). It was (and is) necessary for an elder to have a good reputation (1 Tim. 3:2, 7). One reasons why Cornelius was a godly man was his good reputation (Acts 10:22). The same was true of Ananias (Acts 22:12). Widows were to have a good reputation (1 Tim 5:10), and so are we (Rom. 12:17).

People of the world may fail in many ways to live by the moral standard of our God, but we Christians must not allow this to influence what we are. We are to be made over into the image of the one who created us (Col. 3:10). If we intend to live with our Father eternally, a good reputation is not optional.

Deceased

HEBREWS 10:25

“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.”
Ken Willis began preaching in 1960 during his freshman year at Freed-Hardeman College. Upon graduation he spent eight years in mission work in the mountains of North Carolina. In 1971, he and his family moved to Singapore to teach at Four Seas College of Bible and Missions while awaiting visas for work in Malaysia. In the fall of 1971, the Willis’ moved to Malacca, Malaysia, to pioneer a congregation in that city. In 1974, they began a congregation in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. In late 1975, the Islamic government of Malaysia refused to grant any further visas. However, the Willis’ have returned several times on tourist visas preaching a month each time. For the past three years they have also worked in Bible training schools in India.

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Theme: *In Times Like These...*

Sunday Bible Class: “We Need Encouragement”
Sunday A.M. Worship: “Finding Lost Sheep”
Sunday P.M. Worship: “We Need Stability”
Monday Evening: “Within Thine Own Power”
Tuesday Evening: “From The Launching To The Landing”
Wednesday Evening: “The Half Has Not Been Told”
Thursday Evening: “The Value Of Your Soul”
Friday Evening: “Turn Or Burn”
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, and Lorraine Stephen (Iris Gallaher’s sister).

READING/INVITATION
October 13, 1999
Reading: Allen Brazell
Invitation: Tony Liddell
October 20, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

MARK THESE DATES
October 10, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
October 11, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
October 17, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
October 18, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
October 31, 1999–Daylight Saving Time begins at 2:00 A.M. Set your clocks back one hour before going to bed Saturday night.
November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

ADDRESS CHANGE
Geneave Dean’s new address is: 518 West Hannah; Pensacola, FL 32534. Her telephone number is 471-1900. Please update your directory.
STAND UP, STAND UP FOR JESUS

Toney L. Smith

More and more I am seeing and hearing things that scare me. Fear, you may say, should not be part of the Christian’s vocabulary. And certainly there are things which must not and should not frighten His children. But, I am still scared for the way in which many want to carry the church of Christ. People are not wanting to “make waves,” “ruffle feathers,” or to “rock the boat.” In plain language they do not want to truly make known their religious convictions or to defend the truth contained in God’s Words. I have heard some men say, “Just sit tight and it will pass.” Are we living in a generation which has no convictions? Has the time come when God’s people had just as soon watch error grow as they had to “earnestly contend for the faith”? This attitude will clearly define one’s true convictions.

I am not referring to those who have already defected and taken on the identity of denominationalism and apostasy. I refer to those who want to be identified as sound, but do precious little to help in holding “the pattern of good works” (Tit. 2:6-7), and who will not stand with others who are “contending for the faith” (Jude 3). What will be accomplished with these who are “closet Christians”? My brethren we are in great need of those who will truthfully stand up for Jesus.

When Christians are confronted with error or even the hint of error, they must stand up for Jesus. If error is to be met and defeated it will only be done when God’s people take a sure and firm stand for truth. In fact, that is what is demanded of the saints (1 Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10; Heb. 12:1-2). Godly preachers and elders must never say that the conscience is the guide, because the conscience will always be wrong unless it is not educated (Acts 23:1; Heb. 10:22;
Five Things you Can Do to make this a better congregation

Tyler Young

1. Contact someone in the congregation who may need encouragement and invite them into your home or drop by to pay them a visit. Go out of your way to express words of concern to those who may be struggling through trials or who need to be more faithful.

2. Visit or call one or more of our shut-ins or members who are presently ill.

3. Take some tracts to distribute to those with whom you work or come into contact on a regular basis. This can be a good way to bring up a discussion of salvation, invite someone to services, or offer to study the Bible with someone.

4. Pray for the congregation; petition the Father on behalf of the preacher, elders, deacons, and members of the body, that we might all grow and be faithful in all things. Pray that you might be able to contribute more to the work of the church here.

5. Make it a point to attend every assembly of the church you possibly can—Sunday morning Bible class and worship, Sunday evening worship, as well as Wednesday evening Bible study, and our Gospel Meeting.

It seems that some have stuck their heads in the sand, as if the problem will go away. I suppose it is a sense of security for some, but in fact, it is not safe at all. Really it is an indication of being afraid or uncaring. Either way it is ungodly! Who would want to go into battle with these who are willing to just “live and let live”? When men are content to let error run rampant through this brotherhood, are we not just as guilty as the false teacher? Read 2 John 9-11 and see the sin of not standing against ungodly issues, practices, and those who espouse and spread them. Who will stand up for Jesus?

517 Gaylord Rd; Dresden, TN 38225
Ken Willis began preaching in 1960 during his freshman year at Freed-Hardeman College. Upon graduation he spent eight years in mission work in the mountains of North Carolina. In 1971, he and his family moved to Singapore to teach at Four Seas College of Bible and Missions while awaiting visas for work in Malaysia. In the fall of 1971, the Willis’ moved to Malacca, Malaysia, to pioneer a congregation in that city. In 1974, they began a congregation in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. In late 1975, the Islamic government of Malaysia refused to grant any further visas. However, the Willis’ have returned several times on tourist visas preaching a month each time. For the past three years they have also worked in Bible training schools in India.

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Theme: *In Times Like These...*

- **Sunday Bible Class:** “We Need Encouragement”
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- **Friday Evening:** “Turn Or Burn”
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Marge Williams, Ella Hammac, and Lorraine Stephen (Iris Gallaher’s sister). Bill Gallaher is scheduled for medical tests this week.

READING/INVITATION
October 20, 1999
Reading: Bill Gallaher
Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
October 27, 1999
Gospel Meeting

MARK THESE DATES
October 17, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
October 18, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

ADDRESS CHANGE
Jay and Carmen Worley’s new address is 8990 North Davis Highway, Apt. 119; Pensacola, FL 32514. Their telephone numbers remain the same. Please update your directory.

DAY LIGHT SAVING TIME
Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00 A.M. on October 31. Set your clocks back one hour before going to bed Saturday night.
WHAT IS LEGALISM?
Paul M. Wilmoth

Faithfulness, by definition, is obedient trust and loyal compliance with the stipulations of God’s will (Jam. 2:17-26). Righteousness, by definition, is right doing. “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34-35). “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous” (1 John 3:7). Being righteous obviously involves obedience to the commands of God. Does teaching that one must be righteous make one a “legalist”?

Outcries of legalism serve as convenient smoke screens to justify departure from the faith and to cloak innovations in the Lord’s church. Sure, we must avoid legalism; but, who would have dreamed that the day would come when God’s demand for obedience would be set aside as legalism? Let us not mistake legalism for loving obedience to the will of God in every aspect of our life. Let us carefully do all things which are commanded (Luke 17:10) recalling Jesus’ words in Luke 6:46: “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Let us stake our lives upon the grace of God—but then let us love Him—remembering: “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:3). Brethren, that is not legalism. That is love! Abraham understood this (Gen. 26:5; Heb. 11:8), Moses understood it (Deu. 4:2; 6:17; 11:8, 13, 22, 27-28), Joshua understood it (Jos. 23:6; 24:14-15), John understood it (1 John 5:3). Paul understood it (Rom. 6:16-17).

Legalism is not:
1. Seeing a bear behind every tree except your own.
2. Defending the faith.
3. Contending earnestly for the faith (Jude 3).
4. Warning of false teachers and/or false doctrine.

5. “Marking” those who cause division with their false teaching and/or practices (Rom. 16:17).

6. “Writing up” (as they call it) a brother who is promoting a doctrine, publicly and/or in print, which will send his soul and those who accept his teaching to hell.

7. Teaching the distinctiveness of the Lord’s church; the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins; and the necessity for authority in everything we say and do.

Brethren, we must have balance in our preaching and in our lives. But, we must be sure that it is the balance of the New Testament. Let us avoid any extremes in our teaching; but, let us not be deterred by the false charges of legalism just because we teach that one must lovingly obey all of God’s commandments. Satan has many devices. This is only one of them.

WHAT DO YOUR ACTIONS SHOW ABOUT YOU?

Al Brown

A person always shows what rules his heart by his actions. Jesus said, “Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Mat. 7:20). This rule is so true that we will be judged by what we say and do (Mat. 12:37; 2 Cor. 5:10).

James did not teach that people are saved by meritorious works. He charged them: “If you have faith, show it!” (Jam. 2:20, 26). Do you really believe the Bible is inspired and the only reliable guide (2 Tim. 3:16-17)? If so, how do you show it? Is your entire life Bible oriented? Do you study the Word diligently? Do you obey God’s will? The only acceptable faith is based on God’s Word (Rom. 10:17), and it always expresses itself in action.

Some challenge almost everything revealed in God’s Word. They don’t have the courage to publicly flaunt it or ridicule it. Their attack is more subtle. They claim to be loyal; then pervert it, ignore it, or explain it away instead of obeying it. They often claim they love God, but their love is of the carnal variety (1 John 2:15-16). Paul described them: “They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Tit. 1:16).

Those who are truly faithful try their best to live by it, because they devoutly believe it is perfect, practical, and the best thing we can do (Rom. 12:2b). They are not continually looking for loopholes in God’s will. Rather, they look for ways to please Him. In which group does your actions place you?

Deceased

THE PREACHER’S WIFE

The preacher’s wife! No one but another preacher’s wife could know what that really means. We have come to depend upon them so much, we preachers, have sometimes failed to let them know how much we really appreciate them.

Few women would be willing to give up having a house of their own to be taken all over the country and housed in every description of a house from a two-bedroom shanty to a rambling bungalow, without too serious a complaint. Few women that is, but the preacher’s wife!

