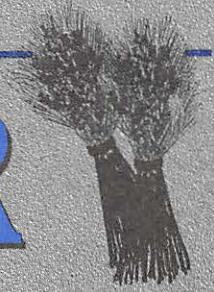


GOSPEL GLEANER



Volume 13

Number 1

WHO STARTED THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

Virgil L. Hale

Some have charged the church of Christ had its beginning with the Campbells, who came to the United States in the early 1800's. Documentary research of Dr. Robinson, principle of Overdale College in Birmingham, England, shows the following: "In the Furness District of Lancashire, in North West England, there existed in 1669, during the reign of Charles II, a group of eight churches of Christ. Most of them are not now in existence. An old minute-book has been found on the year 1669, and it shows that they called themselves by the name of the church of Christ, practiced baptism by immersion, celebrated the Lord's Supper each Lord's Day, and had elders and deacons. There was also a church of Christ in Dungannon, Ireland in 1804 and in Allington, Dengigshire. In 1735, John Davis, a young preacher in the Fife District of Scotland was preaching New Testament Christianity, twenty-five years before Thomas Campbell (Alexander Campbell's father) was born."

The church of Christ was promised by Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18), began on Pentecost (Acts 2:38), and has existed since that day (Daniel 2:44)!

In view of the above, how can anyone honestly accuse us of following a man, Alexander Campbell? There are some, who because of prejudice, refer to us members of the Lord's church as "Campbellites." Those who do so know better, but they are really just promoting what they have

heard their ancestors say. There is not a doctrine or practice engaged in by the Lord's church that originated with Alexander Campbell or any other man.

Anywhere in this world that people follow the teaching of Christ, found in the New Testament, they are a congregation of the New Testament church. After all, He left us a book of instructions plain enough to be followed. If we follow it as we would any other blueprint, we will be what He wants us to be. We claim to be nothing more or less than the New Testament church, and we challenge anyone to prove differently.

When I hear people use the term "Campbellite," I tell them that I have never met anyone who wears that name. In fact, I let it be known that I would like to meet such a person and find out what they believe and practice. However, I make it clear that if such people exist, they are wrong religiously because they are following a man rather than following the Lord.

It should be clear to all sensible-thinking people, that if we all follow the Bible, we will all be teaching and practicing the same thing. In fact, we will all be simply "Christians" -- nothing more, nothing less, and nothing else. Is this not what our Lord prayed for in John chapter 17? Surely it is! - Via *The Southwesterner*, Southwest Church of Christ, Austin, TX



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The *GOSPEL GLEANER* is dedicated to restoring New Testament Christianity. We welcome your comments and questions regarding any article found herein.

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LOOKING UP!

Bill Dillon

As weary travelers on this mundane sphere called earth, we walk often on the flatlands of daily life. Occasionally it is refreshing to change our line of sight to glance upward to view things above.

The Psalmist directs our eyes upward by saying, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," (Psalm 121:1). He goes on to say, "My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." To look to God is to set your sight upon our Eternal Creator and our Source of strength. To discerning souls the hills are emblems of God's power and glory. The granite peaks of mighty mountains defy time and remind us of the steadfastness of Jehovah.

We are amply repaid whenever we take the time to look up in appreciation of the magnificent workmanship of the Lord. As it is written, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). By looking up your faith will be strengthened and renewed.

Abraham Looked Up

When Abraham, the man of faith, looked up he was reminded of God's promise. As Abraham beheld a multitude of stars, every point of light was significant because God had told him, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Genesis 15:5). The stars the patriarch saw were a symbol to him of a vast spiritual heritage within his faith's reach. Abraham proved his faith. Romans 4:20 says Abraham "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." Today we are urged to "walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham..." (Romans 4:12).

Moses Looked Up

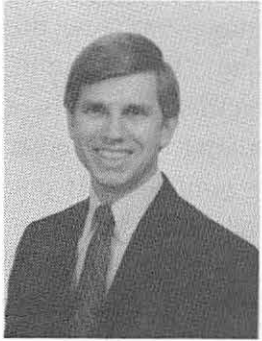
When Moses looked up with eyes of fiery faith, he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25). When Moses looked up, he gained wisdom and strength to accomplish the incredible feat of delivering a nation of millions from the darkness of Egyptian bondage and committing to their care the law God had written on tables of stone.

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FAITH AND OPINION

Dennis Gullledge



The apostle Paul recognized two realms in matters of religion -- the realms of faith and opinion. In 1 Corinthians 8, a chapter wherein he deals with the theme of "things sacrificed to idols," Paul lays out the issue clearly. Idolatrous worship

was prevalent among the heathen in Paul's day, and in idol temples of that time, animal sacrifices were offered. Often the meat was sold in the common market. Some brethren felt that it was wrong to purchase and consume meat that had been thus used. The subject, however, was one of indifference to Paul. He wrote, "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one...But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse" (1 Corinthians 8:4, 8).

However, the apostle also recognized that not all felt the way he did about such matters. He acknowledged that some brethren had an opinion against the eating of meats offered to idols: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled" (Vs. 7). Therefore, he warns those who may feel as he does about it to be careful of how they use their liberty lest they cause another to act against his conscience and sin. Paul said, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (Vs. 9).

We also recognize that there are areas of faith and opinion in religion. One of the great slogans of the Restoration Movement said, "In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; in all things, charity." It is both regrettable

and dangerous to the spirit of unity that the line of distinction between faith and opinion is being blurred by some brethren. Certain liberal brethren are trying to make instrumental music in the worship a matter of opinion rather than the matter of faith that it is (See: *Instrumental Music: Faith Or Opinion?* Freed-Hardeman University Preacher's And Church Workers Forum 1991). As E. Claude Gardner once wrote, "A proper understanding of these two realms can *effect* unity in the church and without it peace is destroyed -- it both effects and affects unity" (*Gospel Advocate*, June 2, 1977, p. 337).

Equally disastrous are the attitudes of some who refuse to confine a matter of opinion to the realm of opinion, but choose rather to make it law. In so doing they trample under foot the warnings given by Paul, wherein he said, "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died...Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemned not himself in that thing which he alloweth" (Romans 14:15, 22). How often are brethren ready to "draw swords" over matters of indifference?

Much confusion and contention comes as a result of problems in this area. It is often said that everyone has a right to his own opinion, but, as R. L. Whiteside has so well observed, even that is not always true:

[F]or no man has a God-given right to an opinion that hinders his prompt and faithful obedience to God. No man has a right to an opinion that disrupts the fellowship in the church or breeds rebellion against God. Too often a person thinks that his right of opinion gives him the right to force his opinion on others, or even to neglect obedience to a plain command of God (*Doctrinal Discourses*, p. 99).

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Let us define what we mean by matters of faith and opinion. First, what are matters of faith? We know how one arrives at faith -- through the hearing of the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Where there is no word from God there can be no faith. Paul spoke "the wisdom of God in a mystery...which none of the princes of this world knew...But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit..." (2 Corinthians 1:7-10). There are things revealed through apostles and prophets which no man has the right to alter (Galatians 1:6-9). A matter of faith is a subject whereupon God has spoken in his word and which no man can presume to change (Galatians 1:6-8).

Second, what are matters of opinion? An opinion is that which one thinks, but does not know. M. C. Kurfees stressed that the Reformers taught "...that opinions must be held as 'private property' to the full extent of never 'publishing or practicing' them 'so as to give offense' to others..." (*Instrumental Music In The Worship*, p. 199).

PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

In the October 1996 issue of *The Spiritual Sword*, in an excellent article entitled, "Fellowship With Error?," brother William Woodson laid down certain principles with regard to Bible authority which are to be applied here. I will follow his basic thoughts at this point.

1. **Specific Bible teaching must be obeyed as given and must not be violated by adding to or taking from it** (p. 19). Examples of such teaching include the following: Baptism is immersion in water (Colossians 2:12); the Lord's Supper is to be observed on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), and, singing is what God sanctions in worship (Ephesians 5:19).

Genuine differences as to the best way to carry these out exist. For example, should baptism be performed in a baptistry or in a stream with

"living water"? In the Lord's Supper should we employ one cup or many? In singing should we utilize a song book or an overhead projector? In each case the specific Bible teaching is respected regardless of one's opinion.

However, if one's opinion violates the specific Bible teaching it is wrong. For example, if one favors sprinkling for baptism such is a violation of God's word on immersion (the clear meaning of the Greek word for *baptism*). If one insists that the Lord's Supper can be observed on any day of the week he violates the restrictions of apostolic example in Acts 20:7. Instrumental music in the worship violates God's word on singing, as it adds another kind of music in addition to that which God approves (Colossians 3:16). Again, no one has a right to an opinion which hinders his obedience to God!

2. **If the matter under discussion is about putting into practice what is authorized by general instruction, there can and will be differences and such differences are not wrong** (p. 20). Applying this principle to matters of faith and opinion we know that there are different ways of obeying a general Bible teaching without violating Bible authority. For example, with regard to worship assemblies on the Lord's day, there are the options of when (time of day) and where (place, location) that must be considered in obeying the specific command to assemble (Hebrews 10:25). With regard to separate Bible classes some elect not to have them while others promote them with vigor. However, one has no right to bind their chosen method on others.

3. **If the matter under discussion is not one of either specific or general authority...it should be left for all to decide what to do for themselves** (p. 20). If I take the position (and I do) that the Holy Spirit works through the Word alone in conversion and sanctification I am not about to part company with those good brethren who teach differently. In the area of Bible versions, whereas I prefer the tried and true King James Version, I am not ready to make the version issue a test of fellowship. Of course, many of the

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LOOKING UP!
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Moses had power to endure tidal wave after tidal wave of misfortune because he saw Him who was invisible.

Shepherds Looked Up

When humble shepherds looked up in child-like faith under Judean skies they received good news from heavenly messengers that "unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

Disciples Looked Up

When the disciples looked up in wistful wonder, standing on Olivet's summit, they beheld the Lord ascending to His Heavenly Father from whence He came. The shining cloud carried Jesus out of sight, leaving the promise "...this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Stephen Looked Up

When the dynamic and devoted Stephen looked up through tears and blood, he beheld the loving countenance of his blessed Redeemer. Stephen's dying words were "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). Departing from the crucible of suffering and death, he went to be with his Lord.

John Looked Up

When John, the apostle of love, looked up from the rugged and rocky slopes of Patmos Isle, he beheld the bounties and beauties of the New Jerusalem. With eagerness John concluded his holy writing with the inviting words, "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

Vision brings responsibility. When you look up and see the work of God, the glory and power of God, the promise of God, the Son of

God, and the home of God -- you must then make such scenes of majesty the guideposts and goal posts of life.

The Greek word for man is *anthropos* which means "one who looks up." How wondrous that God has made man so, distinguishing him from all other creatures.

Today, men and women of high and holy dedication will *look up* to God and then *lift up* the world to the feet of God. Christ needs common people of uncommon faith. Are you looking up? - 612 E. Fourth Street, Mountain Home, AR 72653.

FAITH AND OPINION
Continued from page 4

modern versions contain gross perversions of God's word, and these dangers should be pointed out with the more reliable versions encouraged and the dangerous new versions avoided. Indeed some brethren just will not be warned!

CONCLUSION

In matters of faith we should be of "one heart and one soul." In matters of opinion we should exercise perfect liberty and tolerance. In all matters love and the pursuit of peace should be our guiding principle. -10822 Mabelvale West Road, Mabelvale, AR 72103.

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Sunday Morning Bible Class	9:30
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00

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Dennis Gulledge, Evangelist

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

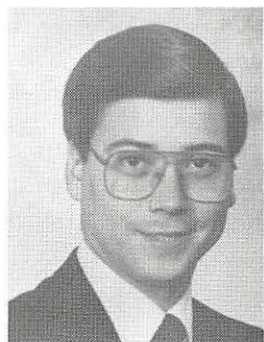
"Ye Are The Salt Of The Earth"

Matthew 5:13



Worship Conscious

Ronnie Whittemore



"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker" (Psalm 95:6).

The Lord has always required worship from His people. Abel and Cain were given divine instructions concerning their sacrifices unto Jehovah (Genesis 4:5). After Noah and his family were saved from the flood, Noah worshipped his Deliverer (Genesis 8:20). After being called from the Ur of the Chaldees and a second time in Haran, Abram worshipped Jehovah God (Genesis 12:8). In fact, it is often noted that one could trace the journeys of Abraham by his trail of altars. From Exodus through Deuteronomy, the proper type of worship is described for God's people during the Mosaic age. In these last days, the Christian age, the Lord still requires worship. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

The Lord has always rejected worship that was not according to His divine will. Cain's offering was not respected by the Lord because it was not according to divine specifications (Genesis 4:5; Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17). Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, were consumed by fire from the Lord for violating divine instructions (Leviticus 10:1-2). Idolatry was one

of the sins which led to Israel's captivity by the Assyrians in 721 B.C. (Isaiah 44:14-20; Psalm 115:1-8). Upon one occasion, Jesus stated to the scribes and Pharisees, "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:7-9).

