

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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“NOT FOR SALE”

By JERRY DICKINSON

In the years preceding the Civil War Daniel Webster, the illustrious Massachusetts Senator, was a hero to abolitionists, especially to those who opposed the spread of slavery into new states coming into the Union. In 1831 the poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote the following lines in praise of Webster.

Let Webster’s lofty face
Ever on thousands shine;
A beacon set, that freedom’s race
Might gather omens from that radiant sign.

In 1852, however, Webster decided he wanted to be President and gave a speech attacking abolitionists for being uncompromising, hoping this would boost his political aspirations. Those who had looked on him as a hero were now disillusioned with Senator Webster. In fact, in 1854 Emerson wrote another poem about Webster that vividly demonstrated his disappointment.

Why did all manly gifts in Webster fail?
He wrote on nature’s grandest brow, For Sale!

How sad and how pathetic that a man would sell out for political advantage. But, of course, that is what politicians have always done - and still do! How much sadder still is when Christians are for sale. May the Lord grant us the courage to ever say to the Devil and to the world, Not For Sale! Note with me some Bible Heroes who refused to sell out.

Peter and John were offered a great sum of money if they would sell the gift they had been given as Apostles. In Acts 8 Philip went into Samaria and preached Christ unto them. Men and women heard the message, believed and were baptized. (Acts 8:12) There was a sorcerer named Simon who, when he saw the miracles Philip was able to perform believed and was baptized himself. The Apostles in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria and the two Apostles began to lay their hands on the new converts so that they could receive the Holy Spirit and miraculous gifts. The Bible says “When Simon saw that through laying on of the Apostle’s hands the Holy Spirit was given he offered

them money.” (Acts 8:18) He wanted to purchase the power these men had to be able to lay hands on others and give them the Holy Spirit. By the way, Simon clearly saw that the miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit was given by the laying on of the Apostle’s hands. When people tell me they can speak in tongues, heal the sick, and perform the other miraculous gifts of the Spirit today I ask them, “Give me the name of the Apostle who laid hands on you.” There are no living Apostles today and hence the miraculous gifts that existed in the early days of the church have ceased as I Corinthians 13: 8-10 plainly teaches.

When Simon offers to purchase the gift of God Peter bluntly and forcefully tells him he is in danger of losing his soul. “Your money perish with you because you thought the gift of God could be purchased with money!” (Acts 8:20) Peter is bluntly telling him that he is going to perish in hell, and his money with him! Amazingly, Simon does not get mad and quit the church after receiving such a harsh rebuke (as many have and do) but he repents and asks Peter to pray for him. Peter’s answer to Simon can really be boiled down to three words, Not For Sale! Not only was the gift not for sale, but neither were Peter and John. That is what is needed today - preachers like Peter and John who are not for sale no matter the price or the accolades .. Yes, we need more preachers in the brotherhood, but not just any preachers. We need men who are Not For Sale!

Naboth had a lovely piece of property with a vineyard on it. Unfortunately, however, it bordered the grounds of the palace of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. Ahab decided that he wanted to purchase the property, plow under the vines, and plant a kitchen garden. He approached Naboth and offered him a premium deal. “I’ll pay whatever amount of money you want,” declared Ahab, “Or if you prefer we can trade. I will give you a better piece of land. Name your price!” I Kings 21:3 records Naboth’s answer, “The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!” Those fourteen words (the only recorded words of this good man) can be reduced to three words - Not For Sale! It must be understood that Naboth did not refuse to sell just because of some sentimental attachment to the land he had received from his fathers. It was much more substantial than that. When Moses had given each family an inheritance in the land they were enjoined to never sell their inheritance throughout their generations. Ahab cared little for God’s Word, but Naboth was a man who would

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Editorial

SOME SAID IT THUNDERED

By: DON McCORD

The 12th chapter of John is thought provoking. Jesus said in verse 23, “ ... The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.” He recognized the time of His suffering was drawing near. In verse 27: ‘Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.’ The Revised Version has a question mark after the word “hour.” This perhaps sustains the thought more correctly. Jesus would certainly have prayed that way had His purpose been otherwise than that of saving a world lost in sin. Then, in verse 28 He said, “Father glorify thy name. There came a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” The voice of God must have been quite a magnificent sound. Ezekiel said His voice was like a noise of many waters.” (Ezekiel 43:2) We suppose it may have sounded something like the mighty thundering surf at the ocean. The people heard the voice of God, according to John 12:29. The apostle John apparently heard and had no trouble understanding but others said it thundered.