Few women are willing to part with their husbands for long evenings week after week when there are things that should be tended to at home. Few women that is, but the preacher’s wife!

Really, preacher, how many women in the congregation where you serve would put up with the things you know that your wife is accepting as part of her job? Few women are married to
their husband’s job, but a preacher’s wife certainly is. But then, it is not a job to her; it is a way of life, a life centered in Christ, a life steeped in service, a life moved by love.

If anyone knows what sacrificial living is, it is the preacher’s wife. If it were not for the dedication of preacher’s wives, the preachers would only be half preachers.

One of the greatest assets a preacher has is that woman who is willing to share with him the sorrows and blessings of being the preacher’s wife.

The preacher’s wife is not an unfeeling machine that is programmed to respond in just the right way every time the right button is pushed. She is a living, breathing human being with the same feelings and emotions of every other woman...She has the same aspirations and weaknesses of all women. Maybe that is what makes her so unusual; she is willing to give up that security that women need in a stable home to share her life with the man who feels compelled
to preach the gospel. She is willing to share her husband with others who need his help even if it means that she will suffer. (What preacher’s wife has not experienced this time and again?)

Young wives with small children pay the greatest price for their husband’s work; but they do it knowing the importance of his work.

The preacher’s wife serves, not in the limelight, but in the shadows. The preacher gets the pat on the back for the good he has done, but she, well...whoever notices service done in silence.

If ever there is a special place in heaven, it will not be for the preachers of the world. It will be for those good women who have followed in their husbands’ shadows, who had held his hand when he cried, and bolstered him when he was weak, that woman who knows his shortcomings and his strengths, that woman called the preacher’s wife.

Author Unknown
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Marge Williams, Hairston Brantley, and Wilford Lott (Diana McDaniels’ father).

READING/INVITATION
October 27, 1999
Gospel Meeting
November 3, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Henry Born

MARK THESE DATES
November 2, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1 at 5:00 P.M.
November 8, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

DAY LIGHT SAVING TIME
Daylight Saving Time ends at 2:00 A.M. on October 31. Set your clocks back one hour before going to bed Saturday night.
TRUE REPENTANCE
Garry Stanton

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31).

Repentance has been called the “hardest command.” Noah preached for 120 years but no one repented. The prophets preached repentance without many results. Even Jesus had a hard time getting people to repent (Mat. 11:20-24). Pride is the reason repentance is such a difficult command. The first step to repentance is to admit doing wrong; to say, “I have sinned.”

True repentance is a change of mind about sin. Christians must have a new mind, the mind of Christ, a mind that avoids sin as Jesus avoided sin (Phi. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:22). Repentance is a change of mind about sin which results in a change of action or life.

True repentance is to stop doing wrong and to begin doing what is right. It is to stop serving Satan and begin serving God. Repentance is to stop going in the wrong direction and start going in the right direction. Jesus told Paul that his job would be to go to the Gentiles and “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me” (Acts 26:18). This is true repentance.

True repentance is the result of godly sorrow. A person might well change his mind about sin and change his life for the better and begin to serve God, but unless his repentance is motivated by godly sorrow it is not true repentance that leads to salvation. Paul wrote, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh...” (2 Cor. 7:10).
Men’s Class will begin on Sunday, November 7, at 5:00 P.M., in room 1. Make plans now to attend. This class will continue to meet the first Sunday of every month.

Men’s Class will begin on Sunday, November 7, at 5:00 P.M., in room 1. Make plans now to attend. This class will continue to meet the first Sunday of every month.

OUR CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT THAT DENOMINATIONALISM IS SINFUL

Garland Elkins

Let it be plainly stated that no matter who belongs to a denomination now, no one belonged to one in the first century. Paul was accused of being a member of a sect (Acts 24:5). He denied that he belonged to a sect and stated that such a false charge could not be proved (Acts 24:13-14). There is nothing denominational in Christianity. People must be more than and different from Christians to be in a denomination. It is very clear, therefore, that one can be a Christian without belonging to a denomination. Denominationalism rest upon division. Let us note: (1) Denominationalism repudiates the teaching of the apostles. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). (2) Denominationalism makes unbelievers. Jesus prayed, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me” (John 17:20-21). Unity among believers would cause others to believe while division would and does produce unbelievers. (3) Denominationalism teaches that God contradicts Himself. Paul wrote, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Cor. 14:33). All Christians of the first century were members of the same church, and it took all of them to constitute the church. There were no denominations in the first century, and there...
would be none now if no one preached or practiced anything but that which was preached and practiced in the first century. To go to heaven one must repudiate all churches except the church of the New Testament which includes all Christians. In other words, the church of the Lord consists of all of the saved of earth. The same process which makes one a child of God constitutes him a member of the Lord’s church (Acts 2:22-47). Most all religious people readily admit that a man can be a Christian and go to heaven without belonging to a denomination. It is a fact that no matter who belongs to a denomination now, nobody belonged to one in the first century! (Acts 2:38-47; Eph. 4:32; Jam. 3:14-16).

John W. Moore

A FEW OTHER QUESTIONS

One of life’s biggest questions involves choosing a mate. Young people beginning to look for that special person with whom to share the grace of life, are often confused and uncertain about whom to marry. In most cases, our society has done a terrible job in training and educating young people in the realm of marriage selection. Instead of a well-reasoned decision-making process, young people often plunge into matrimony, based on a pseudo-Hollywood envisionment of romance and sexual attraction. Yes, pure attraction and romantic gestures of dinner, flowers, and a moonlit walk in the park are important. However, before one even begins to pop or answer the question of all questions, there are a few other questions that desperately need to be answered. Christians should seek answers to the following before plans of marriage are considered.

1. Is this person personally committed to being a disciple of Christ (Luke 9:23; Mat. 20:24-39)?
2. Will this person help me put the kingdom first (Mat. 6:33)?
3. Will this person be the kind of mother/father I would want for my future children (Tit. 2; Eph. 6:4; Pro. 31:10-31)?
4. Does this person think of others before himself/herself (Phi. 2:3-4)? Is this person kind, thoughtful, considerate, compassionate, and courteous (Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 3:8)?
5. Will this person help me fulfill my role and responsibilities as a Christian husband or wife (Eph. 5:21-33; Tit. 2; 1 Pet. 3:1-7)?
6. Will this person help me grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and encourage me in developing my talents in the Lord’s work (2 Pet. 3:1, 8)?
7. Is this person complete in the understanding of and convicted about God’s law of marriage and divorce (Mat. 5:32; Mal. 2:16)?
8. Do we really love each other? Or, is our attraction to one another based only on the physical (2 Tim. 2:22)?
9. Is this person genuinely interested in me, or in the idea of marriage (1 Cor. 13:4-6)?
10. Are we willing to leave both father and mother and cleave only to each other until death (Mat. 19:5-6)?

Finally, marriage and the home must be Christ-centered. In sum, marriage is for those who first love God and, genuinely and biblically, love one another.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Marge Williams, Karen Hatcher, and Wilford Lott (Diana McDaniels’ father).

READING/INVITATION
November 3, 1999
Reading: Andrew Hatcher
Invitation: Henry Born
November 10, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Paul Brantley

MARK THESE DATES
November 1, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1.
November 8, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Vegetable and Chicken Soups

NEW ADDRESS
David and Angie Kelly’s new address is: 3817 Buckhorn Place; Virginia Beach, VA 23456. Their telephone number is: 757-416-0922. Please write to them.
LEADERSHIP

Noah A. Hackworth

For some years now, in the opinion of many, we have been facing a leadership crisis, and this suggests that we need training for leadership just as badly as we need training for preachers, perhaps even more. Leadership involves more than management of congregational business. It requires vision (what needs to be done), planning (the most effective and efficient methods), and direction (the path to follow in the accomplishment of God’s work). If this principle is not recognized, any man could involve himself in doing “that which was right in his own eyes” (Jud. 17:6). The church for which Christ died is not the work of man but of God. Though we mortals are the instruments through which God’s work is effected (Phi. 2:13), it must not be forgotten that the Cause in which we labor transcends all earthly matters in importance. Leadership, in this case, involves church government.

Does the New Testament prescribe a form of church government? Protestants have commonly answered this question in the negative; and having thus answered, they have proceeded to adopt such forms of government as best suited the tastes and judgment of the various parties into which they are divided... Does the New Testament authorize any government at all in the Church? If it does not, then every form of church government is a usurpation. It is altogether certain that without divine authority no human being has a right to control the religious conduct of his neighbor, especially to cut off his neighbor from church membership or the privileges pertaining thereto...If it be ascertained that any church government at all is divinely authorized, it must appear as a very singular circumstance if the form of that government is not indicated. Moreover, if we find a form of government in existence in the apostolic
churches, we shall demand something above mere human judgment or experience to justify an abandonment of it, or even a modification of it. No less that the same authority which institutes can abolish. What God had instituted he alone may abolish. He may abolish by his word, or he may abolish providentially by finally rendering impossible what had once been instituted but unless it is abolished every divine appointment must stand forever.

Primary Considerations

First, the business of God upon this earth involves the local congregation, which is the highest unit of organization recognized by God. Consequently, we need to be reminded about the way God wants the local church to be managed. Congregations of the church are not governed by a plutocracy, aristocracy, oligarchy, or democracy. The New Testament teaches that the affairs of God’s kingdom are to be administered with the greatest degree of effectiveness (cf., Mat. 25:26; Rom. 12:11; Heb. 6:11-12), which is the eldership. This means, therefore, that God’s plan necessitates the appointment of elders to rule, deacons to serve, preachers to preach, and members to congregate and work. This arrangement, if faithfully followed, would revolutionize the Cause of Christ. The New Testament teaches that the work of a gospel preacher is gospel preaching (2 Tim. 4:1-2), and the majority of things expected from gospel preachers should be done by elders, deacons, and members of the church in general.

Second, the eldership of the church is a matter of doctrine because it involves divine arrangement and instruction. Elders must not (they cannot with divine approval) be appointed or disposed of by the will of the majority.

Third, leadership necessitates the training and nurturing of future leaders. The plan for adoption and execution of leadership is presented in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The eldership, not majority rule, is desirable because:

1. An eldership prevents those who are possibly uninformed, worldly, or unfaithful from being given as much voice as those with knowledge and experience.