The Lord has appointed the first day of the week for worship (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10). According to the scriptures, the elders, being overseers of the local flock, have the authority to set aside such times as Wednesday, for Bible study, in which the congregation assembles (Hebrews 13:7, 17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). In Matthew 22:37-38, Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." The saint should desire to worship the Lord at every opportunity, being conscious of God's love for him and his debt to God. John penned these words: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3). In John 14:15, Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Wrong Attitudes In Worship

The Lord desires and deserves the worship of His people, but the chosen generation of God can only worship acceptably if they are conscious of their actions.

(1) The saint is not worship-conscious when he assembles for convenience instead of conviction. With this attitude, the saint does not love God; he has forgotten the purpose of assembling (Hebrews 10:24-25).

(2) The saint is not worship-conscious when he sings hymns and songs without understanding. By being conscious of the words of songs, there will be no problem of singing unscriptural songs which teach false doctrine and

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A STRONG PULPIT

Allen Webster



Somebody said, "Preaching's not what it used to be." Weak preaching has become more and more common place. More attention often is being paid to how something is said rather than what is said.

Drawing large crowds is emphasized more than preaching sound doctrine (Titus 2:1). Preachers in Gospel meetings are billed as the "main attraction" and audiences are told to "turn around and say 'I love you.'" Preachers tell story after story and joke after joke. Churches promote gimmicks, games, and gymnasiums instead of God, godliness, and Gospel.

Theatrical preachers who stir emotions but leave the mind befuddled, remind one of the false teachers Jude mentioned who spoke great swelling words of vanity but were clouds without water (Jude 12-13). Are some contemporary preachers guilty of doing "their works to be seen of men" (Matthew 23:5)? Peter warned that some "with feigned words make merchandise of you" (2 Peter 2:3). The word "feigned" (*plastois*, from which we get our word "plastic") describes something artificial and insincere.

Don't forget that Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32). Preaching "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:2) is to be the focal point of the message. The preacher is not the "main attraction," Christ is. Emotionalism is not to move sinners, the cross is.

Many people have just never considered how dangerous weak preaching is. Let us consider its effects.

WEAK PREACHING CAUSES A LACK OF GENUINE CONVERSIONS. Since it is the Word that sets men free (John 8:32), preaching without it will cause men to remain in bondage to Satan. A

preacher cannot expect to bring men to Christ when he deletes the power from his sermon (Romans 1:16). It is tragic for lost souls who desperately need to hear the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16) to leave a meeting or worship feeling good, but not knowing any more about how to be saved than they did before they came.

WEAK PREACHING CAUSES THE FAITH OF CHRISTIANS TO BE WEAKENED. Christians are built up by a steady and strong diet of the Word. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32; cf. Hebrews 5:12-14). If they are not properly fed, will they remain healthy?

WEAK PREACHING LEADS TO CHURCH PROBLEMS. Churches are being torn asunder by every false doctrine imaginable. A lack of distinctive preaching has contributed to the success of the devil in causing these problems. We wonder why churches are ready to put women in leadership roles, bring the instrument in the front door, and observe the Lord's Supper on Saturday when we have not heard any sermons on the woman's role, the sin of innovation in worship, and why Christians partake on Sunday (and every Sunday). Sincere people do better when they are taught better. The best preventive for church problems is a strong pulpit (cf. 1 Peter 5:8).

WEAK PREACHING CAUSES A LACK OF REAL CHURCH GROWTH. The church is no stronger than the pulpit. One observed that weak preaching has made the church little more "than a soup line for the distribution of loaves and fishes when we should be pointing people to eternal water and eternal food" (John 4:10-14; 6:26-27). Another added, "The liberal denominational churches have generally deleted God's Word from their message over the last forty years. Their faith is dead, their numbers are shrinking. Their missionary forces are drying up, their seminaries

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WORSHIP CONSCIOUS

Continued from page 6

convey wrong concepts and attitudes. Singing involves more than the mouth, but includes the heart as well (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16).

(3) The saint is not worship-conscious when he prays without understanding. By using vain repetitions in prayer, the saint shows a lack of sincerity and effort. By confusing the roles of the Father and Son in prayer, the saint is not worship-conscious. The Father is the One addressed; the Son is the mediator (Matthew 6:9; 1 Timothy 2:5). So the Father is not thanked for His blood, for it was Jesus' blood which was shed.

(4) The saint is not worship-conscious when he shows disrespect for Jesus' sacrifice. When partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, thoughts should be upon Jesus' death and not the afternoon meal, tomorrow's homework, or tonight's football game (1 Corinthians 11:26-29).

(5) The saint is not worship conscious when he withholds his money from the Lord. The commandment is to give upon the first day of the week as he has prospered and purposed (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). The attitude is to be one of cheer and gladness (2 Corinthians 9:7), desiring that the Lord's work be accomplished through such endeavors.

(6) The saint is not worship-conscious or God-conscious when he or she does not give the first fruits unto God (Proverbs 3:9). Does the saint dress his or her best when coming to worship God or does the saint wear what is convenient? Does the saint consider worship to God on the same level as work or school; therefore, dressing the same way? Men and women dress in a very reverent way when they attend a funeral because they want to show respect for the departed one. On the first day of the week, we participate in a memorial of Jesus's death. Should we do any less for the Lord than we do for a friend or relative?

(7) The saint is not worship-conscious when he treats the time for worship as a social event. It is a time of fellowship and edification, but not an occasion to play with the babies, to talk

during the singing, to whisper during the sermon, or to pass notes and giggle while partaking of the Lord's Supper.

These are just a few of the items which indicate whether or not the saint is worship-conscious. It is a time to praise God, to be thankful and to remember Jesus' sacrifice. May every child of God be conscious of his actions and attitudes when assembling to worship Jehovah God. -200 S. Curry Pike, Bloomington, IN 47404

A STRONG PULPIT

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are closing. Why should we follow them down the broad road that leads to destruction?"

WEAK PREACHING CAUSES CONFUSION AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS. When "uncertain sounds" (1 Corinthians 14:7-10) come from the bugle, the army panics. Weak preaching makes weak Christians. Weak Christians walk out of the meeting-house doors unequipped to cope with the god of this world. Many confused Christians are unprepared to meet the false doctrine of the denominational world and not a few have been swept into it. A Texas preacher wrote, "Preachers need to shake 'em up, wake 'em up, move 'em out, so God's will and way can be clear in an age of foggy, dim, unclear thoughts, doctrines and ideals."

Paul wrote, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20); and, "But shun profane, and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness" (2 Timothy 2:16).

The souls of men are at stake. Gospel preaching saves, and without it men cannot be saved. "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 Corinthians 1:18). Preachers, let's take heart. God will be with us when we send out His message. And, "what shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31). -P. O. Box 512, Jacksonville, AL 36265

ARE YOU TOO SENSITIVE?

Franklin Camp (1915-1991)

"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour" (Matthew 15:21-28).

There are many members of the church who have quit the church because someone hurt their feelings. There are others who still attend, but they are no longer active in the Lord's work because someone hurt their feelings. These people feel they are justified for their actions because their feelings have been wounded. Surely this is being overly sensitive. Is it not being overly sensitive when one lets his wounded feelings place his soul in danger of being lost? But, this is the condition of all who quit the church or cease to be active just because unfeeling brethren hurt their feelings. Following are four tests to see if we are too sensitive:

The First Test. A Canaanitish woman cried: "...Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil" (Matthew 15:22). The next verse says, "But he answered her not a word." Does this not seem cruel? Was this not a time, if there was ever such a time, for someone's feelings to get hurt? Was this not a good time for her to have turned away

and said, "Well, if that is the way you act, I will never ask you for anything else"?

What would most of us do if we should ask the preacher a question and receive no reply? Would our feelings be hurt? Chances are, we would quit the church. Many would feel they would be justified in doing so. But, would they?

This woman did not let the silence of Christ turn her away. Was she a woman without feelings? No, but she was a woman who needed something, and she knew that Christ was the only one who could supply that need. The life of her child was in danger, and she thought more of her daughter than she did of her own feelings.

Your soul is in danger, and Christ and the church are the only places where safety can be found. Do you think more of your soul than your feelings? If so, then like the woman, you would let no one drive you away because your feelings have been wounded.

The Second Test. The silence of Christ was only her first test. Most would not have passed the first test; and, very few would pass the second test. When Christ did not answer, His disciples struck at her feelings. They said, "Send her away; for she crieth after us." Certainly this should have been enough to send her away with wounded feelings. But, did she leave? No, her need was too great to let Christ's disciples stand in her way. She would not let them rob her of blessings she needed.

Suppose the next time you come to the assembly the elders should say, "Send him away, he annoys us." Would you stay or leave? If you, like this woman, knew your needs and why you came, you would remain in spite of what they said. If you turned back because your feelings were hurt, would you not be the one to lose? Of course, God would not be pleased with the actions of any who would try to turn you away, but their actions

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REMEMBER THY CREATOR UPDATE

Daniel F. Cates

would not justify your quitting. If you should let even this cause you to quit the church, what condition would your soul be in? All who know anything about the Bible, know that they would be lost if they quit the church.

The Third Test. This woman, having passed these two tests, had more to face yet. Jesus said to her, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." What would you do if someone should say the blessings of the Lord are not for you? Would you get all ruffled up and leave? Not this woman. "Then she came and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me." How many of us could worship under such circumstances? We would get as "mad as an old wet hen" and refuse to stay, much less worship. But, should we give up? Is it more important that we obey the Gospel and serve the Lord in the church, or run home with our feelings hurt?

The Fourth Test. She had one more test to pass. Would it hurt her feelings and drive her away? Jesus said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." Not many of us would have carried the conversation far enough to have heard this statement. But, what would we have done? What would you do if someone called you a dog? Most of us would think this would be enough to justify our getting to heaven without ever passing by the church again. This woman simply said, "Truth Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs."

This woman obtained the mercy she sought. Was it worth it? It would have been easy to let her feelings rob her and her daughter of the healing she desired and needed. When we meet God in judgment, Will we have let our feelings rob us of that plaudit, "Well done"?

We tell the world we walk by faith, not feelings. What are you walking by? Are you a quitter because you have had your feelings hurt? Are you walking by faith, even though your feelings have been hurt?

The second issue of *Remember Thy Creator* is now upon us. Enough money has been raised to print and mail the second issue, and so it has now been mailed. We appreciate the patience and interest of all who have inquired about this work. We hope that it will be beneficial.

We are printing about 2800 copies this time, and are financially able to send out this issue, but we are going to need to raise new funds before every printing (a process which we now know, through experience, takes time). If you as an individual can help in any way, or if you know of a congregation that could help either once, quarterly or monthly, please let us know by writing to *Remember Thy Creator*, P. O. Box 345, Mabelvale, AR 72103, or by calling Dan Cates at 501-455-2547 or Wayne Jones at 501-658-2953.

One other thing of interest to some of you is that one of the staff writers, Terry Frizzell, has put *Remember Thy Creator* on the internet. The text of each issue will be put on his webpage at <http://www.cswnet.com/~frizzell>. Also, there will be some articles each quarter on the internet which will not fit into the issue itself. Thanks a lot to Terry for making this possible. Terry Frizzell can be contacted through electronic mail at frizzell@cswnet.com. Dan Cates at dcates@aristotle.net. Wayne Jones at waynejl@missconet.com. Thanks again for your interest, and for helping our young people to "remember now thy Creator."

MY PLACE

There is a corner somewhere that I alone can fill.
If I fail to take my place, no other ever will.
It's all a part of God's great plan, that each a worker be,
And somewhere in His vineyard wide, the Lord needs even me!



DO WE NEED A NEW GOSPEL FOR THIS NEW AGE?

(Galatians 1:6-12)

M. W. Kiser



Time does not wait for anybody. It will leave behind those who will not keep in step. This is a changing world, nothing remains the same for very long. Our century has never seen anything like the great advances in scientific

research, philosophic investigation and mechanical inventions. In the areas of medicine, travel and warfare textbooks can hardly keep up. Does the ancient gospel meet the needs of modern man? Do we need a new message for this mess - age?

I. THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT HAVE NEVER CHANGED.

- A. Man's nature has never changed; and never will.
 - 1. Physically we still have the same needs of life's necessities.
 - 2. Emotionally we still have the same desires, impulses and passions.
- B. Man's world has never changed; and never will.
 - 1. The veneer is somewhat different; but we are the same at heart.
 - 2. The nature of temptation still comes the same way (1 John

2:15-17; Matthew 4:1-11; Genesis 3).

- 3. No man of modern times is tempted in more or less points (Hebrews 4:15).
- C. Man's malady has never changed; and never will.
 - 1. A change in disease calls for new remedies. We have the same old problem as before. It is just like it always was (Romans 6:23).
 - 2. There are no new sins to add to the catalog! (Romans 1:29f; Galatians 5:19f).
 - 3. There are no old sins to delete. Man still practices them all.
- D. Man's adversary has never changed; and never will.
 - 1. Satan still walks about (Job 1:6-8; 1 Peter 5:8).
 - 2. He still uses schemes to deceive men (2 Corinthians 11:14-15; Matthew 7:15).
- E. Man's destiny has not changed.
 - 1. We have an appointment to leave this world (Hebrews 9:27).
 - 2. We have an alternative for eternity (John 5:28-29; Matthew 25:46).

II. THE GOSPEL WAS NOT DESIGNED TO BE SUPERSEDED BY ANOTHER MESSAGE.

- A. The gospel dispensation was planned from all eternity (Ephesians 3:10-11).
- B. The gospel was designed to be universal in scope (Mark 16:15-16).
 - 1. Therefore, unlike the law of Moses which was for one race.
 - 2. It contained a universal appeal (Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 22:17).
- C. The gospel was declared to be the last revelation of God to man.
 - 1. Times past, but now...once and

(Continued on page 12)

for all (Hebrews 1:1-2; Jude 3).

2. The standard of judgment at the last (John 12:48).

D. The gospel was declared to be full and complete (2 Peter 1:3).

1. A new gospel would contain no new truth (John 16:13).
2. It could not do any more than the one we have (Romans 3:24-26).

III. THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST STILL WORKS TODAY LIKE IT DID IN DAYS PAST!

A. It can still save us from the love, practice and guilt of sin.

1. James and John (Luke 9:54).
2. The murderers of Christ (Acts 2:36-41).
3. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9, 22, 26).

B. It can still save us in the same old way! (1 Corinthians 15:1-3).

1. Salvation is through faith in His blood (Revelation 1:5; 1 John 1:7).
2. We still apply it by obedience (Romans 6:3-4; 1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16).

C. It can still sustain us in life's darkest hours.

1. Stephen and Paul (Acts 7:60; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).
2. The Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17) "If we believe (What?)."

Amid all the changes we meet; Christ is still all we need! (Hebrews 13:8). P.O. Box 0344, Takoradi, W-R, Ghana, W. Africa

The only people with whom you should try to get even are those who have helped you.

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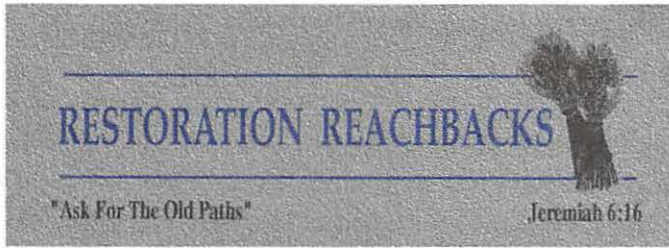
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THE NAME "CHRISTIAN"

Elmer L'Roy

There are three verses in which the name "Christian" occurs in the New Testament. The first time it is used is Acts 11:26, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

The next time is also in Acts (26:28), "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

The final passage in which the name "Christian" appears is 1 Peter 4:16, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

The word "Christian" is seen to be "Christ-ian" when we divide its syllables. It is obviously derived from "Christ," which word means "Anointed." In the Hebrew language the word is "Messian," in Greek "Christ," and in English "Anointed."

Christ Jesus is the Anointed. Christians are in Him and like Him. They too are anointed, but perhaps, some other word will ordinarily be used to express this truth.

The name "Christian" is a name of distinction. This is a characteristic of all names. They serve to distinguish between persons or things of the same kind.

A Christian is one who is chosen of God; called by the gospel. His new name upon becoming a child of God distinguishes him from the world, other religions, and all the past. It identifies him as the property of Christ.

In 1 Peter 5:3, elders are instructed as follows: "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Here the church is called "God's heritage." The Greek

word for "God's heritage" is **kloran** from **klaros** meaning "to receive a possession" (as by lot).

An interesting connection in this word with our times, **klaros** is the word which in English is clergy. To become "God's heritage" or "possession" is to become a clergyman. Now if one reads 1 Peter 5:3, he sees that every Christian is **klaros** -- clergy. If one compares this with our times, he finds something quite different. The distinction between "clergy" and "laity" in the church of God is a false one. Every Christian is God's heritage or possession. Truly the Christian is not his own but is bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20).

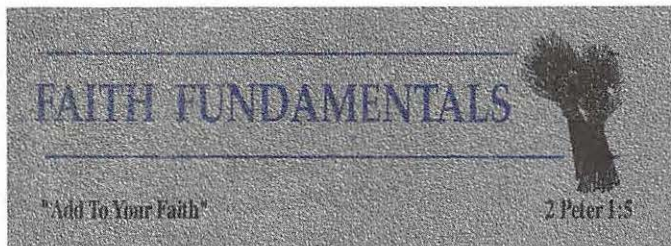
Why should we wear the name "Christian?" First, because we are the property of Christ. We are His as one who is older or ancestor to us. It is not unusual for descendants to wear the name of an ancestor. We are followers of Christ; hence, Christians.

Second, the name "Christian" is of divine origin. God intends for His people to wear it. We conclude this from Acts 11:26. The verse reads: "And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." The word for "were called" in the original language is **chramatidzo** meaning, according to Thayer: "to receive a name or a title, to be called."

No doubt this is a correct definition of the word rendered "were called" in Acts 11:26. However, it does not state who did the calling or who gave the title or name. The word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament and is used to signify a Divine call. (See Matthew 2:12-22; Acts 10:22; Luke 2:26). There is no reason to think that the disciples were called Christians except by Divine will.

This meets the prophecies of the scriptures also. In Isaiah 62:2, the Lord said: "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isaiah 65:15 tells us that the Lord's people should drop their old name and God will "call his servants by another name."

(Continued on page 18)



THE GOD WE SERVE

Guy F. Hester



"And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my

house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). This was the ultimatum given to the Israelites by Joshua. We too must make that same choice. May we make the right choice and say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

There are many "gods" in the world today and teeming thousands are deceived by them. What are some of these false gods that are deceiving thousands upon top of thousands?

THE FALSE "GOD" OF MATERIALISM. This is a very materialistic age. The people of America are pleasure mad, leisure mad, and money mad. We have become so affluent that few of us really want to go to heaven. We are content with our bank accounts, houses, cars and all the things that money will buy. We have come to regard money as being the answer to almost all of our problems. But money is not the answer. "Money will buy *associates*, but will not buy *friends*. Money will buy a *house*, but it will not buy a *home*. Money will buy a position but it will not buy *respect* (not even self-respect). Money will buy a *reputation*, but it will not buy *character*. Money will buy *food*, but it will not

buy an *appetite*. Money will buy *medicine*, but it will not buy *health*."

If we make the mighty dollar "our god," it will not save us in the day of Jehovah's wrath. The question was asked by the Lord: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26). In the sermon on the mount in Matthew chapter six, Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your 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 the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon....But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:19-21, 24, 33).

Our materialistic society is deceiving and undermining our thinking so that there is hardly a family or an individual that is not greatly affected by it.

THE FALSE "GOD" OF INDIFFERENCE. The Lord said to the church of Laodicea, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Why did the Lord tell them he would spew them out of his mouth? Look at the next verse: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:15-17).

Members of the church will say, "I'm not bad. I don't curse, lie, steal, murder. I'm doing alright; I don't need to attend all the services of the church, study my Bible, help the needy, give of my means, do personal work, I'm alright." The Lord will say to such: "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." How sad it will be when they stand

before Him in the judgment and hear Him say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels...And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Many churches today are preaching a social gospel. They spend their money on material things. Only a small part of the money contributed ever reaches the mission field or goes into the training of gospel preachers. Too many are serving "the god of indifference."

THE FALSE "GOD" OF WORLDLINESS. The attitude of our society has changed greatly over the past two decades. Gradually we have become more and more worldly.

Divorce was once frowned on by society in general; now it has become a major problem in the church. Preachers and elders are condoning "social" drinking. Dancing, mixed swimming and pornography have become acceptable pastimes for the people of our nation including some members of the church. Sexy and near nude dress have become a standard and many women in the church have fallen prey.

Premarital and extramarital sex are no longer frowned upon. Couples living together without the benefit of marriage is common place in almost every community. Now there is a big effort underway in our nation to legalize same sex marriages.

Space will not allow us to mention all the passages in the Bible that condemn immodesty, lasciviousness, adultery, drinking, unscriptural divorce and remarriage. John, more or less, sums it up for us when he said, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). Many have made the choice to serve "the god of worldliness."

THE FALSE "GOD" OF LIBERALISM. Liberalism is the greatest single threat to the church today. Liberalism is hard to define because

it has so many faces. About the best brief and simple definition of liberalism is: "The undermining of the authority of the Scriptures." Its primary doctrine is that the end justifies the means.

The only way to keep from serving "the god of liberalism" is to go back to the Bible and demand a "thus saith the Lord" for everything taught and practiced in religion.

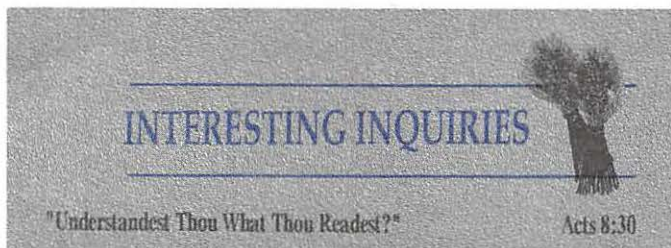
FINALLY, THERE IS THE FALSE "GOD" OF SELF. Jesus said, "If any will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Many times we are our own worst enemy. Living the Christian life is not always easy. Jesus said that if one would follow him that he must "deny himself." Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:1-2).

Will we be able to give up all the glamour that the world has to offer? No doubt, we will all, at times, become discouraged and despondent, but we must never turn back. Remember that Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

Regardless of the hardships and trials that may come, and the false gods with which we must contend, may we all persevere in living the Christian life and preaching the gospel until death overtakes us. -10914 Highway 25 South, Fulton, MS 38843.

"If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, and any house better than the house of God...any persons better than Christ, or any indulgence better than the hope of heaven...take alarm."

Thomas Guthrie



DO WE HAVE A RIGHT TO OUR OWN OPINIONS?

John T. Polk, II

"How can you say that what you believe is right for everyone? Isn't everyone entitled to their own opinion? What is right for your church may not be right for others."

No one has "a right to their own opinion" as long as it differs from the Word of God. "Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you glory as if you had not received it?" (1 Corinthians 4:6-7). Whatever God has given by his revealed word is not subject to human criticism or contradiction. John the Baptist said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven" (John 3:27). Only "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor (Greek *critic*) of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). There is no "higher criticism" than the word of God itself! The Bible is the only written source of infallible truth (John 17:17; Psalm 118:8; 119:30-31, 97-104, 129-136)! Jesus Christ said he came into the world "that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice" (John 18:37). Wicked Pontius Pilate spoke for all liberal Bible critics when he asked, "what is truth?" (John 18:38). The answer to his question

stood before him in the person of Jesus Christ, and the liberal critics are answered by the Gospel of Jesus Christ! People who were "weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd" needed Jesus' disciples to preach the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 9:36-10:26).

Faith depends upon one's view of God's truthfulness (John 14:1; 8:32; 5:46-47). The Scriptures are the truth and are not as false-scholars say they are, and God's Word does not abide in those who do not believe in "Whom He Sent" (John 5:38). Reader, Please read 2 Peter 1:16-21 and notice that *The Bible Is Not*:

1. **Human Wisdom** (2 Peter 1:16). The Bible is an accurate account of what it says, not "cunningly devised fables" (or "cleverly invented myths"). There is no legend, lore, or lie in the Bible except to show false ways. Scripture is a God-breathed, Holy Spirit-worded, Jesus Christ-fulfilled text that shows mankind "faith, hope and love" (1 Corinthians 13:13). Bible history is abundantly and persistently verified by archeology. Bible morals light the darkest recesses of human soul; ennoble behavior with utmost good; satisfy a mind's search for truth; and simplify solutions to life's stumblingblocks. It is not a collection of Jewish fables (1) to be re-edited as a "documentary hypothesis" suggests: (2) Nor should it's accounts be combined out of sequence to uphold "traditions" (Magi saw no babe in a manger, but a "young child" in a house (Matthew 2:11); (3) Nor should pagan practices be mixed into its faith, cf., Acts 14:6-18 (winter time rituals i.e. yule logs, mistletoe, or drunkenness; Rites of Spring i.e. eggs, rabbits, lilies, etc.); (4) Nor should "religious myth" be associated with it (cf., Colossians 2 16-3:3; 1 Timothy 4:1-5).

2. **Human Authority** (2 Peter 1:17-19). The claims about Jesus Christ were taught by eye-witnesses whose accounts were substantiated by "signs, wonders, and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will" (Hebrews 2:1-4; cf., Matthew 17:1-5; 2 Peter 1:16-18; John 20:27-28). Bible claims were written by those whom the Holy Spirit guided into "all truth" (John 16:13; 15:26-27; 14:26). The

miracles recorded in the Scriptures are all anyone should need to believe in both Jesus and Scripture (John 20:29-31; 3:2; 16:27; 17:20). Scripture is not based upon hearsay or second-hand accounts. "We have the prophetic word confirmed" (2 Peter 1:19), and it is faithful and worthy of acceptance (1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Thessalonians 2:13), thus there is no place for man-made: catechisms, creeds, prayerbooks, manuals, theologies, or doctrines.

3. **Human Interpretation** (2 Peter 1:20-21). Human opinions, speculations, or guesses without consulting God's revealed word, produce divisions, confusion and error. Everyone's opinions as to whom Jesus was were wrong, and no one had a right to be wrong! Only Peter's answer was right because it came from the "Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 16:13-17). No matter what the Bible proves to the contrary: "Humanism" teaches that Scripture was completely devised by fabrication and lie; "Judaism" teaches that Bible Prophecy is incomplete and unfulfilled (no Christ, kingdom, or New Testament); "Catholicism, Buddhism, Mormonism, Hinduism, Islam, *et. al.*" teach that the Bible is incomplete and they need to add Apocryphal books, traditions, or "other scriptures;" "Denominationalism" teaches that the Bible approves of confusion, disintegration, and division; "Fundamentalism" teaches that the Bible needs constant, additional miraculous revelation and confirmation; and "Liberalism or Modernism" denies the miraculous element(s) and accuracy of the text. All of these are false systems of Bible study. Indeed, "let God be true but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4).

Prejudiced, destructive, arrogant critics of the story of Christ strip Him of His Deity and place upon Him the scarlet robe of humanity; weave a crown of thorny man-made Bible "difficulties;" give Him a reed of doubt with which to abuse His person; bow the knee in mock "adoration;" spit upon Him words of confusion and contradiction; say "Hail, King of the Jews" conceding Him an earthly nation but not a heavenly kingdom of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles and lead Him away from His church,

compelling Him to bear the cross for Himself and no one else (cf., Matthew 27:28-32). They have the audacity to offer Him their bitter doctrines to swallow but he refuses to partake of their false concepts of Him! When they have Him crucified, they gamble for the biggest share of His life's leftovers by merchandising their writings, lectures, teachings, seminars, and college courses on how unimportant Jesus Christ really is (cf., Matthew 27:34-35). Then they watch Him and marvel when people who believe in their "Frankensteinian Christ" reject Jesus as the Christ, become disinterested in their message, stoop to degradation, and refuse religion altogether (cf., Matthew 27:36-44)! Indeed, their publications, classrooms, pulpits, churches, seminaries, and assemblies are "Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull" (Matthew 27:33). Those "critics" who follow in the footsteps of David Friedrich Strauss, author of *Life Of Jesus* which denied the Divine in Jesus Christ, would do well to hear his own words twenty-five years after its publication: "I might well bear a grudge against my book, for it has done much evil...it has made my life a lonely one," (p. 112, *Where The Higher Criticism Fails*, by W. H. Fitchett, The Methodist Book Concern, N.Y., 1922).

What anyone believes should only come from the Bible (Romans 10:17), and all churches should believe and practice as Christians did in the New Testament (Acts 11:26; 1 Corinthians 1:10-13). Truly the devil is the father of lies and of those who deny the evidence to the truth (John 8:39-47). -125 The Trace, Dover, TN 37058.

DO NOT FORGET

A traveller was packing his suitcase in preparation for a long journey. He said to his friend, "In this small corner of my suitcase I am going to put a lamp, a mirror, a telescope, a sharp sword, and a small library." His friend inquired, "How are you going to manage that?" "Easily enough," came the response, "the Bible is all of these."

A SIGNIFICANT NEW BOOK ON CHANGE IN THE CHURCH

Dennis Guldedge

In 1966 an attack on the faith was published in the form of a book called, *Voices Of Concern*. It contained chapters from those who denied the Bible as well as those who claimed to be members of the Lord's church who were telling us what they perceived as being wrong with the church at the time. In 1967 James D. Bales wrote a critical review of that book, and the many falsehoods which it advocated, in a volume entitled, *The Faith Under Fire*. Many of the same contentions and conclusions of current change agents are nothing but a re-hash of what was taught thirty years ago as a re-reading of the Bales book will reveal.

A significant new book which carefully analyzes the current change movement among some brethren is *Piloting The Strait*, by Dave Miller who is director of the Brown Trail School of Preaching in Bedford, Texas. It is "A Guidebook for Assessing Change In Churches of Christ" which treats the subject in a kind, comprehensive, scholarly, but above all, Biblical fashion.

This book is comprised of six main parts: (1) "The Roots of Change," (2) "The Fuel For Change," (3) "The Mechanism For Change: The New Hermeneutic," (4) "The Specifics of Change," (5) "The Goal of Change," and (6) "The Antidote to Change." You will be shocked at how pervasive change-agentry has become in the church. You will, however, appreciate Dave Miller's simple but hard hitting approach, the attention to detail in the many subjects covered, the thorough documentation at the end of each chapter and the respect for Bible authority which permeates this wonderful book. You will learn who is saying what as this book names names.

Piloting The Strait is a hard bound book of 528 pages. It sells for 19.95, plus \$2 for postage. You may order a copy from Dave Miller, P. O. Box 210667, Bedford, TX 76095.

THE NAME "CHRISTIAN"

Continued from page 13

These prophecies were fulfilled in Christ and in Christianity. In Acts 10 and 11 we read of Gentiles seeing the glory of God, and in the same chapter, 11:26, we find God's people being called by a new name.

Our desire is to be Christians and to wear no other proper name than this. We are Christians and Christians only. We are able to glorify God in this holy and worthy name. We dare not profane it by linking it with any sectarian title or denominationalize its use.

Christian is a Divine name. In it all division and heresy are renounced. It is undenominational. It is unifying. It glorifies Him of whom it is said: "There is no other name given under heaven whereby you must be saved" (Acts 4:12). [*Christian Light*, November 1955].

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Sunday Evening Worship	6:00
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00

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Bill Dillon, Evangelist

POOR RICHARD SAYS:

"Think of three things -- Whence you came, where you are going and to whom you must account."

-B. Franklin

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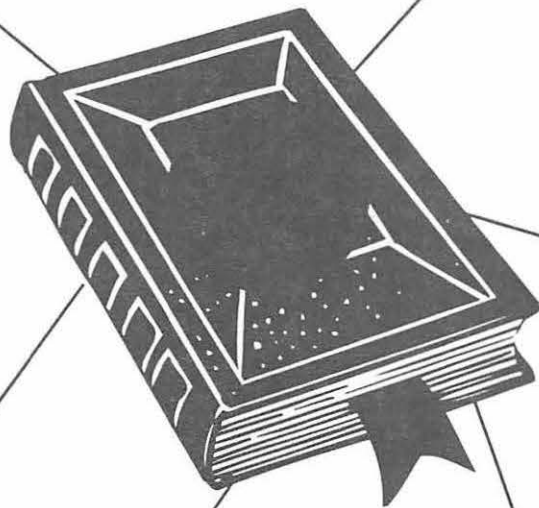
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READERS' RESPONSE

"How Readest Thou?"

Luke 10:26

SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING

I recently read a copy of *Gospel Gleaner*. It was spiritually uplifting for me. Would you please put me on your mailing list. Wayne W. Pagel, Cornersville, TN.

BORROWED FROM A NEIGHBOR

Today I read the first *Gospel Gleaner*. The paper is above excellent on each article. Please add me to your mailing list. I borrowed your paper from a neighbor, friend and sister in Christ (Katie R. Faulkner). Iola Tatum, Ridgely, TN.

READ IT FROM COVER TO COVER

We received our *Gospel Gleaner* today and read it from cover to cover. Jo Moore, who is our daughter and a member of Mabelvale church sent us our first copy. Ira & Virginia Clark, Millington, TN.

SAW GG ON THE WEB

I saw your paper, *Gospel Gleaner*, on Garland Robinson's website. Please add me to your mailing list. Michael Willey, Nashville, TN.

NEED MORE PAPERS LIKE GG

The *Gospel Gleaner* has been coming addressed to A. L. Parr. Brother Parr is no longer here, but I have been enjoying reading the magazine ever since I have been here. We need more papers such as this. Please add my name to your mailing list. Paul Lewis, Berry, AL.

WAYS TO UTILIZE GG

I am writing on behalf of the Westville Church of Christ. We are receiving copies of the *Gospel Gleaner* and find much within its pages for prayerful study. We find the paper to be very useful in evangelistic work; for giveaways at doctors' offices, hospitals, where ever people congregate. Ernest Lombard, Bonifay, FL.

LOOKS GREAT

Please sign me up for your publication. It looks great! David W. Hester, Tuscumbia, AL.

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY

I enjoyed your paper which was sent to Faulkner University. Please put the one you send here in care of my address. May God richly bless your efforts. Kenneth Randolph, Montgomery, AL.

WORD FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Thank you very much for the *Gospel Gleaner* magazines which I received in my mailing address in Manila and also in my residence in Cavite. I already received 2 issues in Manila (Vol. 12, no 1 & 2) and a copy in Cavite (Vol. 12, no 2). Our provincial postal system in Tanza, Cavite is not good. So I advise you to mail the magazines in my mailing address in Manila. I appreciate if you will do. God bless you, Serafin M. Calixto, Tanza, Philippines.

Thank you very much for sending my first copy of *Gospel Gleaner*. I am very grateful for your kindness to send this to me for free. I pray that you will continue sending every issue of this amazing publication to me. Thank you very much again. God bless you all. Danni C. de Vera, Queszon City Philippines.

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GOSPEL GLEANER



Volume 13

Number 2

THE GROWING TREND TOWARD "JAZZED-UP" WORSHIP

Wayne Jackson

Some folks are suggesting these days that we may have restored "truth" in our worship format, but we have not restored the "spirit" aspect of public devotions to God (John 4:24). They want to be able to shout, clap, wave their arms, etc. Some are asking: "How do we know the Spirit doesn't 'move us' to do these things?" They argue that we ought to be able to feel the same emotional intensity that we did when we first became Christians -- in every worship service.

First of all, "Spirit," as employed in John 4:23-24, has nothing to do with the emotional climate of one's worship. "Spirit" relates to the genuineness or sincerity of the worshiper. The whole premise, therefore, that we should "charge up" our services in order to tap into the "Spirit" is flawed. Moreover, it is in the nature of things that no one can mentally entertain the same emotional pitch, regarding any matter, indefinitely. This, in itself, ought to be a clue that true spirituality is not to be found in emotional "highs," but rather in the satisfying depths of knowing that one is faithfully serving his Maker.

Repeatedly in the Bible we are taught that we receive divine instruction, edification, etc., by means of "words" (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). The Scriptures are able to furnish us completely unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). How could this statement be

true if we are in constant need of "nudges" from the Holy Spirit to recharge our religious batteries.

Then consider this: Suppose one has an understanding of what the New Testament teaches regarding a matter, but he feels that he is getting a "prompting" from the Spirit to do otherwise. Which should he follow? The fact is, it is the responsibility of those who argue for the validity of the so-called Spirit-induced emotional waves to show biblical support for such. We have clear precedent for Scripture-prompting; where is the authority for Spirit-prompting -- apart from the Bible? The Pentecostals can outdo us with this emotional subjectivism any day of the week, and some of our people are being seriously influenced by this movement. Make no mistake about it, it is a growing phenomenon.

I am convinced that this surge toward false emotionalism is due in part to the shallowness of our people in Scripture knowledge. Many have become so spiritually/intellectually lazy that they are looking for a quick-fix to alleviate their boredom. It is almost like some are searching for a sort of "Spirit" drug on which to get a fast "high."