2. An eldership prevents preachers from bowing to the wishes of the majority. Paul refused to do this. In Galatians 1:10, he said, “For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? or am I striving to please men? if I were still pleasing men, I should not be a servant of Christ.”

3. An eldership, assuming it to be scriptural, is the solution to congregational chaos as well as the ultimate path to peace and growth. Surely no one would disagree that elders are made not born. Years of training and nurturing are required if God’s instructions are followed. Elders are a special class of servants. May their tribe increase.

Men’s Class will begin on Sunday, November 7, at 5:00 P.M., in room 1. Make plans now to attend. This class will continue to meet the first Sunday of every month.
Such an ad tells what one seeks in a partner. Sometimes our requirements are materialistic, silly and applied so strictly that they eliminate potential growth. Some people, when looking for a church, apply the same shallow requirements. Notice, for example, some of the things which are sought by many modern “church shoppers.”

The church must have a very big, beautiful building. The early Christians did not have buildings at all. Sometimes they met in the Jewish temple (Acts 2:46), and other times they met in homes of Christians (Rom. 16:5), or in upper rooms (Acts 20:8).

The church must have a lot of members. Numbers are fine, but the real question is, are they walking in truth? (2 John 4).

The preacher must have a college degree, wear expensive suits, be an eloquent, entertaining speaker and have a nice house and car. Jesus and other Bible preachers were humble, poor men who loved the truth and placed no emphasis on material things (Mat. 3:4; 18:20; Luke 12:15; Acts 3:1-6; 4:13).

The church must not teach against other churches. Jesus attacked the false teaching of His day (Mat. 15:1-9), and so did the great apostle Paul (Acts 15:1-2; 14:1-7; 18:4).

The church must have some programs for me and my children. The only activities the church had in New Testament times was the preaching and teaching of the Word of God and benevolence (Eph. 3:8-10; 1 Tim. 3:15). There was no recreational or secular program, for Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36).

The church must accept me as saved in whatever way I think I was saved, and accept me as a member. The Bible teaches that there is salvation in no one else but Jesus (Acts 4:12). The Lord has but one church (Mat. 16:18; Eph. 4:4). He teaches that salvation can only be found in His church (Eph. 5:23; Acts 2:47). All other churches will be rooted up because there is no salvation in them (Mat. 15:13-14). That being the case, people must be baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins in order for the Lord to add them to His body—the church (Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 12:13). One cannot be in a false church and become saved while he is in it. All who come out of man-made churches must be baptized into the Lord’s body—His church (Gal. 3:27; Acts 22:16).

There are many things that people expect from “their church.” However, people have no right to place demands upon the Lord. What we should do is search with an open mind and an open Bible. Let the Bible teach us and show us what the church should be as God designed it. Rather than place undue emphasis on material things like the building and big crowds, we should notice more important things. What do they teach? Do they use God’s Word as the source of their authority, or do they do what “feels good” and appeals to the crowd? Do they worship like the New Testament Christians worshiped? Do they wear the name of Christ rather than the name of some man or doctrine? What about the lives of those professing Christians who meet there? Are they holy and righteous people living as God commands?

It is sad to see people reject a church—possibly throwing their souls away—because that congregation may have a small number of people present. Remember that Jesus taught that the way to heaven is strait and narrow and few would find it (Mat. 7:13-14). Perhaps we should be more concerned when there are crowds of satisfied people. Jesus Himself was not a “popular” preacher!

If a person wants to be saved, he will search the New Testament and examine the church he reads about there. He will seek for truth, not for silly things that mean nothing as far as the Lord is concerned.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Marge Williams, Wilford Lott (Diana McDaniels’ father).

READING/INVITATION
November 10, 1999
Reading: Daniel Hatcher
Invitation: Paul Brantley
November 17, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Jeremy Caine

MARK THESE DATES
November 7, 1999–Men’s Class will start meeting the first Sunday of the month in room 1.
November 8, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 29, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

NEW ADDRESS
Brandon and Peggy Watts’ new address is: 1508 Constellation Place, Apt. 401; Woodbridge, VA 22191. Their telephone number is 703-490-3099 and their e-mail address is bpwatts@gateway.net. Please write to them.
YOUR PARENTS CAN’T MAKE YOU GO TO HEAVEN!

Ted J. Clarke

One of the great miseries of being a child is being made to do things that a child does not want to do. Eating vegetables, brushing teeth, taking a bath, cleaning one’s room, going to Aunt June’s, going to school, and attending worship and Bible study—these all rate high on the list of things that many children and teens do not like to do at some time or another.

As children get a little older, they often can see the wisdom of brushing their teeth or taking a bath, and many like going to school, even if it is not because they see the value of a good education. But mom and dad still make them attend church, even after they have complained sufficiently to be exempted from visiting Aunt June. Why?

Some young people feel as though they have finally broken the stranglehold parents exercise over children, when they have removed themselves from parental power to make them “go to church.” A number of older people have told me that the reason they do not attend church in their adult years is because their parents made them go when they were children. Most of us know that that really is not the reason. The real reason is usually twofold. One, the young person was not made to see the need for attending worship or Bible study as he/she was growing up, or the child simply did not learn the lessons taught. Two, the young person has grown and has made a decision that he/she does not need God in his/her life. His or her interests are simply not served by religion. In the growing process, the wisdom of eating properly, bathing, and brushing teeth made sense, but somehow God was never
made as real or as sensible as those other things? Why?

Well, growing up is more than just getting older and bigger. There is a maturing of the mind (a true sense of seeking for answers to the questions of “Where did I come from? Why am I here? And What happens to me when I die?”). When we really grow up, there is a soberness about life’s purpose and death’s destiny with those who are truly mature. Young people, it is not easy to force yourselves to think about these things, but it is important that you do so!

As you develop and grow older, try to grow in wisdom, too. When you become a young adult, your parents cannot make you do many things they used to do. You may be happy about that, but your parents did what they thought was best for you (Heb. 12:9-11). There is one final thing that your parents cannot make you do! They cannot make you go to heaven. As much as they would like to see you there, they can not make you go! That is a decision that you get to make. You do not have to go, if you do not want to go.

Romans 14:12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 say that “each one of us will give an account of himself or herself.” Growing up is great! The adult life is a continuing education. There are tremendous and eternal consequences attached to the decisions you make as young adults! Use your freedom to make the right choices for yourselves.

P.O. Box 251; Mammoth Springs, AR 72554

THE CHRISTIAN’S ARMOR

Ken Chumbley

Many times in Scripture, the Christian life is referred to as a warfare. The Christian is called upon to stand and fight.

However, we need to note that the conflict in which Christians are engaged is not a physical battle. It is spiritual warfare. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Eph. 6:12). The Christian’s fight is against Satan and his cohorts, against the forces of evil and wickedness.

In Ephesians 6, the apostle Paul describes the armor that the Christian is to wear in this conflict. Each part of the armor is a vital necessity to the Christian so he will be able to stand in the conflict and fight against wickedness. Let us notice each piece of this armor, as Paul describes it, and see the use that it has.

“Loins girt about with truth.” The apostle Paul uses the illustration of the Roman soldier and his armor to describe the armor of the Christian. The belt, or girdle, was the part of the armor which one wore for support. By it, the remainder of the armor was likely held in place. The Truth is the support and mainstay of the Christian upon which all else must rest.

“Having on the breastplate of righteousness.” The breastplate was a frontal piece of armor which protected the vital parts of the body from attack. Righteousness, or purity of life, in the child of God will preserve him from the assaults of Satan. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Mat. 5:8).

“Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” When the feet of the soldier were shod, it would indicate that he was ready to move, to go forward. The child of God is ever ready to advance, not with the weapons of carnal warfare, but with the gospel of peace; that is, the gospel that brings peace between God and man, and ultimately between man and man.

“Taking the shield of faith.” The shield was a large round oblong structure usually held by straps to the left arm. It was a defense weapon which could be raised to repel the fiery darts which were hurled in battle. With faith as his shield, the Christian is enabled to resist the temptations with which he is constantly tried. An
unfaltering trust in God will lead the child of God to find the “way of escape” which has been promised (1 Cor. 10:13).

“Take the helmet of salvation.” The helmet prevented serious blows or cuts to the head. The hope of salvation will sustain the saint in times of great spiritual conflict. He must learn to look beyond the present to “the recompence of the reward” (Heb. 11:26).

“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” The Spirit helps God’s child, but in so doing, he operates through his instrument, the Word of God. The sword is both an offensive and a defensive weapon. It was by the Word of God that Jesus overcame temptation (Mat. 4), and it is by the Word of God that the saint is able to meet and oppose error (1 Tim. 4:1-4).

We see the Christian clothed with the whole armor of God, but how does he wear it? Not boastfully or pretentiously, but “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit” (Eph. 6:18). This soldier prays as he goes out to battle: he prays not only for himself, but for all saints. Christians need the prayers of their brothers and sisters in Christ so they might be able to “Fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12).

1300 Louisville Road; Frankfort, KY 40601

REMEMBER

Tim Smith

When things are not going in the way you wish them to go, nor in the way you think best, remember, “it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23).

When the things you have received are not the things you wanted, remember, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (Jam. 1:17).

When you are depressed with the cares of this life, and you do not think yourself capable of going on, remember, “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phi. 4:7) can be yours.

When you try to live right, but fall victim to sin, remember, the Psalmist declared, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psa. 199:11).

When you feel your temptations are greater than you can bear, and you fear that their weight will soon collapse your supports, remember, “God will not allow you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear.”

When you feel that no man before you has ever carried the kind of load you must carry, remember, Jesus carried His cross to Calvary.

When you think that your contributions of time and effort are useless, and that you can offer nothing to God worth-while, remember, Paul declared that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

When you feel that you are incapable of learning God’s Word, and that you are unable to find the truth you are seeking, remember, Jesus promised, “seek, and ye shall find” (Mat. 7:7).

When you feel that you have no influence on the lives of others, remember, “No man liveth unto himself, and no man dieth to himself...”

When you feel that no one cares for you, remember, Jesus cared enough to die for you.

When you feel that no man loves you, remember, Jesus loved you enough to offer salvation to you.

When you feel that no one is your friend, remember, Jesus said, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14).

When you feel you need guidance, protection, comfort, hope, and consolation, remember, it is “in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

Whatever the need, whatever the problem, remember “who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20) Jesus of Nazareth.

1272 Enon Road; Webb, AL 36376
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, and Tim Lamb.

READING/INVITATION
November 17, 1999
Reading: Howard Johnson
Invitation: Jeremy Caine
November 24, 1999
Reading: Brantley Johnson
Invitation: Bill Cline

MARK THESE DATES
November 14, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 15, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 29, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

LUKE 6:20-22
“And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man’s sake.”
CHRISTIANITY:
A “DAILY” PERSPECTIVE!

Bob Patterson

It does not take long (even for the casual reader of the New Testament) to recognize the importance that is placed upon such terms now, today, or daily! We live in a world that is literally “on the go” twenty-four hours a day! Most of us look at our schedules and calendars, and we find that our lives have become regimented by the demands placed on us at the work place, appointments here, doing this, doing that, going here, traveling there, pick-up this, deliver that, a meeting here, and a deadline there! If we are not extremely careful we can become like the one in James 4:13-15, who takes the approach, “To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.”

Just think for a moment, has life become so routine, planned, and scheduled that we have gotten to the point where we take life for granted? Have we become so involved in this world and what this world has to offer, that we have lost sight of God? When that occurs, what becomes of the thing I treasure (Mat. 6:19-21)? Upon what have I set my affections (Col. 3:21)? What priorities do I find myself pursuing (Mat. 6:33; 1 John 2:15-17)? Do we recognize the dangerous “exchange” which can take place so very quickly which has eternal consequences (Mat. 16:26; Mark 8:36-37)?

Let us just take a few moments to see the emphasis that the New Testament places on daily:
1. Daily we should pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Mat. 6:11).

3. The early church in Jerusalem was characterized in this manner. “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart” (Acts 2:46).

4. The church in Jerusalem was involved in a daily ministration on behalf of the widows. Notice: “And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, ... murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration” (Acts 6:1).

5. Brethren also searched the Scriptures daily! “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

6. Paul taught daily in what we might have been able to call a school of preaching! “But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he [Paul] departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus” (Acts 19:9).

7. Paul’s life was placed in jeopardy daily. “And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily” (1 Cor. 15:30-31).!

8. There was also Paul’s daily care concerning the church. “Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (2 Cor. 11:28).

9. As brethren, we are to exhort each other daily. “But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13).

All you have to do is get out your concordances to find the listing of these references. There can be no doubt about it: *Daily* did, and *daily* does make a difference! Think about this: What would happen if each one of us would grab hold of every opportunity, and *daily* we busied ourselves in prayer, acts of benevolence, study, teaching, exhorting one another, and living an exemplary life before the world?

Let us not get caught up in the “hum-drum” routine of simply existing day to day, but let us present ourselves as “a living sacrifice” unto God (Rom. 12:1) and “do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). May each one of us make Christianity our daily manner of life, and keep our life in proper perspective!

P. O. Box 690; Sapulpa, OK 74067

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**HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?**

You went through an entire song service without even thinking about what you were singing?

You bowed your head and closed your eyes during the prayer but you really did not become involved in it?

You were more interested in when he could finish the sermon than in what he was saying during the sermon?

You allowed some minor noise near you to completely upset you so you could not really worship?

These and many other things often happen, do they not? Why? Here are some of the reasons:

1. Do not come to the services expecting to be entertained; this is not its purpose.

2. Be a participant rather than just a spectator.

3. Prepare yourself mentally when coming to worship. Think about the what and why concerning worship.

4. Resolve that you are going to worship no
matter what others do. There are many events and functions we attend where there are many distractions, but we accept them. We do not condone noise in worship, but let us be determined that it will not keep us from worshipping.

5. Do not think that services have to be conducted differently to be meaningful.

6. Examine your motives for worshipping often. Habit may become the motive.

7. Bring your Bible and run references during the sermon.

8. Take notes during the sermon. The time will pass by faster and you will retain more of the lesson.

9. Make a list of words in the songs which are unfamiliar to you and find their definitions later.

10. Come to services with the positive attitude that it is a privilege and that you will truly worship in spirit and in truth.

Author Unknown

GO, STAND AND SPEAK

Shan Jackson

Persecution had engulfed them. To silence their teaching they are cast into prison. However, the power of their message was the power of God, and His angel opens the prison doors. Their freedom renewed they are told, “Go, stand and speak in the temple” (Acts 5:20).

Contained in this word we find an implied call for Christian courage. They were being called upon to stand, in the face of danger, in a place of opposition, in the very spot of their original arrest, and proclaim “all the words of this life” (Acts 5:20). But this message of life, per their instructions, was not concerning this physical life, rather, the life brought by the Savior (John 10:10). This is the life that touches the soul. This is the life that challenges.

At first opportunity they carry out their mission. They entered the temple “early in the morning” (Acts 5:21) to obey God’s directive. His directive was to teach truth. The truth the Lord died to supply. And there they stood, moved by conscience, to proclaim Christ’s truth on love and salvation, stating, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Brethren, today we have received a similar call for courage and truth. Not directly through God’s angel, but directly through His Word. The call is for courage and heroism. It is a call to “stand and speak.”

But let us regress for a moment and see the story unfold further. The apostles were arrested at Solomon’s porch, and now they have returned and hear: “Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple” (Acts 5:25). No wonder their boldness was noticed.

However, ready for a similar stand should be every Christian. Like a soldier at his post, like a captain on a burning deck, Christians must heroically stand in danger’s face regardless of whether we find themselves on mission soil or at home. In any spot of service, in danger of life, peace, or tranquility, we must stand.

Furthermore, the obedience of these men to God’s Word was literal. They were told to go and speak, and they went and spoke. Literal command, and literal obedience. In the temple, and from house to house they “ceased not to teach and preach” (Acts 5:42).

The place we are told to stand we often call opportunity. Seed-sowers go into the fields. But this stand of obedience, this opportunity, was also a stand of privilege. It provided them the privilege of obeying God and teaching truth. Christian duty enlarges into Christian privilege with each acknowledgment of His command. Sowing the seed allows a view of the harvest, and allows Him to say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant” (Mat. 25:21).

P.O. Box 904; Palacios, TX 77465
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, and Tim Lamb.

READING/INVITATION
November 24, 1999
Reading: Brantley Johnson
Invitation: Bill Cline
December 1, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Bill Crowe

MARK THESE DATES
November 21, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
November 22, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
November 29, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 5, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 6, 1999–Men’s Class will meet at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
December 12, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

NEW ADDRESSES
Ira and Vada Rice’s new address is 3809 Wind Valley Drive; Memphis, TN 38125. Their telephone number is 901-756-2728.
Harold and Jessie Cozad’s new address is Coral Sands Mobile Park; Space 104; Apache Junction, AZ 85220. Their telephone number is 480-380-4012.
DOES DRAMA CONSTITUTE WORSHIP?

Joel Wheeler

Over the course of church history, man has determined to change the way he worships God. We must remember that God has set the standard for worshiping Him. Jesus said, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). It seems that “drama-groups” have woven their way into the worship of many liberal congregations. Many who are not satisfied with God’s instructions for worship, have taken upon themselves to add theatrics to the assembly. Those that promote such, believe they are changing for the better. Should we act out the Scriptures and what would be wrong with doing so?

First, there is no authority in the New Testament for drama neither by example nor command. Whatever is done, must be done by the authority of Christ and the approval of God (John 4:24; Col. 3:17). We read of singing (Eph. 5:19), giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2), praying (Acts 2:42), preaching (Acts 20:7), and the Communion or Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:20-29), but never “drama-worship.” Did Peter, Paul or any of the other apostles act out the crucifixion or ascension—NO!

Second, the purpose of worship is to bring glory to God and not to self. Drama and play acting biblical accounts leads to self-glorification. Men are praised for their acting ability. Theatrical performances are done for self-praise and self-glorification. On several occasions, Jesus condemned the works of men that are done “to be seen of men” (Mat. 6:1; 23:5).

Third, God chose preaching to save the lost and not playing. Paul wrote, “For the
preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). The church is told to “preach the word” which is done for the purpose of reproving, rebuking, exhorting, and convicting (2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 4:12).

In conclusion, “drama groups” and “worship-drama” can only provide entertainment and boost the ego of the “performer.” It is obvious that the liberal element in the church is ignorant of the Scriptures. Both Old and New Testament characters used visual aids to make a point. But, never did the primitive church use drama productions to propagate the gospel. The inventions of men never has the approval of God.

PO Box 714; Foley, AL 36536

LEADING PRAYER
G. D. Boutwell

When one is assigned to lead a prayer during the worship service; or asked to lead prayer at other times, it is a most serious responsibility. Your prayer is to lead the entire audience to approach the throne of grace, of our heavenly Father through our mediator Jesus Christ.

“Jesus saith unto him [Thomas], I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). When leading prayer, the audience must hear the prayer in order to follow it and to become a prayer of unison by the audience. It is the congregational prayer.

1. The leader must speak clearly, distinctly, and into the microphone, or if at a location with no microphone, speak loudly.
2. Advance thought should be given to the wording of the prayer, especially assigned prayers. One should always be prepared to offer on the spot prayer. If one prays often during the course of the day, public prayer comes easily. Be “instant in prayer” (Rom. 12:12).
3. Remember if your prayer is not heard by the audience, you have lost the purpose of leading prayer.
4. Prayers must be addressed to God the Father through Jesus Christ. Not addressed to

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<th>Bible classes for the winter quarter will begin Wednesday, December 1 and Sunday, December 5. Make plans now to attend these classes.</th>
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our Lord. God hath made Jesus both Lord and Christ. “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

5. Lead your brothers and sisters in Christ to God through Christ, your prayer with the congregation; so you must be heard and understood.

A THREE-MINUTE SERMON TO QUITTERS

Now and then, a member of the church is heard to say, “I don’t go to church anymore, because I had some business dealings with a man of the church and he didn’t treat me right.” Or “one of the biggest hypocrites I know goes over there.”