The most thrilling and sustained "high" that you will ever have is when you dig deeply into the treasures of Bible study. -P. O. Box 55265, Stockton, CA 95205



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The *GOSPEL GLEANER* is dedicated to restoring New Testament Christianity. We welcome your comments and questions regarding any article found herein.

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NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

Bill Dillon

The declaration of Paul in Romans 1:16 stands as one of his boldest and most significant utterances:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.



In order for all Christians to render acceptable service to their Lord and Master, they must come to Paul's position.

When Paul said he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, he meant that he was not ashamed of the principles and doctrines which Christ taught. At the time Paul made his statement, the followers of Christ were held in contempt and were looked upon in derision by the enemies of the gospel. Paul was nevertheless willing to accept the Lord's teachings and proclaim them far and wide, that others also might hear and come to the knowledge of the truth.

In the first century cruel suffering and perhaps death at the hands of the heathen came to the followers of Christ. But such things did not cause Paul to swerve from his staying the course of duty and faithfulness.

Paul was not ashamed to preach Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2); the one church (1 Corinthians 12:20; Colossians 1:18); and the necessity of baptism for the remission of sins (1 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 6:3-4).

Paul knew what a wondrous change the gospel had wrought in his own life. The things he once loved, he now hated; and the things he once hated, he now loved. Before, he had zealously persecuted Christians and marshaled his abilities against the teachings of Christ; now, he was willing and anxious to proclaim the very same teachings to the world at any cost (Galatians 1:13, 23).

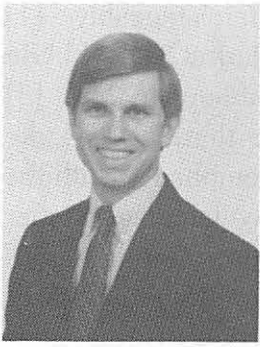
Paul also had seen how the gospel had a saving and transforming influence upon the lives of others. He had observed it shape the lives of sinners and fashion them into saints (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Certainly, such a gospel was nothing to be ashamed of, but rather, a thing in which to glory.

"Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till He,
Bright morning Star; bid darkness flee."

(Continued on page 8)

"THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS"

Dennis Gullledge



That the death, burial and resurrection of Christ involved three days is well established in Scripture (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). In light of this fact, frequently people want to know, "If Jesus was crucified on Friday, as many say the Bible teaches, how could He have risen on Sunday and be in the grave three days and three nights?" Let it be seen just here that the Bible teaches that there was a Friday crucifixion. It occurred on the day the Lord's biographers called "the preparation," that is, the day before the Sabbath (Mark 15:42; John 19:31). Let it also be seen that the Bible teaches a Sunday resurrection (Matthew 28:1; Luke 24:1-3).

For some this chronology poses a problem. Sabbatarians, for example, argue for a Wednesday crucifixion and a Saturday resurrection. The late Herbert W. Armstrong made such an argument. "The purpose is to remove the significance of the first day, thereby to bolster Sabbatarianism" (*The Plain Truth About Armstrongism*, p. 135). Others, without any such sectarian objective, but, driven by the initiative to help the Bible out of what they see as a difficulty, attempt to formulate a satisfactory explanation of the "three days and three nights" time frame. In order to get three full nights some set the crucifixion on Thursday, leaving only two full days. In order to get three full days some set the crucifixion on Wednesday, giving four full nights. None of these explanations are satisfactory.

THE PROBLEM

The Lord clearly explained His own death and resurrection thusly: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall be no sign given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the

whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39-40). For those who have a problem understanding how that can be possible given the Friday to Sunday scheme, let me hasten to say that the problem is not with the Bible, but with some interpretations of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17). How often do we create problems where none exist except in our frequently unenlightened minds?

Our problem comes from a failure to understand how the Jews counted time. The evening introduced the Sabbath day (Exodus 12:18). Josephus speaks of the priest's signaling the beginning and ending of the Sabbath by saying "At the beginning of every seventh day, in the evening when the day was finished, as giving notice to the people when they were to leave off work, and when they were to go to work again" (*Wars Of The Jews*, IV, IX, p. 12). It was based on the statement, "And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Genesis 1:5). In this sense the day consists of two divisions -- light and darkness (Genesis 8:22).

The problem is realized when we consider that to the typical English reader of the Bible "three days and three nights" means 72 hours. The problem is accentuated when we attempt to work 72 hours into the Biblical equation. If "three days and three nights" are to be taken literally, as we understand it, there could not be an early morning resurrection (Matthew 28:1). Let us say that Jesus was crucified and buried on Friday. Three full days and three full nights later would be late Monday afternoon. If the crucifixion and burial took place on a Thursday afternoon the resurrection would have occurred on a Sunday afternoon. If we say that the crucifixion and burial occurred on a Wednesday afternoon the resurrection would have been on a Saturday afternoon. Guy N. Woods was correct when he

Continued on page 4)

said, "Any effort, the design of which, is to make the period our Lord spent in the tomb exactly three full days and three full nights is a fruitless and vain exercise, a useless and unnecessary endeavor" (*Questions And Answers: Open Forum*, p. 220).

A PRACTICAL SOLUTION

The problem is resolved when we consider that there are three expressions in the Bible which indicate the length of time that the body of Jesus lay in the tomb. [1] "The third day" (Matthew 16:21). [2] "After three days" (Mark 8:31). [3] "Three days and three nights" (Matthew 12:40). If taken literally these statements each indicate different lengths of time to the English reader. "The third day" means exactly that. "After three days," to us, means on the fourth day. "Three days and three nights," to us, means 72 hours. However, they all denote exactly the same period of time, inasmuch as they all refer to the same event.

Leslie G. Thomas, of loving memory, made the helpful observation that the Bible "should be understood according to the true and proper meaning of the words, in their current acceptation at the time and in the place in which they were originally written or translated. If this principle is properly regarded, we will have to interpret such expressions as those used to indicate the time the body of Jesus lay in the tomb, in the light of Jewish usage, rather than in the light of present-day understanding" (*What The Bible Teaches, Volume 1*, p. 100).

A few examples show that it was the Hebrew custom to use "after" and "on" interchangeably in expressing the duration of a series of days or years. In Genesis 42:17-18 Joseph put his brothers "in ward three days," but released them "the third day." In 1 Kings 12:5, when the people petitioned Rehoboam to make their taxes lighter, he said, "Depart yet three days, then come again to me." Verse 12 says, "So

Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade them, saying 'come to me the third day.'"

Jesus used the expressions "after three days" and "on the third day" interchangeably. [1] "After three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). [2] "Be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21). [3] "Rise again from the dead the third day" (Luke 24:46). If Jesus could say, in compliance with the idiomatic usage of the Hebrew language, "after three days," meaning termination "on the third day," He could also say "three days and three nights" to indicate the same period of time since they all refer to the same event.

It is also true that the Hebrews counted a portion of a day or a year, at the beginning or end of a series, as a whole day or a whole year. Consider, for example, what we know of the brief reign of Abijam, king of Judah (1 Kings 15). Abijam began to reign "in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam" (vs. 1). He was succeeded by Asa "in the twentieth year of Jeroboam" (vs. 9). Yet, "three years reigned he in Jerusalem" (vs. 2). Here we find that a part of the eighteenth year, all of the nineteenth and part of the twentieth are designated as "three years." In reality, it might actually have been a little more than one year! Many other examples could be given, but suffice it to say that these examples show that "three days and three nights" designates the time from Friday (a part of that day called "the preparation"), all of Saturday ("the Sabbath"), and a part of Sunday ("the first day of the week").

If we keep in mind the proper meaning of words at the time when they were originally written we will no longer feel the frustration of trying to figure out how to get 72 hours out of one whole day and a portion of two. It will give us a clearer understanding of many Bible expressions, including "three days and three nights. -10822 Mabelvale West Road, Mabelvale, AR 72103

No Condition Is Permanent. No Situation Is So Good That It Can't Go Bad. No Situation Is So Bad That It Can't Get Better.

CAN A MASON GO TO HEAVEN?

David P. Brown

YES.....

1. ...IF God will accept mere men being addressed as "Worshipful Master," "Most Worshipful Master," and "Right Worshipful Master" or in the case of the Eastern Star, "Worthy High Priestess" or "Royal Matron," etc. (verified by asking them the titles they give people).

2. ...IF God will accept Christians who have been blindfolded, kneeled, and with hands on the Bible took as a solemn oath, "in the presence of Almighty God, and this Worshipful Lodge, erected to Him, and dedicated to the holy Saint John do hereby and hereupon most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear..." and be made a "Master Mason" (3rd degree); a "Mark Mason" (4th degree); a "Past Master" (5th degree); and then a "Most Excellent Master" upon taking the sixth degree (*Handbook of Freemasonry* by Ronayne, 1943, pp. 68-70, also *Duncan's Ritual of Freemasonry*, Part 1).

3. ...IF God will accept prayers worded in the following manner from Christians and non-Christians. "And when we shall have ended our labors on earth may we forever sing songs of deliverance and joy in that Heavenly Lodge where love is supreme and the ties of fraternity and friendship are never to be broken. Amen" (*Masonic Manual*, Grand Lodge, A.F. and A.M. of Alabama, Compiled under Authority of the Grand Lodge by Oliver Day Street, 1940, Reprint 1943, p. 145).

4. ...IF God will save religious institutions other than the church of Christ. "Masonry, then, is indeed, a religious institution; and on this ground mainly, if not alone, should the religious Mason defend it" (*Encyclopedia of Freemasonry*, McClure Pub. Co., Philadelphia, 1917, p. 729).

5. ...IF, along with the church of Christ, God will accept Masonry as a divine institution. "That the institution is of Divine origin, leaves not a shadow of doubt on my humble mind" (*The Freemason's Monitor*, Z. A. Davis, Late Past

Master of Lafayette Lodge, No. 71, p. 4 of the preface).

6. ...IF God will accept the following statement about the deceased Mason made at Masonic funerals. "As a reminder to the living of that rectitude of conduct which should characterize man in this life, we deposit this apron with the body of our deceased brother with the hope that the virtues symbolized by it will gain ready passage for him from our imperfect lodge here to that all-prefect, celestial lodge above where there is a higher, a wider and a brighter realm of life and labor" (*Masonic Manual*, p. 84).

7. ...IF God will accept the doctrine that whatever a man believes to be the truth is the truth to him (*Morals and Dogma*, Albert Pike, p. 160).

8. ...IF God will accept people into heaven contrary to his will (Matthew 7:21; 2 John 6-11).

BE AN ENCOURAGER

Bill Dillon

One writer has stated: "One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement...it is easy enough to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another. Many a time a word of praise or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet. Blessed is the man who speaks such a word."

A youthful preacher was discouraged over his lack of accomplishment in his labors. The young man had hoped to preach to hundreds but only a handful came. An elder lifted his spirits by saying, "Son, don't feel badly. I know a man who had only twelve followers and He did all right."

It is human nature to get discouraged. It is divine nature to give encouragement.

THE LORD'S SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Allen Webster



The disciples once came upon Jesus while He was deep in prayer (Luke 11:1). Though accustomed to hearing men pray -- since children they had seen men stand on street corners praying -- they were fascinated by this prayer. It

was not mere form, but force. They must know His secret, so they ask Him to "take them to school."

If you had the privilege of asking the Lord for one blessing, what would it be? "Lord, teach me how to make money!" "Teach me how to be successful." "Teach me how to enjoy life." "Lord, teach me how to do a miracle, preach, or lead singing." But "teach me to pray"? -- this takes a wise man. This is often called "The Lord's Prayer," not because Jesus prayed it (He never had to ask for forgiveness), but because He taught it. It might better be called "The Model Prayer." Let's look at it phrase by phrase.

"When ye pray say" Luke's version is shorter, and different, than Matthew's (6:9-14) which indicates Jesus taught the same lesson on two occasions and that He does not want us tied to these very words (for then there would be no variation). This episode also shows that it is proper to meditate beforehand what we want to ask God, and to arrange our thoughts, lest we come thoughtlessly into His presence. The prayer's brevity contrasts sharply with what the disciples heard from the Pharisees (Mark 12:40; cf. Ecclesiastes 5:2).

"Our Father" Jesus refers to God as Father (*pater*) -- not counting repetitions in parallel passages -- about 161 times in Scripture (e.g., Luke 15). This privilege is granted to all Christians (Isaiah 63:16; 1 John 3:1; cf. Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15; 1 Peter 1:17). Prayer is based on family relationship. It recognizes the

relationship of brothers and sisters ("our" Father). I have no right to ask God for blessings that would hurt you (cf. Psalm 106:15).