Shame! Shame! What is the matter with you? Do you go to services to worship a man? Of course, in a congregation of this size you will find a few who are not all that they should be... But what has that to do with your citizenship and your worship? You know that the church does not endorse hypocrisy or crookedness on the part of anyone. This is clearly demonstrated in your case. We... is notable to control you, why do you object so loudly and strenuously because it has not always controlled a few others?

The easiest thing in the world is just to quit, but I think you know as well as anyone what the Bible says will happen to quitters. The picture that John saw of the redeemed wearing the white robes and walking the streets of heaven was not a picture of a quitter. They had tribulations a plenty, but they endured in spite of them. They did not quit!

One of these days the shades will be drawn in your room and people will tiptoe and whisper. Then the undertaker will drive up in his funeral car and the preacher will be sent for. Those flashy excuses you have been using will not do you one bit of good when you stand before the judge of all the earth.

(Taken from an article old and yellowed by age—author unknown—yet it stands as wisdom for today.)

Author Unknown

AS FOR ME AND MY FAMILY

A preacher came calling on a man about his soul and was concerned about his salvation. The preacher pleaded with the man to come to Christ, but the man would not budge.

The next Lord’s day when the invitation song was sung, the man responded. Walking down the aisle and clutching the preacher’s hand, the man said, “Preacher, I want to ‘get right’ with God.” He confessed his faith in Christ and was baptized for the remission of his sins. After the service the man told the preacher what made him come to realize the great importance of accepting Christ as Savior.

He said, “Preacher, after you left my home the other evening, my little boy climbed on my lap. He said that he had heard what you said to me. He reached out his chubby little arms, hugged me real lightly, put his mouth up to my ear and whispered, ‘Daddy, we don’t want to be a Christian, do we?’ Preacher, I went upstairs weeping; now realizing the terrible consequences of the example I was setting for my family. That is one reason why I obeyed the Gospel—to get myself right with God so I can help my family to know Him!”

If this applies to you do not wait—get right with God today! The eternal destiny of your child is at stake!

via Elkmont, AL, bulletin
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, and Geneave Dean. Tim Lamb is scheduled for dental surgery on December 15. Charles Williams is in Sacred Heart Hospital (send cards only).

READING/INVITATION
December 1, 1999
Reading: Bryan Loy
Invitation: Bill Crowe
December 8, 1999
Reading: Jim Loy
Invitation: Dale Cunningham

MARK THESE DATES
November 29, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 5, 1999–Men’s Class will meet at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
December 6, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 12, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 13, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 27, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

DIRECTORY
If you haven’t notified the office about any changes in your address in the members’ directory please do so as soon as possible.
TO WHOM DOES THE HONOR BELONG?

Al Macias

As we go through this life, we are tempted to do many things that are not pleasing to the Lord. Sometimes we may get too involved in trying to make money, and more money, and more money. We become so materialistic that we forget about God and our spiritual well-being. Sometimes our problem may be something altogether different, such as the pleasures of this world. We are surrounded by so many pleasures in this world which are contrary to the will of God. From the music to which we sometimes listen, to the television programs that we see, we are so easily tempted to do that which is wrong. But there are still other things that are not so apparent, and before we know it, we find ourselves guilty of doing things that are far from what the Scriptures teach.

It may not be the case that we are guilty of being too materialistic or seeking after the pleasures of this life. No, it may be that the thing which attracts us is the honor man gives to man. I believe that there is nothing wrong in wanting to be admired somewhat, or perhaps to be told once in a great while that we are good at what we do, whatever that may be; but we always need to be very careful that we not become so consumed in desiring the honor that men give that we forget altogether that the honor really belongs to God.

The problem of seeking honor from man is that it makes us do things in a much different way than we would have done otherwise. This problem of desiring to be honored can also be a temptation for those of us who preach the gospel of Christ. The apostle Paul, in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, said that he had not come to them with excellency of speech or of wisdom. Paul had decided that he would not preach anything to them except Christ and Him crucified. He also
told them that he did not use enticing words of man’s wisdom in his preaching, so that their faith would not be standing in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. If we concentrate in our lives to always give the honor and the glory to God, then we will not have time to fall into the temptation of seeking our own honor and glory.

To whom do you give glory and honor?

8900 Manchaca Road; Austin, TX 78748

IS YOUR FAITH WORTH PASSING ON?

Brian W. Jones

The name “Howard Hughes” can always spark an interesting conversation. His life has always been an enigma to those of us who have watched and studied him from the outside. Hughes’ life started with such great potential, but, tragically, his life ended in a pitiful condition. This one-time wealthiest man in the world died as a spiritually bankrupt individual.

Mr. Hughes’ life and history are very fascinating. Howard Hughes, Jr., was born on December 24, 1906, in Houston, Texas. Howard’s mother, Allene, died in 1921. His father, Howard, Sr., was a Harvard educated attorney turned technologist. Howard, Sr., invented a rotary drill bit with 166 cutting edges. This drill was used by wildcatters who drilled for oil through hard rock. His drill became an industry standard. He did not sell these bits, but leased them at $30,000 per well, a handsome sum in the early part of the 20th century. The drill formed the basis for his enormously successful Hughes Tool Company. He died suddenly in his office in 1924 at the age of 54. Seventy-five percent of Hughes Tool went to his only son, Howard, Jr., who was just 18 years old. The value of the estate was nearly a million dollars.

Howard, Jr., bought a controlling interest in RKO so he could become a movie producer. His interest in aviation led him to form Hughes Aircraft Corporation in the 1930s. The company became a major defense contractor. Hughes would eventually take over the helm of Trans World Airlines. When he divested himself of his stock in the company in 1966, he received $546.5 million. In the 1960s he purchased a number of gambling casinos in Las Vegas. All of his ventures put him in the position of being a billionaire when being a billionaire was a rare thing.

Howard Hughes’ successful business life was overshadowed by his deplorable personal life. He was known in Hollywood as “the world’s greatest womanizer.” He had trysts with all sorts of leading ladies in the movie industry. He contracted syphilis which developed into irreversible neurosyphilis. This was a main contributor to his mental deterioration. In the 1950s a crash in an experimental jet plane caused him serious head and back injuries. He became addicted to painkillers and was perpetually self-injecting morphine into his system. Over time he developed an irrational phobia of germs and refused to touch anything without a Kleenex. The last twenty years of his life were spent in obscurity and isolation. He died of heart failure in 1976 en route from Acapulco to a Houston hospital. He weighed only 92 pounds. What a tragic end to a bigger-than-life character.

However, there is another part of the story that is often untold. Hughes came from a deeply religious family of preachers. Howard’s great, great, great, great grandfather was John Gano. He was popularly known as “The Fighting Chaplain of the American Revolution” and served as President George Washington’s personal minister. John Gano is buried in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Howard’s great, great grandfather was John Allen Gano. The dining hall at Freed-Hardeman University is named after this pioneer gospel preacher. He was of a Baptist background but had never made any profession of faith. He attached
himself to Barton W. Stone and T. M. Allen. He eventually was baptized for the remission of sins under the preaching of Allen. His family was so distressed at this decision that they sent for a Baptist minister, Jacob Creath, Sr., to “talk some sense into him.” After much discussion with Creath, Creath himself decided to take his stand for Christ, left the Baptist church, and was baptized for the remission of sins. John Allen Gano spent the rest of his life preaching the gospel. It is said that he baptized nearly 10,000 people during his ministry.

Hughes’ great grandfather, Richard Gano, was a Confederate General. He was also a faithful gospel preacher and a member of the Pearl and Bryan Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas. General Gano worked hard to keep digression out of the Dallas area. W. B. Gano, Maurice Gano, and Robert Lee Gano were all sons of General Gano and served as partners in a law firm. These three sons were also members of the Pearl and Bryan congregation.

William Bariah (W. B.) Gano, Hughes’ grandfather, in addition to practicing law, was a gospel preacher. He courted and married Jeannette de la Fayette Grissom. Their daughter Allene, a debutante, married Howard Robard Hughes, Sr., who became known as a philandering industrialist. Allene gave birth to their only son, Howard, Jr.

Howard Hughes had a rich spiritual heritage. It took only one generation to separate Hughes from the religious identity of his family. The separation cost him his mental well-being, his physical well-being, and eventually and most importantly his spiritual well-being.

Parents would do well to carefully consider their influence. You might pass on to your children great wealth and status, but do you have a faith worth passing on? Notice the godly example of faith passed on in 2 Timothy 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.” Timothy’s faith was much more valuable than any silver or gold he might have inherited from his family. Give your children and grandchildren a faith to live by and a faith to die by.

2900 Camden Ave; Parkersburg, WV 26101

THOUGHTS ON SCRIPTURAL GIVING

1. Some people steal from God. “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Mal. 3:8).

2. It is false to think it unnecessary to plan your giving. “And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have” (2 Cor. 8:10-11).

3. Some have the false idea that we can give less as Christian than God expected of the Jews under the law of Moses. “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mat. 5:20).

4. Giving blesses the giver. “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

5. God gives to you in accordance with how you give to Him. “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” (Luke 6:38).
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Tim Lamb, Hairston Brantley, Floy Dell Lindesmith, and Charles Williams.

READING/INVITATION
December 8, 1999
Reading: Jim Loy
Invitation: Dale Cunningham
December 15, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Ray Dodd

MARK THESE DATES
December 5, 1999–Men’s Class will meet at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
December 6, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 12, 1999–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 13, 1999–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 27, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Canned Meat

PROVERBS 3:21-23
“My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion: So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck. Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.”
THE LORD’S CHURCH

David P. Brown

The church of Christ (the church of which we read on the pages of the New Testament) is composed of all the saved of the earth (Eph. 5:23; 4:4; Col. 1:18, 24). Outside her righteous boundaries not one faithful child of God exists (Acts 2:41, 47). The church of Christ alone was built by Jesus Christ and purchased with His own precious blood (Mat. 16:18; Acts 20:28).

No sectarian denominational church is the Lord’s church. All denominational churches were founded many years after the Lord’s church by men and upon their own commandments and doctrines. Hence, they bear no relationship to the Lord’s church. Not an accountable soul in them is saved.

Unlike ungodly men, God begets children only in His family, the church of Christ (1 Tim. 3:15). His begetting power is located in His seed (Luke 8:11). When sown in a “good and honest heart” (mind), the seed (the Word of God) convicts one of sin and converts him to Christ through his compliance with the conditions taught in the Word of truth, i.e., he hears the gospel, believes the gospel, and obeys the gospel. One is, therefore, born of water and the Spirit when he is baptized in water into Christ for or unto the remission of sins (Rom. 1:16; 10:17; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:10; Heb. 5:9; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; Acts 2:38; 8:38; 1 The. 1:8; 1 Pet. 1:22; John 3:3, 5; John 8:32). An eternity of woes on the person who would ascribe to God the base human sin of begetting children in families that are not His own!

That there are unfaithful members who have ceased to associate themselves in doctrine and practice with their faithful brethren cannot and would not be denied. It is true that such persons are at present in sectarian religious bodies. That they are, however, in a saved state under such conditions and in such erroneous religions is absolutely false. One cannot believe and practice
that which is wrong and be right.

Although it should not be the case, there are unfaithful brethren who continue in fellowship with sound brethren. Many of these apostate brethren continue so to do because they desire to lead others of their brethren away from the truth. If a person in a sectarian church happened to study the Bible well enough to learn the plan of salvation and obey the gospel as previously stated, that person would be a Christian, a member of the church of Christ. Hence, he must cease and desist from any and all fellowship with sectarian denominations. If he does not, he is an unfaithful child of God, lost and in need of repentance.

If a person from a denomination attended a gospel meeting and did the same thing as has just been written, all things being equal, no one would question that person’s baptism. If, however, that person went back to the denomination from whence he came, either he would not have understood the implications of his baptism or he would be guilty of going back into error following his conversion. The same, therefore, is true regarding a sectarian who studies his Bible well enough to learn the gospel plan of salvation and obey it. If that person remains in that denomination after his obedience to the Gospel, he is in sin and thereby an unfaithful Christian. He is lost! If not, why not?? He would need to do what any erring child of God must do in order once again to become faithful—repent, confess his sin(s) and pray for God’s forgiveness (1 John 1:9; Jam. 5:15, 16; 1 John 5:16).

The reformation of life in this case following his repentance would be seen in his cessation of fellowship with the denomination of which he was once a member as well as any other denominational church in the context of this study, less he could not do and remain faithful. More he need not do. As Paul put it to the Corinthians so it must be today: “That in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written” (1 Cor. 4:6—ASV). Furthermore, Paul declared, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17-18).

25403 Lancewood; Spring, TX 77373

THE MOST SIMPLE—YET MOST REJECTED COMMANDMENT!

John C. Bowles

One of the most simple—yet most rejected commandments of God in the gospel of Christ is the command of baptism! Jesus said plainly: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Why is this the most rejected commandment?

1. First of all, it is not because it is hard to be understood. Ask any child who is capable of reading and understanding sentence structure and wording: “Who is it that will be saved?” The answer will come quickly! “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

2. Second, some argue that since God has never explicitly said, “Except ye be baptized ye shall be lost.” Thus, they reason that baptism is not essential. But, notice what happens when one applies that reasoning to another commandment, the commandment of faithfulness.

3. Some look upon baptism as a “meritorious work” by which one earns salvation. The truth of the matter is, no matter how many times one is baptized—without the grace of God pro-
viding salvation through the sacrifice of His Son, man would never have his sins washed away. For it is the blood of Christ that washes us (Rev. 1:5) and redeems us (1 Pet. 1:18-19) from our sins. However, the fact that God decreed that baptism in water is that condition to contact that blood (Rom. 6:3-4; John 19:34) does not make baptism a work of merit—but a work of obedience! Just as faith is a work of obedience (John 6:28-29).

In spite of the clear and unmistakable language of Mark 16:16, some still reject baptism as being essential to one’s salvation. Are you ready to accept the truth? Check the following statement that is true:

- “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”
- “He that believeth and is not baptized shall be saved.”

Copied

SIN IS “TROUBLE”
Brian W. Jones

The Associated Press recently reported that a 100-pound calf jumped into a suburban swimming pool in McDonald, Pennsylvania. Ironically, the cow’s name is Trouble.

The cow struggled unsuccessfully to get out of the water. The owner of the pool tried to keep the calf’s head above the water. Finally, fire fighters on the scene decided to call a tow-truck for assistance. The tow-truck hoisted the cow out of the water to safety.

The above story has some real parallels to Christianity. Some Christians tend to get as close as possible to the pool of sin without actually jumping in. However, the temptation to sin is extremely strong. By allowing oneself to stay within sin’s range of influence, many weak (and some stronger) Christians will jump overboard into the pool. They will enjoy the “pleasures” of sin for a season (Heb. 11:25). Then they will realize the Trouble that they are in. They may even try to leave sin on their own. However, without God’s help they will be unsuccessful. We too need to be hoisted to safety.

The only way to save a drowning sinner is through Jesus Christ. The sinner must decide to put away his sinful behavior (2 Cor. 7:9-10). Then Christ will hoist the sinner back into a proper relationship with Him (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:7-10).

Sin is Trouble. However, if you have fallen into its trap, there is a way out. Try practicing these guidelines:

- Use God’s Word, Psa. 119:11
- Guard the tongue, Psa. 39:1
- Avoid evil companions, 1 Tim. 5:22
- Confess to the Lord, 1 John 1:8-9
- Go to the Advocate, 1 John 2:1

CHRISTIAN UNITY
Toney L. Smith

The church of Christ teaches the unity of God’s people based only on God’s plan. Jesus said that the church was one flock under the one good shepherd (John 10:14-16). God gave certain things to His Son, which in turn gave these to the apostles and gave them the commission to take this message into all the world (Mat. 28:18-20).

Jesus prayed for unity based upon the things that made He and the Father one (John 17:20-26). Paul reproved the Corinthian church for not being united upon this very thing (1 Cor. 1:10-13). He called division a carnal (worldly) thing (1 Cor. 3:1-9) and charged them not to glory in men (1 Cor. 3:21-23).

The church is one body (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23), and is to be guided by one doctrine (Eph. 4:5; Gal. 1:6). Christian unity can be based only upon the one truth found in God’s Word. Without this truth there is no unity at all. God is not pleased with any division in the body of Christ.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Floy Dell Lindesmith, Hairston Brantley, Charles Williams, Ray Williams, Betty Cripps (Joyce Johnson’s cousin). Tim Lamb is scheduled for dental surgery on December 15. Jane Herrington’s mother, Bea Green, is scheduled for surgery on December 9. Dallas Diamond’s sister-in-law, Virginia Diamond, is in critical condition following heart surgery.

READING/INVITATION
December 15, 1999
Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Ray Dodd
December 22, 1999
Reading: Horace Myrick
Invitation: Ray Foshee

MARK THESE DATES
December 29, 1999—Fifth Wednesday singing at 7:00 P.M.
December 12, 1999—Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 13, 1999—Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 19, 1999—Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 20, 1999—Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 27, 1999—Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 10, 2000—Baby Shower for Vanessa Liddell, at 7:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. See Nancy Loy and Sharon Caine for details.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
THE PERPETUITY
OF THE CHURCH
Noah Hackworth

Ephesians 3:21 teaches the perpetuity of the church. The passage says, “unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever.” The phrase πασας τας γενεας του αιωνος τον αιωνον is literally “all the generations of the ages.” F. C. Cook has commented:

“The ages” are the various periods, which commencing when time commenced, have run their course and been succeeded, and will be succeeded, by other periods as long as human consciousness (of which time is a condition) shall exist in its present state. The period comprising all these periods is “the age of the ages.” The expression is borrowed from the LXX. version of Dan vii. 18. Slightly altered in form it occurs in Gal. i:5; 1 Pet. i:23; Heb. vi. 20. A “generation,” also a LXX. phrase, signifies a division of time equal in length to the duration of the life of man. Glory is to go up to God in the Church through all subdivisions of that age which is the sum of all the ages.

It is the will of God that the church for which Christ died (Acts 20:28) continue from one age to another, and that glory shall be given to Him through the church. But will this just automatically happen? Not likely because a “human element” is involved. (Phi. 2:13). It has been repeatedly said by good brethren that the church “is only one generation away from apostasy.” If this is true, and I believe that it is, a succeeding generation without sufficient knowledge and understanding of God’s will could be the point where God’s plan for perpetuity is interrupted (Exo. 1:8) if not completely abandoned and/or eradicated. There are three distinct things (and this has been echoed through the years) which must be done to insure the perpetuation of the church.

1. God’s people must maintain separatism. This means the church is a “peculiar people” (KJV) or “a people for God’s own possession”
(ASV) with an obligation to be distinct in doctrine and practice (1 Pet. 2:9-10; 2 Tim. 4:2). If our speech betrays us, we are “dead in the water” (Mat. 26:73). The church is obligated to believe and practice what the Bible teaches, the point of emphasis being what the Bible teaches, not what a local church believes or teaches. Surely no one can seriously question the soundness of this approach.

2. God’s people must be aggressive. Somewhere along the line many of us had the “starch” taken out of us; we allowed the “wind to be taken out of our sails” by someone or something. There is “no more fight” left in some of God’s people. But when did the conflict end (2 Cor. 10:3)? If there is a legitimate answer for discontinuing the battle against wickedness, we really do need to be ready to provide it because the Lord will definitely want to hear it. The battle between truth and error will continue until time is no more, and there is no Christian Soldier who can afford to go AWOL.