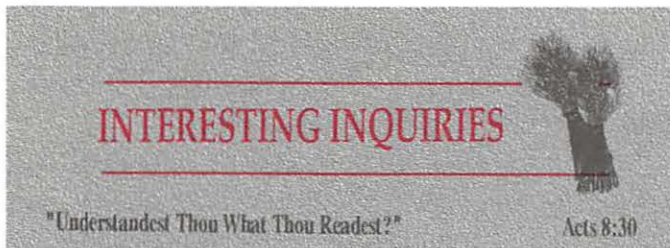
When we are "born again" (John 3:3-5; Galatians 3:26-27), we are added to God's family (1 Timothy 3:15), and can address Him as "Father." Unless we can honestly call God "Father," we cannot pray. Perhaps the greatest blessing of prayer is not receiving an answer, but being a person God will hear. A ship's passengers were all scared as it was being tossed mercilessly by winds and waves. All, that is, but one little girl. "Why are you not afraid?" they asked. She replied, "Because my father is captain of this ship." How glad we are that God is our Father. As life's storms rage, we can assuredly say, "We are not afraid, for our Father is Captain of the ship."

"Which art in heaven" (2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalm 11:4; Daniel 2:28; Matthew 5:16; 10:32). Convince us that this amazing universe is only a vast and gorgeously furnished house without an infinite Occupant who is our Friend, and Christians will never pray again. God is there!

"Hallowed be thy name." Prayer's first concern should be honoring God. Jesus stressed reverence in approaching God (Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 10:3; 22:32; Psalm 79:9; 111:9; Isaiah 6:2-3; 29:23; Ezekiel 36:23; Revelation 15:4). Hallowed (*hagiazō*) means "made holy, revered; to separate from profane things and dedicate to God." Literally this reads, "Let thy name be sanctified." We are saying, "Let God's name be sanctified in my life," which is done by living righteously.

"Thy kingdom come." This reflects the pre-Pentecost nature of this prayer, as the kingdom (church) was in its preparatory state (Matthew 16:18-19). It came "in power" on Pentecost (Acts 2; cf. Mark 9:1; Luke 24:47-49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-4;

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WHAT ABOUT CLONING?

John T. Polk, II

"Of Today's Technology What Can A Couple Use To Conceive A Child?"

ONLY SOME, assuming they wish to honor God by being in a two-person, heterosexual, monogamous, persistent marriage (Cf. Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:1-6).

In Scotland a lamb named "Dolly" was purportedly "cloned" in 1996, but it wasn't announced until February 25, 1997 when the British Government-funding for the project was being debated. Screaming headlines ["Screamlines" -jtp, II] herald almost all falsely-called "scientific" achievements (Cf. 1 Timothy 6:20). Clearly, researchers seek money and mania for themselves rather than reverence for the Creator.

CLONING IS: (1) *Uniting life-structure and genetics God created in ways God may not have intended.* These "anomalies" and "mutants" are supposed to be "engineered" by human intrusion into natural processes. For humans, whatever is done to by-pass God's marriage law is doomed. Cloning is defined as "the product of asexual reproduction," or being born with only one parent (a.k.a. "parthenogenetically" -- virgin-born). Idolatrous evolution requires that this was done ages ago without God, but the creation showed that God is the only one who could and should make humans this way (Genesis 1:26-27), and in the virgin-birth of Jesus, God did not suspend male/female involvement (Luke 1:26-37). Thus, Jesus Christ was not a "clone" (Hebrews 2:7-9, 14-18). Products of parenting are called

"children" not "clones"! Nothing done in the laboratory can set aside the fact that God will hold accountable everyone who makes babies without heterosexual marriage (Hebrews 13:4). God gives humans dominion over all life forms (Genesis 1:26-27) except man, himself, for humans are made "in the image of God" and differently from animals (Genesis 2:7; 9:6; Psalm 139:13-16; Acts 14:15).

(2) *Yet another example of mankind taking glory for himself rather than marvel at God's wisdom and power* (Cf. Romans 1:18-25; Psalm 19:1-6; Colossians 1:13-18). Albert Schweitzer said, "If a man loses reverence for any part of life, he will lose his reverence for all of life." Men who take undue credit for any part of life will take undue credit for all of life. "Normal" people are the "offspring of God" (Acts 17:28-29). QUESTION: If a man is cloned, who is his "creator," God or man? God is not responsible for the sins of the godless (Ephesians 4:16-20; 2 Timothy 3:1-5). Evolution hid its idolatry for a century behind a mantle of "biology" (Cf. Romans 1:25), but the idol of "scientism" is the DNA Molecule, before whom panderers seek to remove God from the formula of life by their test tubes. The act of re-using what God has made does not qualify one to be God (Isaiah 44:6, 9-21; Psalm 94:3-12; Jeremiah 10:8, 11-15; 7:8-11; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6).

(3) *Not the same as using fertilization techniques to help married couples bear their own child.* Human "cloning" avoids God's way, whereas fertilization methods can assist God's pattern. But remember that most medical personnel may not share one's devoutness: a) fertility pioneer Ricardo Asch, after fertilizing a wife's egg with her own husband's sperm, used the "extra" eggs removed to implant other women whose eggs were not readily available (*USA Today*, 2/22/96); b) Michael & Elizabeth Higgins' twins had been fertilized *using another man's sperm* in addition to her husband's sperm (1995); c) in Fairfax County, Virginia, 1992, Dr. Cecil Jacobson fathered as many as seventy children
(Continued on page 17)

THE LORD'S SCHOOL OF PRAYER

Continued from page 6

Colossians 1:13). Today, we could pray that it be enlarged and that more would become members of it.

"Thy will be done" Prayer's purpose is not to get man's will done in heaven so much as to get God's will done on earth. A little child asks for anything and everything, and usually does not get what he asks for. Older children discover what fathers want to give, then asks for and receives it. Christians must want what God wants (1 John 5:14-15; Luke 22:42; Matthew 6:10; Philippians 2:12-13; Proverbs 28:9) or they cannot ask in Christ's name (Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 5:20; John 16:24). Before talking about our needs, we must focus on His concerns.

"Give us this day our daily bread" (present) [Give, *didomi*, "supply necessary things."] Bread was a staple in their diet, a necessity for life. No need is too small or great for God (cf. Philippians 4:19). This goes back to the story of manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16:11-21; cf. Deuteronomy 8:6) when only enough for a day's needs might be gathered. Matthew says, "Give us daily bread this day," whereas Luke says, "Give bread to us day by day." The Israelites had daily manna, "Let us have bread today for today, and tomorrow for tomorrow." The present tense verbs indicate continuing, daily, provision. We are not to worry about the unknown future, but to live a day at a time. To trust God for sufficient food day by day was important to people who were often hired only a day at a time (cf. Matthew 20:1-5).

"Forgive us our sins as we forgive others" (past). This show that there are no Christians who do not need forgiveness. Sin debts are daily contracted, and should daily be removed. God forgives and cleanses us as we confess our sins (Psalm 25:11, 18; 32:1-5; 51:1-3; 130:4; Isaiah 43:25-26; 1 John 1:9). Forgiveness is provided through the blood of Christ in His body, the church (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 2 Timothy 2:10; Acts 20:28). God desires the

extension of mercy on the part of His people (Micah 6:8; Matthew 6:14-15; 18:35; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:13; James 2:13). Indebted to us is literally injured us (Barnes).

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (future). God guards and guides us. Temptation refers to any testing situation [*peirasmós*, "an experiment, trial, proving"] (2 Corinthians 12:7-8; Revelation 2:10; 3:10). Temptation is to be as dreaded and carefully avoided as sin itself. God does not tempt men to sin (James 1:12-15), but is able to guard them against it, and/or provide a way to escape it (1 Corinthians 10:13; cf. 1 John 3:9; Matthew 26:41; Luke 8:11, 13; 22:46; Psalm 119:11, 105). Deliver (*rhōmāi*) means "rescue" (Genesis 48:16; Psalm 121:7).

No Christian rises any higher than his praying. But prayer is hard. Most would rather work than pray, but without prayer work is useless. What a difference it would make in our personal lives, our homes, our churches, and our world if all Christians enrolled in the Lord's school of prayer -- and graduated! -P. O. Box 512, Jacksonville, AL 36265

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

Continued from page 2

Paul's love for Christ and his conviction that the gospel was to include all mankind made him travel the world to reach the legions of the lost.

The gospel of Jesus Christ upholds the highest of ideals and ethical standards. It is the one true religion. All other pathways to salvation and peace lead only to disappointment and despair.

May we always have such a love for the blessed gospel that we may never be ashamed to be examples of sinners saved by the gospel of God's grace, and like Paul, let us be willing to glorify the Author of that gospel in our lives. -612 E. Fourth Street, Mountain Home, AR 72653



AN HONEST AND GOOD HEART

(Luke 8:15)

M. W. Kiser



I certainly do not want to leave the impression that sincerity is all that is required. Many people have made tragic mistakes though most sincere! But, sincerity is a prerequisite to acceptable service (Philippians 1:10; 2 Peter 3:1). What are some

signs of a good and honest heart?

I. SEEKING HARMONY IN WHAT INSPIRED WRITERS WROTE.

- A. There are two ways to "handle" the word of God (2 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Timothy 2:15).
- B. Some make the word of God contradict itself.
 1. Luther thought the book of James contradicted the book of Romans.
 2. The doctrine of faith only ignores passages on water baptism.

II. INVESTIGATES BEFORE MAKING A DECISION.

- A. "Truth" has no fear of investigation and cross-examination.
- B. It is nice to trust people, but we should investigate for ourselves.

1. The case of the noble Bereans (Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21).
2. There is such a thing as a false teacher (1 John 4:1).

III. ASKING FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE IN LEARNING.

- A. Only those who are sincere will be heard (Proverbs 28:9).
- B. This does not contradict John 9:31 (see: 1 Peter 3:12).
 1. The example of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22:10); Cornelius (Acts 10:1-10).
 2. "What will You (not wife, mother, preacher) have me to do?"

IV. SHOWING GLADNESS IN BEING HELPED TO UNDERSTAND.

- A. Ignorance and prejudice are dangerous (Acts 3:14-15, 17; Matthew 13:13-17).
- B. Here are two examples of a proper disposition in being helped.
 1. Those converted on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41).
 2. The man from Ethiopia (Acts 8:30-31).

V. REPENTING AS SOON AS CONVICTED OF BEING WRONG.

- A. The heart is not to be trifled with (Romans 2:4-6; Hebrews 3:8, 13).
- B. Consider again some Bible examples:
 1. Saul, immediately desired to do what was right (Acts 9:5-9; 22:10).
 2. The Jailer, "the same hour of the night" (Acts 16:33).

VI. OBEYING IMMEDIATELY DIVINE COMMANDS.

- A. Obedience is important (Hebrews 5:8-9; Matthew 7:21; Revelation 22:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

(Continued on page 10)

AN HONEST AND GOOD HEART

Continued from page 9

B. Whose instructions are you going to follow?

1. The doctors or the neighbors down the street? Jesus or yourself?
2. Consider the bad example of Felix (Acts 24:25).

VII. TRYING TO WALK IN THE LIGHT YOU HAVE.

- A. If we refuse what we understand, we are not so sincere!
- B. Spiritual progress depends on this (1 John 1:7; 1 Corinthians 15:58).
1. How much light does a light house need to give out?
 2. To know, and not do is a sin (James 4:17).

Waiting to change until you are on your death bed is risky business. Death could come suddenly; pain could be too great; or the heart could become too hard to change fast! Don't burn your candle in the service of the devil and then try to blow the smoke and ashes in the face of God! Most cases of death bed repentance are never made good if the person recovers. Let your heart be an honest and good heart!

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Dennis Gullledge Evangelist

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THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS

J. A. McNutt

The home is the oldest institution in the world, it existed before the church, before civil government was instituted. It originated with Adam and Eve when God created both man and woman, to dwell in the beautiful garden of Eden. Any other relationship than male and female living together would be a sinful perversion of God's order. Adam as head of the family and Eve as wife and mother. The husband and wife, father and child, mother and baby relationship was ordained of God. "So, then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matthew 19:6 NKJV). This is a bond that cannot be broken except by death or sexual immorality (Matthew 19:9; Romans 7:2). Individuals or nations that ignore God's law will suffer the penalty.

The Husband, Head Of Family. God ordained man to be the head of the family, but modern society and the Feminist Movement has demoted man to a secondary role, or he has abdicated his God given responsibility. This is sad, because God intended that man should be the spiritual leader in his home, and that he should set the moral example and pattern for his children to follow. The father's obligation to his children is clearly stated in Ephesians 6:4, "And you fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." Many fathers have tried to shift this responsibility to the wife and mother, but fathers should not evade their Biblical obligation to their children. Some men feel that they have done all that is required when they have worked and supplied food and shelter for the family (1 Timothy 5:8), but even an infidel or unbeliever does this. Christian fathers must provide spiritual direction and guidance. Churches would do well to have a class for men using my workbook on *Father, The Head Of The House* and teach men their duty in the home. Thousands of families do not have a father to be a role model or spiritual leader in the

family, there is no effective discipline and children turn to drugs, gangs and crime.