3. Evangelism must continue. Someone has suggested that we have become a society of missionaries instead of gospel preachers. Could this be true? The word missionary certainly involves a “person with a mission,” and I am not usually disturbed about it, but the term “gospel preacher” must not disappear from our vocabulary and become extinct. A respected gospel preacher once said:

It is significant that the word missionary is not in the Bible, nor is there a corresponding word in the Greek text. But one preacher said that the word missionary is derived from the same original textual word as the term apostle, and is therefore scriptural. When he was asked if he would be willing to call the missionaries by the name apostle, he had not thought of that. Just because a respected preacher made these comments about the word missionary does not make them true or the word wrong, but they are worthy of consideration. Preaching the word is what we must be doing (Acts 8:4; 1 Cor. 1:21; 2 Tim. 4:2) and this is our mission. If we cease to evangelize at home and abroad, the church cannot do anything but die. Evangelism is what perpetuates the church. “Preaching the word” is a responsibility incumbent upon every Christian, in one way or another, not just upon a particular family who decided to sacrifice themselves and their comforts to go to a foreign land. However, we are more grateful for those who have done this than we are for those who “sit at home” and do nothing (1 Cor. 9:16-22). So thank the Lord for those who are mission-minded. Because of this breed the world may one day be completely evangelized (Mat. 28:19). May their tribe increase!

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LIBERALISM

Jerry Moffitt

The world is starving for a cause worth dying for. The brotherhood is feeble and bloodless due to short rations regarding the Bible. And though it gives me no pleasure to say it, liberalism in most of our churches offers the world a kind of “Christianity lite.” We know liberalism will never offer true Christianity to the world—not the stick-to-your-ribs kind. It offers an insipid, unsavory, mild, diluted, weakened version. With liberalism it is sue for peace with the enemies before they say something that may hurt our pride. Everywhere you turn truths are watered down and the Christianity is an ease-off cool-down, re-in, pull-up, gloss-over, type—the type that is so broad-minded that it makes one’s brain fall out. When it comes to warfare with sin and error, liberals are embarrassed doves, ashamed the subject even came up. Let us look at a few areas of concern.

Intellectual Pride

Liberalism makes fun of “Bible-toting-Bible-quoting” preachers. If you just study the Bible you are guilty of “theological thumb-sucking” and “Neanderthal religion.” I have two higher degrees, but I know Paul said, “hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” (1 Cor. 1:20). The way of man is not in him (Jer. 10:23).
The gospel is God’s power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). The Word of God is where the fire and the strength are (Jer. 23:29; Heb. 4:12; Luke 1:37).

Morals

A liberal does not much preach on or stand up to unscriptural divorce, drinking, dancing, smoking, dipping, immodest dress, indecent movies, and soft pornography. Rather, they accuse churches who do take a stand of trying to paint “an antiseptic circle around the church.” Well excuse me; that is exactly what I want to do. For me, my family, and the church I love, I want to carve out the cleanest and most wholesome environment possible, even if criticized for it by liberals. Christ wishes to present us to God as “holy and without blemish and unreprovable before him” (Col. 1:22). Paul said the church should not have “spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27). See also 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and 2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1.

Doctrinal Error

When it comes to warfare with denominational error, the liberalism I have seen up close has a real problem deciding which side it is on. In fact, its aim seems to be to strip the church of all that makes it distinctive, in the hope that denominations will quit persecuting us and rather say nice things about us. Yet Jesus said, “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!” (Luke 6:26). Jude said, “Contend earnestly for the faith” (Jude 3). And Jesus...character, when I go into a debate it has gotten where I am more afraid of some of my brethren than I am of the sectarian.

Conclusion

As you know, I could go on for quite a while. Liberalism hates rules and commandments, perverts love, swings a wide loop regarding fellowship, attacks reestablished doctrine, plays down hell fire, has doubts about the inerrancy of the Bible, emphasizes fun and games, and presents Christianity as a delicate and tasteless religion of convenience. If Jesus and the apostles were on earth today, I candidly say I believe they would be appalled. 213 Sabine; Portland, TX 78374

WRONG IS ALWAYS WRONG
Pat McGee

In a period of loose, sagging morals, Satan provides many rationalizations for improper behavior. Those who live Christian lives must not be ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). Wrong doing is always wrong despite our efforts to excuse our actions.

Wrong is wrong even if you do not get caught. Let us remember that “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (Pro. 15:3).

Wrong is wrong even if others are doing worse things. It will be little comfort in the day of judgment, if you should be lost, that others you knew did things which you considered worse than your own sins.

Wrong is wrong even if it does not bother your conscience. The conscience can be trained to accept wrong doing. But even an “honest sin” or evil done in sincerity is sinful in the sight of God (Gal. 6:7).

Wrong is wrong even if it is commonly considered acceptable. The Bible says, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (Exo. 23:2). “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men” (Pro. 4:14; also notice 1 Th. 5:21-22).

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(Editor’s note: Since writing this fine article we regret that Pat McGee has apostatized from the faith. However what he wrote then is still worthy of consideration).
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Hairston Brantley, Floyd Dell Lindesmith, Madeline Quinn (Diana Brazell’s mother), Bea Green (Jane Herrington’s mother), Betty Cripps (Joyce Johnson’s cousin), Virginia Diamond (Dallas Diamond’s sister-in-law), James Simmons (Brantley families’ uncle). Tim Lamb will have dental surgery on December 15. Fran Waters will have foot surgery on December 16. Please help them in any way you can.

READING/INVITATION
December 22, 1999
Reading: Horace Myrick
Invitation: Ray Foshee
December 29, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Louis Herrington

MARK THESE DATES
December 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday singing at 7:00 P.M.
December 19, 1999–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
December 20, 1999–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 27, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 2, 2000–Men’s Class meets at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
January 10, 2000–Baby Shower for Vanessa Liddell, at 7:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. See Nancy Loy and Sharon Caine for details.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
MEETING TIMES

SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. BIBLE CLASSES
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP

WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

BISHOPS: Paul Brantley, Bill Gallaher, Fred Stancliff
MINISTER: Michael Hatcher
DEACONS: Henry Born, Elward Brantley, Jerry Caine,
Bill Crowe, Louis Herrington, James Loy,
Richard Parker
MISSIONARY: Ira Y. Rice, Jr.

FIVE LOOKS AT “THOU ART THE MAN”
Howell Bigham

Nathan the prophet spoke the above words many centuries ago to David the second king of the United Kingdom of Israel. The powerful and poignant phrase “Thou art the man” has been the basis for many sermons down through the corridors of time. To study the context of this statement, one needs to read 2 Samuel chapters 11 and 12. One readily observes that the piercing statement sent David to the knee of repentance. As we reflect on that short phrase “Thou art the man,” there are five looks that must be considered.

1. A Look Outward. Nathan provides us with this look as he was concerned about David’s soul. He obeyed the command of God to go to David. He was certainly looking outward to his fellowman. Likewise, we are to look outward to the field of the world because “the harvest truly is plenteous” (Mat. 9:37). We are to obey the command of Christ to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). Furthermore, we must look outward to unfaithful members of the Lord’s church. Paul wrote, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1).

2. A Look Downward. Nathan catalogs the sins that David committed in 2 Samuel 12:7-12. The look at David’s life in these verses is downward. Sin always carries one down. It carried the prodigal son to a far country (Luke 15:13). It resulted in the de-throning of King Saul from his rule (1 Sam. 13:14). It resulted in Judas taking his life (Mat. 27:5). When we understand that sin separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2) and carries us down, down, down, we should have the resolve to...
not allow sin to reign in our mortal bodies (Rom. 6:12).

3. A Look Inward. David said in sorrow “I have sinned against the LORD” (2 Sam. 12:13). Previously, he was blinded by his own sin (2 Sam. 12:1-6). However, now he has looked inward and practiced self-examination. Likewise, we all must look inward and take inventory of our lives. If we do not measure up to the correct measuring stick—the Bible—then some changes in our lives should be forthcoming.

4. A Look Upward. Upon realizing his sin, David prays to God for forgiveness (Psa. 51). He looked upward in prayer to God. As children of God, when we fall away, we must look upward to God in prayer asking for God’s forgiveness (Acts 8:24; 1 John 1:9). Alien sinners must look upward to God in obeying the gospel plan of salvation.

5. A Look Onward. After David repented, God forgave him. Please examine the psalm of joy that David penned in Psalm 32. David expressed the happiness of forgiveness in that psalm. When we meet God’s terms of pardon, may we react as did David looking onward to future service to God.

6. WHEN MEN LEAVE GOD

James D. Burns

In studying Romans 1:21-25, we detect this thought in these verses: when people have the wrong view of God, all of their thinking and actions become distorted.

Those of whom Paul wrote had a wrong view of God. “They glorified him not as God, neither were thankful” (Rom. 1:21). Further, they “changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (Rom 1:23). He also observed that they “changed the truth of God into a lie” (Rom. 1:25). The concept they had was not that of the living and true God.

How did this affect them? They “became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Rom. 1:21). A wrong view of God affected their thinking. Men cannot think straight without God.

They had an inaccurate view even of themselves. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:22). Those who have degenerate thoughts of God have an exalted view of themselves. Although foolish, they view themselves as wise.

They “worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25). People tend to worship that which they consider greater than themselves. Evidently they considered creatures—men, birds, beasts, creeping things—greater than themselves and worthy of their worship and adoration. It is ironic that they had an exalted view of themselves, “professing to be wise,” but at the same time such a low view of themselves they could honor creatures in their worship. Their thinking was certainly warped!

These verses also indicate that they “dis-honour their own bodies between themselves” (Rom. 1:24). He elaborates on this in following verses (Rom. 1:26-27). Considering the gods they worshipped and the distorted view they had of themselves, we are not surprised how they treat their own bodies.

When people have a wrong view of God, it affects all their thinking and actions.

3380 Coleman Ave, Memphis, TN 38122

THE GREATEST WAR

R. L. Whiteside

The greatest of all wars is the war between right and wrong. It is greatest in point of numbers engaged and involved. Every responsible person is on one side or the other. There are no neutrals; neither can there be any. Jesus settled that when
He said: “He that is not with me is against me” (Mat 12:30). If you are not fighting for the right, your very example, no matter what your desires may be, is helping the wrong. Even the helpless infant suffers as a result of sin in the world. This is the greatest war; if measured only in dollars and cents. Think of all the government machinery engaged in protecting the good citizens and in apprehending, trying, and punishing the criminals. To that must be added the loss of good citizens murdered and also the vast amount of property criminally destroyed; also we must add the cost of every lock, every safety-deposit vault, etc. And, above all, it is greatest because of what is involved. Some wars decide the destiny of nations; your part in the war will decide the destiny of your soul.

This is a war of conquest—the conquest of hearts. You may surrender to either side. God is leading the forces of righteousness; the devil, the forces of evil. So far as you are concerned, you decide the issue. “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Rom. 6:16). The devil has gained a point every time he induces you to do wrong, and he has gained a victory when he induces a person to make no effort to obey God. Be sure that he is using everything possible to keep people from obeying God. He uses religious theories with great effect, such as universalism, unconditional salvation, “one way is as good as another,” and so on through the whole catalogue of false theories.

Let this statement find permanent lodgment in your heart: Anything, whether it be doctrine preached from the pulpit, or business affairs, or social relations, or anything else that keeps you from doing God’s will or makes you feel at all comfortable in disobedience, is of the devil.

But people who earnestly desire to do right will not be led astray. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Mat. 5:6).

This means that they will attain to what they desire. Everyone who sincerely and earnestly desires to do right will find the right. That promise of Jesus is as plain and definite as: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). I cannot doubt either promise. Hence, I believe that every honest person comes to know the truth.

But many people who are honest with their fellow men are not honest with God. What is honesty? It is to render to the other person everything that rightfully belongs to him. If I take or withhold from my neighbor that which rightfully belongs to him, I am not honest with him. If I am indifferent about my obligations to him, I am not honest with him. If I withhold from God that which rightfully belongs to Him or am careless or indifferent about my obligations to Him, I am not honest with Him. I owe it to God, as I do to my fellow man, to treat His Word fairly. Also I have been bought with a price; by right I belong to God. Honesty requires that I deliver to Him in full that which belongs to Him, to be used by Him as He pleases. To act on the principle that one way is as good as another is dishonest. In business affairs we have certain standards of values, weights, and measures. To deviate from these carelessly or intentionally is dishonest. God’s Word is the standard by which our conduct is to be regulated. By it we are evaluated, weighed, and measured. Let us be honest with Him in making a determined effort to abide by that standard. The devil is a skillful warrior; be not deceived.

(The above article was written more than 40 years ago by a faithful preacher, who spent many years studying the Bible. Many in the church today believe that they can be “neutral” or “sit on the fence” or be passive when it comes to battling error. No soldier in the army of God can be neutral. He must stand and defend that which is right!)
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Floy Dell Lindesmith, Hairston Brantley, Charles Williams, and Tim Lamb.

READING/INVITATION
December 29, 1999
Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Louis Herrington
January 5, 2000
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Tony Liddell

MARK THESE DATES
December 27, 1999–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
December 29, 1999–Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 P.M.
January 2, 2000–Men’s Class meets at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
January 3, 2000–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 9, 2000–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 10, 2000–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 10, 2000–Baby Shower at 7:00 P.M. for Vanessa Liddell, in the general purpose building.
January 16, 2000–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 17, 2000–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 24, 2000–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly
Joy is often mentioned in the Scriptures. It usually characterizes the people of God when they are walking in the light of the Word of God. It is the second characteristic listed in the “fruit of the Spirit” by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23. Let us take a few minutes to scan the Bible teaching concerning joy in order that we might more fully appreciate this wonderful gift from above.

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the comforting words of the Psalmist, “Happy is the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God” (Psa. 146:5). No matter what the difficulty, no matter how rough the road, those who faithfully follow the teachings of His word will ultimately gain the victory; this is the occasion of our rejoicing. Eugene Field wrote:

All human joys are swift of wing,
For heaven doth so allot it;
That when you get an easy thing,
You find you haven’t got it.

Joy is not something which may be obtained easily, nor without effort. It is something which must be cultivated over time. It is like the old saying concerning rest: “You can’t rest if you are not tired,” you likewise cannot be truly joyous unless you appreciate what life is like without it.

Jesus wants His followers to be joyous, for He said, “These things have I spoken unto you, that your joy might be full” (John 15:11). Are you joyfully serving Him with all your might?

1272 Enon Road; Webb, AL 36376

THE LIFEBLOOD OF CHURCH GROWTH

Dave Rogers

Practically all Christians want the church to grow; most of us would find it depressing to assemble and worship with a stagnant, careless congregation. We do not like to worship where the singing is lifeless, the giving is stingy, the preaching is dull, the prayers are perfunctory, and the Lord’s Supper has become a hasty ritual. Neither does our Lord like such “worship” (Pro. 15:81). It distresses us to discover Bible class teachers who are chronically unprepared to impart the eternal lessons of God’s Word. Such congregations remind us of the church at Sardis (see Rev. 3:1-2).

When we say “we want the church to grow,” however, we need to examine the motive behind that assertion. Do we just want the church to grow so we can belong to the largest religious body in town? Do we want the church to grow so we can afford a fine building, or a preacher called “Doctor” somebody? Are we just looking for a “staff” of ministers to fulfill our Christian responsibilities for us? Is our goal really just a desire be known as one of the largest congregations in the brotherhood? What is our motive?

Many things cause a church to grow (“swell”) in numbers: Great singing, dynamic preaching, and enthusiastically presented Bible classes will all contribute to “increasing the crowd” on Sunday morning. Carefully avoiding controversy attracts some, while others will only attend where discord is a staple of the congregation’s life (but note Proverbs 6:19b). Large numbers are not a reliable measure of church growth; however, Garth Brooks can pack hundreds of thousands of people into a park simply by announcing a free concert there!

A congregation’s growth does not depend on programs, methods, novelties, or “staff members.” The lifeblood of church growth rests in every Christian’s personal commitment to evangelism (this is the essence of Christianity, Mark 16:15-16!). When all of us are trying to fulfill the great commission (Mat. 28:19), nothing can hold this congregation back! When every member invites visitors to every service, those visitors will want to know more (see Zec. 8:20-23, and note Rom. 2:28-29)! Have you done these things today?

As a congregation, we are far too satisfied with the way things are! A few members are trying to be diligent personal workers, and because we all know who they are we let them do all the work. We had better be careful about singing “Here Am I, Lord Send Me” if we are not willing to go! There is much more to being a Christian than “just” attendance! Christian living means more than simply “staying out of trouble!”
Garrison Keillor (who is no Bible scholar!) hit the mark exactly when he observed: “You can no more become a Christian by going to church than you can become an automobile by sleeping in your garage.” To live the Christian life we must each pursue the gospel pattern! Each of us must learn to bring others to Christ (2 Tim. 2:2). Ivan Stewart was exactly right when he said, “Go ye means go me!” People in our day are fed up with “religion”; they want real Christianity instead, and it is up to us to show them where and how to find it.

Beloved, every last one of us needs to “get off high center,” and get down to the business of building up God’s kingdom. Let us dedicate ourselves to doing everything we can and whatever we must to help the church grow. All of us should take an active role in helping this congregation grow. If we need to “re-learn” how to teach someone the gospel, let us do it! If we need to practice “teaching” each other before we attempt to teach someone “for real,” let us do it! Let us be personally involved in church growth (1 Pet. 3:15—are you ready?)!

742 Brownson Road; Victoria, TX 73505

THANKS TO SENIOR SAINTS

Allen Webster

No person or group of people hears the sweet words “thank you” as often as they desire or deserve. Perhaps this is more true with those who are older and out of the limelight of a hurry-up world. The Bible places a high premium on gratitude (2 Thes. 2:13) and has much to say about the value of aging and older people: “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness” (Prov. 16:31). “Thou shalt arise before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man” (Lev. 19:32).

We, as the younger generation, thank you for setting the proper example for us. It is always easier to follow an example than it is a precept, and we appreciate you for leading us in following God. You make a declaration with your life similar to the one Joshua made with his lips in his farewell speech: “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Jos. 24:15). You may underestimate this or not even recognize it; but, younger members are looking to you to lead the way.

We, as the younger generation, thank you for remaining faithful through the years. The faith of every saint is tested throughout the course of the Christian race (Heb. 12:6; 2 Tim. 3:12), but you have managed to weather these storms and not look back (Luke 9:62). Now when the seas of our lives become rough, we know that we can make it because you have remained constant under similar circumstances.

We, as the younger generation, thank you for continuing to do all you can for the Lord. We know that you attend services when you really do not feel like it, and it inspires us to greater service. It may be that you cannot do all that you used to but you do what you can. “She hath done what she could” (Mark 14:8), pleased the Lord then and it will today. We look to your wisdom (Job 12:12) and good judgment (1 Kin. 12:6-8) while valuing your abilities.

Some of the mighty servants of God did their greatest work after they were increased in years. Noah had lived six hundred years before God called him, Abraham and Sarah were almost a century old when Isaac was born, Caleb cried, “give me this mountain” when he was old and Moses did not even start to lead the Israelites until he was eighty!

Senior saints, we love you and owe you a great deal. By watching your life, we can see that the “winter of life” can be one of the most productive periods for the child of God. May the Lord richly bless you is our prayer.
SICK AND SHUT-IN
Please remember in your prayers: Leon Waters, Marilyn Hall, Martha Wilcoxson, Geneave Dean, Floy Dell Lindesmith, Tim Lamb, Hairston Brantley, and Charles Williams.

READING/INVITATION
January 5, 2000
Reading: Richard Parker
Invitation: Tony Liddell
January 12, 2000
Reading: Michael Wilkes
Invitation: Fred Stancliff

MARK THESE DATES
January 2, 2000–Men’s Class meets at 5:00 P.M., in room 1.
January 3, 2000–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 9, 2000–Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 10, 2000–Visitation Group 3 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 10, 2000–Baby Shower at 7:00 P.M. for Vanessa Liddell, in the general purpose building. Contact Nancy Loy or Sharon Caine for details.
January 16, 2000–Elders/Deacons’ meeting at 5:00 P.M., in room 7.
January 17, 2000–Visitation Group 1 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 24, 2000–Visitation Group 2 meets at 7:00 P.M., in the zone room.
January 31, 2000–Visitation Group Get-together at 6:00 P.M., in the general purpose building. A covered-dish meal will precede the meeting.

PANTRY ITEM NEEDED
Peanut Butter and Jelly

“THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL”
1 John 1:4
Tim Smith
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