Mothers Are So Important. It would be difficult to assess the true value of the mother's influence in training her children. It is tragic when a child is deprived of a mother's loving care and guidance in a Christian home. Nothing can fill the vacancy left by a godly mother, when she is separated from her children. Sometimes death may take the mother away and leave the children without her direction. A more frequent cause of the separation comes when the mother seeks employment in the business world and the children are committed to "Day Care" instead of "Mother Care." Willard Collins describes the modern home, in these words, "No cradle, no baby, no mother at home." There are extenuating circumstances, where mothers feel compelled to work. Yes, but the child is still deprived of the love and attention that is desperately needed in those early years. Christian mothers should ask themselves, is it really worth leaving your child to the care of others, for the money to buy luxuries that are not all that important, while your baby's life is being influenced by others who have no spiritual values to impart.

Mothers Are Needed At Home. The mother who works away from home may have missed an irreversible opportunity to train her child in God's way for those first six years of life. There is a little poem that suggests that a mother cannot begin too early to teach her child about God and his word

"Before your child has come to seven

Teach him well the way to heaven

Better yet the truth will thrive

If he knows it when he is five

Better yet, if at your knee

He learns it when he's only three

But best of all is when you have begun

To teach him of Jesus before he's one.

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The Lesson Of The Empty Cradle.

Sometimes there is no baby at home and the cradle stands empty, because a child has died. In such cases the parents are lonely and sad, but their child is safe. Jesus, has said, "except ye be converted, and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3-4; see also Luke 18:16). In other cases the cradle is empty because the mother is working and the baby is in Day Care supervised by the state. Parents need to be concerned because the government is often anti-religious as evidenced by the rejection of religious influence in our public school system. A child's life is empty without a mother's direction. Civil government is a poor substitute for a mother's care.

Mrs. Linda Mahue in her book *Day Care Vs. Mother Care* (page 49) has well said; "A child reared in the faith, is the greatest single contribution which can be made to society." "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Proverbs 1:8). It is time for parents to wake up and assume their God given responsibility to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We are living in a sin saturated society where God and the Bible have been forgotten. Someone has said, "Moral judgments aren't made much anymore, especially not in print or on TV. Among intellectuals and commentators judgment was long ago replaced by therapy. Ministers and priests gave way to clinics and counselors...everyone was left to his own way. It appears now that many people could have used a road map. The road map that man neglected or refused to read and follow is the Bible. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). The world threw away the road map, and chose to do what "seemed right in our own eyes" and ended up on a one way street to eternal destruction (Judges 17:6). There are only two ways, the narrow way which leads to life and the broad way which leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13-14) and

both ways are clearly described. The world needs to quit arguing with the sign posts and get back on the narrow way that leads to life. God's road map is always right; throw away the one designed by man and get on the right road. This will solve the world's problems, and guarantee your salvation as long as you continue on the road to eternal life.

Why not begin your journey today by faith and obedience to Christ (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16). "Faith only" is not enough; the gospel of Christ requires an obedient faith (Romans 16:26). We become the children of God when we are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26-29). Then having begun your journey never look back or turn back to the world or take a detour advocated by man. -2426 Lacosta Dr., Bartlett, TN 38134

DEALING WITH SIN

Jack Harriman

The world thinks the church makes too much ado about sin. It cannot see the terrible reality of sin and that it must be feared and shunned. Worldly folks confess they are sinners in flippant tones and between loud bursts of laughter. They make a joke out of it. But "fools make a mock of sin" (Proverbs 14:9).

It is impossible to have an adequate sense of sin without a great concept of God. Sin is against God. Joseph said, "How can I do this great wickedness (adultery) and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). Being "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3) is man seeing himself as he is compared to God. When Abraham saw this he said, "I am but dust and ashes." Isaiah said, "Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." The publican said, "God be merciful unto me a sinner."

Sin, like God, is no respecter of persons. It is that which separates a man from his maker, and it can have but one end -- death. "The soul that sins, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). That's you and me for "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Jesus went to the cross to deal with man's sin problem. The great physician has a cure.

What are you going to do about your sins? Why not do as did Saul, "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins" (Acts 22:16). -Center Street Bulletin, Fayetteville, AR

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

Steve E. Yeatts

When I was growing up, I was taught the dogma of the Baptist religion. I remember hearing that it was the blood and only the blood of Jesus Christ that could cleanse one from sin. As most children will during their formative years, I accepted that statement with blind faith. Now that I am a member of the church of Christ I can reflect upon that statement with a much different perspective. I understand now with much more clarity that it is the blood, but how we avail ourselves of it is much different than what I was taught as a child.

Jesus Christ said in Matthew 26:28, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for remission of sins." Clearly as Hebrews 9:22 tells us, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." But how and when do we obtain that remission? Paul wrote in Romans 6:3, asking "Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?" Being baptized puts us into Christ and his death and the act of baptism is the implementation of the commands of Jesus Christ and His Scriptures.

Where our denominational friends and family members are egregiously confused is that the blood is undeniably linked to the Lord's church. Some decry any connection between the church and the blood, but the Bible clearly states that the blood Jesus Christ shed was for the purpose of purchasing the church (Acts 20:28). So, in order for one's reasoning to be sound in accepting the blood; one must also accept the church that exists as a result of the blood of Christ. That is a crucial line of demarcation between the church and the religious world at large, the fact that the very life-giving element (the blood) bought the church which one must be a part of to have eternal life.

It is unfortunate that the denominational world that claims to esteem the blood of Christ so much is the source who does their best to

disassociate themselves from the very scriptures that tell us how to avail ourselves of that precious blood. Romans 6:4 says "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Baptism is that burial of a person dead in sin that identifies us with the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are buried because we are dead (spiritually), and we are raised because we are made alive by the blood of Jesus Christ, which we contacted by our fulfillment of the commands of the word of God.

I hope and pray that we as the church of Christ are never identified with disregarding the blood of Christ. We should honor and respect and preach the blood unequivocally as our cleansing element. The key is to emphasize that our doorway to that blood is contained within the waters of baptism where we put on Christ and the purpose of baptism is what is so important. -1909 Sterling Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37130

MOUNTAIN HOME CHURCH OF CHRIST COLLEGE AND NORTH STREETS

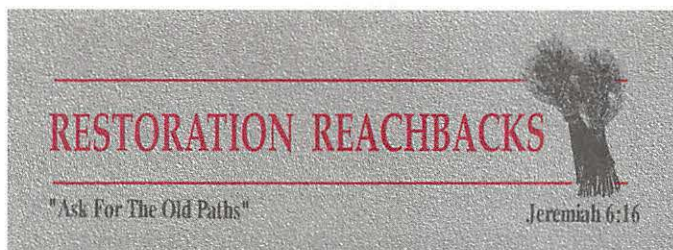
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Bill Dillon, Evangelist



ARE WE SAVED OUT OF THE CHURCH?

J. B. Gaither

Can we be saved out of the church is a question which has given many much concern. Before this can be determined one must learn what the church is. Too many times the church is thought of as one of the many denominations present in the world -- just a body of people subscribing to one-of-the-many doctrines. That might define a church but not **the** church. When we refer to the church we mean the one found in the New Testament. Let us now go to the New Testament and learn what the church really is.

The church is built upon Christ as the foundation. When Peter had confessed Christ as "the Christ the Son of the Living God," Christ said. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:15-19). The rock of which Christ spoke was the great truth that He was the Son of God. Christ is referred to repeatedly as "the stone (rock) which was set at naught of the builders" (Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6-8). In 1 Corinthians 3:11 Paul refers to Christ as the foundation. (1) The church is the institution built upon Jesus Christ. It is defined as (2) the kingdom of which Christ is King (Matthew 16:18-19). Paul writing to Timothy said, "These things write I unto you hoping to come to you shortly; but if I tarry long that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God which is the church of the living God..." (1 Timothy 3:15). (3) The church is the house of the living God. Paul, in speaking of Christ, said God "gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His

body..." (Ephesians 1:22-23). Thus we learn that the church is the very (4) body of Christ. Jesus came to save the world, but Paul said: "Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28) (5) The church is the price of Christ's blood. Again, Paul to the church at Rome says: "...ye should be married to another even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." (Romans 7:4). Here he is saying (6) the church is married to Christ -- His bride, His wife. In Ephesians Paul again says, "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the Head of the church...Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything...For no man yet hateth his own flesh but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Ephesians 5:23-29). Here Paul shows the church to be the wife of Christ whom "He nourisheth and cherisheth." The same relationship exists between Christ and the church that God would have to exist between husband and wife. (7) The church is also that which Christ nourisheth and cherisheth (Ephesians 5:29). In Acts 2:47, we learn that "the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (8) The church then is the saved. Also (9) those that glorify God "Unto Him (God) be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" (Ephesians 3:21). God is glorified only in and by the church.

Now let us reason on the nine definitions of the church given above and see if we can be saved out of it.

1. If Christ is the foundation of the church and salvation can be had outside the church then Christ is not the foundation of salvation. See Hebrews 5:8-9. Christ is "the author of eternal salvation."

2. If the church is Christ's kingdom and salvation can be had out of the church, one can be saved without being a servant or subject of Christ. Christ is "the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9).

3. The church is the house of God. If sal-
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ARE WE SAVED OUT OF THE CHURCH?

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vation can be found outside the church, God need not have a house. "In my Father's house are many mansions...I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2-3).

4. The church is the body of Christ. If one can be saved out of the church, Christ is not his Saviour. "Christ...is the Saviour of the body" (Ephesians 5:23).

5. Christ gave Himself for the church. If one can be saved out of the church, Christ's blood was not necessary, but was shed in vain. We know that this is not true "...the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7; Hebrews 9:13-14).

6. The church is Christ's bride. God has declared that if a man cleave unto his wife the two become one (Ephesians 5:31). Therefore, to this extent, Christ and His church are one and inseparable. For salvation to be had out of the church would be like a child coming into life by means of only one parent. This cannot be! One might as well try to claim relationship to his father and deny any relationship to his mother as to claim salvation through Christ separate and apart from the church.

7. Christ cherisheth the church. To be saved out of the church would mean salvation without being loved or cherished by Christ. See Galatians 2:20.

8. The saved are added by the Lord to the church. Therefore it would be impossible to be saved and not be a member of the New Testament church. To do so would be for the Lord to fail to do His duty. He adds the saved to the church daily (Acts 2:47).

9. The church constitutes or includes those that glorify God. If one could be saved out of the church, one could be saved without glorifying God. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31). "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20). We must glorify

God, but it can only be done in and through the church.

We are taught in the New Testament to believe (Mark 16:16 and Hebrews 11:6); to repent (Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9); and to be baptized (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 22:16). When we have completed this primary obedience, we are saved, and the Lord adds us to the church. Proof: We are baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27). "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are baptized (buried) to be raised into a new life (Romans 6:4). This new life is in Christ; it is in His body, the church. (*The Gospel Witness*, December 1940)

RESTORATION REVERSED

Dennis Gulledge

The pioneers of the Restoration Movement were those who claimed the right and seized the opportunity to leave the darkness of denominationalism, the fruit of the Reformation. They left it for something better -- New Testament Christianity. They were motivated to do so by reading their New Testaments with a freshman-like enthusiasm and were elated to finally find freedom in Christ.

There is an interesting and shocking reversal of the restoration in the works by some who want to take the church back into the weak and beggarly elements of sectarianism. There are some preachers today who seem driven to convince people that we in the Lord's church are just another denomination. They have broadened their fellowship to include the "larger Christian community." They view their mission as ecumenical as they endeavor to bring churches of Christ into the denominational mainstream. And with an air of irenic sweetness they contend for instrumental music in the worship. The beauty of restoring New Testament Christianity eludes them as they see the New Testament plan as exclusive and sectarian. This constitutes a bold reversal of everything the pioneers ever fought for, but more importantly everything the New Testament teaches.

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

"Ye Are The Salt Of The Earth"

Matthew 5:13



WHAT CONSTITUTES MARRIAGE?

Ronnie Whittemore



Marriage is an institution designed by God. Its basic ingredients include a covenant to which God is witness, a binding between one man and one woman, a cleaving to the spouse and a leaving of parents, companionship, and God's prescription for procreation. A proper appreciation of marriage will result in refreshed lives and ultimate happiness.

Modern day critics of marriage consist of individuals who have never properly understood nor applied the principles of marriage which God has given. Instead, they "play" marriage by their own rules. No marriage is happy where sin is dominant in the life of either husband or wife. Whereas fornication and adultery are accurately described as the ruin of trust and confidence in marriage, there are many other sins which also deteriorate this divine relationship. Selfishness, pride, anger, inconsideration and jealousy are heart-filled sins which lead to the destruction of many marriages. Add to these innate desires, other works of the flesh, such as, drunkenness and lasciviousness, and one will have the ingredients of a doomed marriage.

However, marriage is a wonderful institution and fulfills every need of men and women **IF** husbands and wives will live by the guidelines ordained of God. So what does marriage involve?

MARRIAGE IS A LIFE-TIME COMMITMENT

Jesus referred to the beginning when He was asked about the marriage relationship, saying, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). The apostle Paul defined the commitment of husbands and wives: "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband" (Romans 7:2). The prophet Malachi wrote about God's hatred for divorce or putting away (Malachi (2:14-16). In a divorce, at least one person has sinned! God intends for a marriage to last a lifetime. The only honorable ending to a marriage is death.

MARRIAGE IS A COMPANIONSHIP

The words "help meet" are found twice in Genesis (2:18, 20). It refers to "partnership" and "equal sharing." The English word "companion" is used in Malachi 2:14. Every marriage should consist of two best friends: the husband and wife. In times of trials, joy, frustration, confusion and desperation, husbands and wives should turn to one another. Husbands and wives who forget this principle will have a difficult road before them. There is no room whatsoever in marriage for selfishness. Husbands who place their personal desires above their wives or wives who place their wishes before their husbands will fight and fuss until the court or death separates them. Selfishness is destructive and harmful to the marriage relationship. Much of the twentieth century philosophy that one hears and reads about marital woes advises the spouse to do whatever makes him or her happy regardless of the severity of the consequences. Children suffer, the spouse suffers, the work of the church is hindered, and the family loses its influence for good as a result of selfishness. Is it not strange that these same psychologists who give such "sorry" advice, are also bombarded with patients suffering from

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WHAT CONSTITUTES MARRIAGE?

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loneliness. What would their advice be for those people in view of their other advice on marriage? Instead of seeking an "easy way out" (which is not easy, at all), men and women should be putting forth every effort to be the kind of companion that the Bible commands. Within this kind of marriage, true happiness will be found.

MARRIAGE IS A MUTUAL AND HONORABLE LOVE

Husbands and wives should develop a good understanding of each other. One should be able to know what makes the other spouse happy because one learns what makes the other spouse "unhappy." All marriages need good helpings of respect and trust. Husbands and wives should have the same goals and aims, especially heaven. Peter wrote, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). Paul's great description of Bible love in 1 Corinthians 13 should be applied to every marriage. Read that passage. Is that the kind of love that you show your spouse? Is your love, long-suffering and kind? Does your love rejoice in truth? Is your love enduring? How strange it is that often times husbands and wives exercise less patience with one another than they do toward strangers. Someone has well said that "love is seeking the greatest good or welfare for another." Applying that to marriage, the husband or wife who seeks what is best for the spouse will have a loving and caring marriage.

Marriage is not one-sided. It involves two people who have committed themselves to a life-time contract. They view their relationship as a partnership. They respect and love one another to the extent that they seek the greatest good for the other. Selfishness undermines a marriage and brings about its destruction. Love will hold a

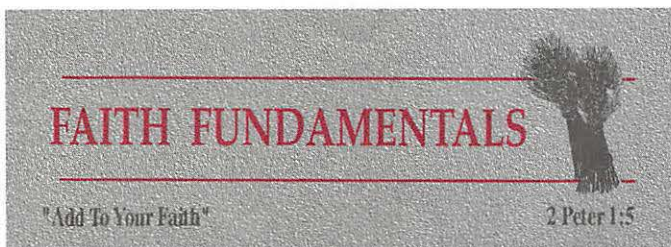
marriage together for a life-time. -200 S. Curry Pike, Bloomington, IN 47404

WHAT ABOUT CLONING?

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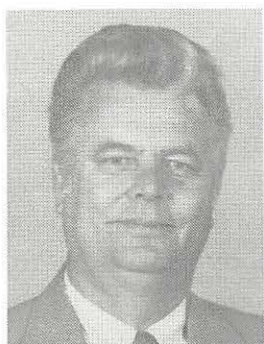
using his own sperm as donor instead of that provided by a sperm bank. In each of these cases women went to fertility clinics because they desired a child and trusted their doctors to respect their convictions in the matter. The first USA "test tube" baby (a.k.a. *in vitro*) occurred in 1981, and by 1994 there were three hundred nine clinics reporting 12,463 such babies born yearly. It has become a two billion dollar a year industry. Clearly, doctors will supply what is demanded, but let the consumer beware!

Technology opens doors to possibilities and decisions never before pondered, and the rebellious and disobedient rush in without regarding the limits of God's Word. Bible-believers know, however, that the same rules apply no matter how much more men seem to know about their world (1 Timothy 1:3-11). The atomic theory was a door of understanding God's power in the Universe, but instead of awe we live in fear of another Hiroshima. In 1957 the Russian Sputnik beeped its way around the earth but instead of seeing the world as God might, "space junk," spy satellites, and communication links clutter our access to the "final frontier." Now the modern "Hello Dolly" presents yet another "pandora's box" to humanity, and medical "miracles" aside we should be concerned with medical morals. Hollywood dealt with cloning a dictator ("Sleeper," "Boys From Brazil") and a father ("Multiplicity"), but gave no solution to the real question: *Is human life shaped by nature or nurture?* Biblically, human behavior is not from the chromosomes but from the heart (Mark 7:20-23); it cannot be corrected by replication but by repentance (Acts 17:30-31); and improvement is not in cloning but conversion (Acts 3:19; 2:38). Whether choices are presented through concubines or cloning, God wants men to honor marriage. - 125 The Trace, Dover, TN 37058



"I JUST WANT TO JOIN THE CHURCH AND QUIT CUSSIN"

Guy F. Hester



Many years ago, my father was conducting a gospel meeting in a rural school house in Walker County, Alabama. In those days, three Sunday meetings were common and ten day meetings were considered short. Such subjects as the

kingdom, the gospel plan of salvation, instrumental music in worship, the errors of denominationalism, the purpose of baptism, etc., were preached long and hard. At the conclusion of this particular meeting enough people had given up their religious error and obeyed the gospel that a congregation of the Lord's church had been established.

At the conclusion of one of the services during the school house meeting, as the invitation song was being sung, a man came down the aisle and as daddy took his hand and asked him if his desire was to be baptized, the man responded in a loud voice that could be heard by all, "No, I just want to join the church and quit cussin." It turned out that this man was a "half wit" who was incapable of understanding.

I believe that one of the great problems we have in the church today is that we have a lot of people on the roll who have never been converted to New Testament Christianity, but have just

"joined the church and quit cussin." Too many have just regarded baptism as the method by which one "joins the Church of Christ."

They do not understand that the kingdom and the church are one and the same (Matthew 16:18-19). They regard the church of Christ as "the Church of Christ denomination." They do not understand that denominationalism is condemned in the Bible (John 17:20-22). They do not understand that instrumental music in worship is sin because it is not authorized in the New Testament (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). They do not understand that in baptism one is saved from his sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). They do not understand that when one is baptized "for the remission of sins" that the Lord adds him to the church (Acts 2:38-47). They do not understand that there is more to Christianity than a partial reformation of life (quit cussin'), that it is a totally new life, changed completely from the life that they lived in the world (Romans 6:3-4; 12:1-2). However, their problem is not the same as the man in daddy's meeting over fifty years ago; they are not "half wits" incapable of understanding. The problem is that we have too many "half wit" preachers from whose "sermons" one would be incapable of learning these important truths.

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:1-5). -10914 Hwy 25 South, Fulton, MS 38343

Fight Only When You Must. But Fight To Win. Wisdom Is Knowing What To Ignore. Ignore Much.

NAMES ~ THEY REFLECT WHO WE ARE

Howard Johnson



Throughout the Bible, God has placed a great premium on names. In the very beginning of time God called man exactly who he was - ADAM (red earth). When it became time to name the woman, again a most appropriate name - EVE (mother of all living).

As God began to develop His plan of redemption among the nations, He changed a few names. He changed Abram (high father) to Abraham (father of many nations); Sarai (princess) to Sarah (covenant); Jacob (supplanter) to Israel (a prince of God). Names have always meant something to God.

To hear someone today say that what we call ourselves means little to God makes me shudder. I know the Bible teaches otherwise. The Bible gives us our name. We are either faithful or not. We are either with Him or not. We are either children of God or not. We are either Christian or not.

I never read in the Bible of anyone being called a Baptist, Methodist, or Lutheran as an identifier in matters of faith. The Bible says they were called "Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:26).

What does it mean to be called a Christian? It means that Christ is the one to whom we give allegiance. If we call ourselves anything else then that is the one to whom we give allegiance.

When I married my wife she took my name. In matters of marriage she is to be in allegiance to me. Ephesians says, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head over the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body" (5:22-23).

There is no room in a marriage for a divided allegiance. There is no room for

hyphenated names (i.e. Mary Smith-Jones). This reflects a compromise of trust and obedience. According to the Bible she should submit to her husband's family leadership.

This is not a lesson on husband/wife roles, but it does help us understand the need to wear the name of the one to whom you show allegiance.

When Christians wear sectarian names (those names other than "Christian" only) they show a divided allegiance. One will sooner or later have to deny one to be with the other.

Paul condemned the Corinthians for this very thing: They named Paul, Cephas and some even named Christ as their name. They did this to show their allegiance. Paul further told them that neither he nor Cephas ever died for them. They should be united in Christ only.

There is but one faith (Ephesians 4:4-6; Jude 3). Luther never died for you. John the Baptist never died for you. He even said go and join to the lamb that takes away the sins of the world (John 1:26-37).

When we begin to call ourselves by divisive names that is exactly what we do -- divide. "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 Corinthians 1:10).

Let us strive to be Christians only. All glory to God. Amen! -15183 52nd Street, Live Oak, FL 32060

WORTH PONDERING

A religion that does not depend completely upon the power of the Gospel, the adequacy of Scripture, and the effectiveness of preaching cannot result in the salvation and sanctification of souls.

READERS' RESPONSE

"How Readest Thou?"

Luke 10:26

A LONG TIME READER

I have read the *Gospel Gleaner* since it first came out, and all that I can say about it is: GREAT. You and brother Dillon are doing a great good for God's cause and all who read the paper. I have recommended it to the church here and several have signed the enclosed list for their names to be added to your mailing list. Daryl Busby, Sullivan, MO.

VERY IMPRESSED WITH GG

I am very impressed with this publication and plan to show many of my friends. If you will, put me on your mailing list. Keep up the good work in God's Word! Chris Kimball, Collinston, LA.

ENJOYS THE SOUNDNESS

Please send me your publication *Gospel Gleaner*. I saw a copy of your paper at the C Street Church of Christ in Elizabethtown, Tennessee and enjoyed the soundness of the good teaching. Keep up the good work for our Lord and His Kingdom. Mack Bennett, Bluff, City, TN.

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Could you please include us in your mailing list. We recently read your periodical and just loved the articles and would enjoy receiving this publication. Robin Berry, Belleville, IL.

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Brother Virgil Lindley gave me his *Gospel Gleaner* to read and I am impressed very much with each of the good lessons. You are doing a great work. I would appreciate it if I could be added to your mailing list. Troy M. Jackson, Corning, AR.

GG SENT BY A FRIEND

I would like to be placed on your mailing list. I have enjoyed the paper a lot sent to me by a friend. She isn't here any more. I find the *Gospel Gleaner* the greatest. Thank you. Geneva Ragsdale, Trenton, TN.

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We are currently receiving *Gospel Gleaner* and we appreciate your sending it to us. We would like to get Volume 11, Numbers 1 and 2 so our holdings will be complete for that year. We have all four issues for 1996. Thanks for your help. Hope Shull, Henderson, TN.

REALLY ENJOYED IT!

Thanks for sending me a copy of the *Gospel Gleaner*. I really enjoyed it and would like for you to add me to your mailing list. Keep up the good work! Randy Kea, Forest Park, GA.

LEARNED OF GG FROM INTERNET CONTACT

Please add my name to your mailing list for the *Gospel Gleaner* publication. I have enclosed my card as well as a couple of articles I have written that you can use if they suit your purposes. I received your publication's name and address from a contact on the Internet. May the Lord bless you in your outreach. Steve E. Yeatts, Murfreesboro, TN.

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