Interesting, isn't it, that some heard and understood while others just heard thunder? This seems to be the case through history. Even today men hear the voice of God, through preaching of the scriptures; and while some understand and accept, others hear only thunder. In other words, they hear only what they want to hear. Notice this example: In Mark 16:16 Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Men have little difficulty hearing the command to believe. They quote that from the house tops. However, when Jesus also commanded baptism, they hear only thunder! In Luke 10:16 Jesus said to the disciples:” He that heareth you heareth me “ This means, when we hear one accurately speaking the word of God, it is as if God is speaking to us. In 1 Peter 1:25 we read: “But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” Scholars may not agree on some things, but they agree on this. The preaching of the gospel is the word of God which He Himself has spoken. So, when the word of God is preached, God is speaking.

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: What has happened to the commandment to “greet one another with a holy kiss” Rom. 16:16, 1Cor. 16:20, 2Cor. 13:12, 1Th. 5:26, 1 Pet. 5:14?

Answer: It is a well known established fact that kissing as a form of greeting was common among the Middle-eastern world. The bible abounds with references to the practice. Mention is made of it between parents and children Gen. 27:26-27; 2Sam. 14:33; 1 Kings 19:20; Luke 15:20, between brothers or near male relatives or intimate friends Gen. 29:13; Ex. 4:27, and salutation between persons not related 2Sam. 20:9; Prov. 27:6; and Luke 7:45. Greeting by means of a kiss seems to have been a common practice in the early church. It was mentioned by a number of early writers including Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Chrysostom, and Augustine. Guy N. Woods points out that “historians of the early church indicate that abuses to which the practice would ordinarily lead were avoided by the separation of the sexes when the church assembled for worship, an arrangement inherited from the synagogue.” The “Constitution of the Holy Apostles” written around A.D. 300 to 400 contains the following “Then let the men give the men, and the women give the women, the Lord’s kiss. But let no one do it with deceit, as Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss” (Book 2, 57, page 422, Vol. 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers).

The scriptures mention several types of kisses i.e. idolatrous kiss (Hosea 13:2); the deceitful kiss (Proverbs 27:6); and the betrayal kiss (Luke 22:48). It should be noted that neither Paul nor Peter is binding the kiss as a form of greeting. They both merely regulate a practice that was common and already in use, pointing out that when a kiss is used as a form of greeting it must be holy. Neither is saying that we must or should kiss when we meet. But if we do greet with a kiss, it must be a holy kiss of love, a command that still stands today. In most Western parts of the world we greet with a hand shake or verbal greeting. Both are fine and are no violation of the passages mentioned by the querist. Any greeting among Christians, however, should spring from a sincere heart of love. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net)

WHAT MODESTY SHOULD MEAN TO A CHRISTIAN

By P. DUANE PERMENTER

I think that some have moved so far away from what the Bible teaches about modesty that it is hard to ever come back. Others trying to promote what they think is important with our dress have gone to the other extreme and have also failed to emphasize what Biblical modesty is. I would like to ask a few questions and allow the Bible to answer them for us.

Does modesty only refer to what we put on? Why do we wear clothes today? Does it really matter what a person wears? Is the Lord concerned about our outward appearance?

Does Modesty Only Refer to What We Put On?

In order to answer the first question: Does modesty only refer to what we put on? It is necessary for us to look at the exact meaning of modesty. The Apostle Paul writes, “in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel ... “ (1 Timothy 2:9, NKJV) The word modest in this context means orderly or good behavior from God’s point of view. We know that good when talking about Christian living is always found in the Bible. Passages such as 2 Timothy 3:16, 17, inform us that every good work has been revealed through the scripture. It is the concern of every sincere Christian to find out what the Lord considers good. Today, we are talking about being modest both with our attitude, actions and our attire.

It is false to say that God does not care what we put on. A simple reading of 1 Timothy 2:8, 9 along with 1 Peter 3:1-6 indicates that the garments we wear are important. The garments are not the only thing that should be stressed. For one to leave the impression that God is not concerned what I put on is wrong! On the other hand, to over emphasize the outward attire to the point that people think they can act in any way as long as they have the right garment on is wrong also!

To answer the question, does modesty only refer to what we put on? The obvious answer is no! God is concerned about what we wear, and how we act in what we wear.

Why Do We Wear Clothes Today?

In the beginning it was not so! Genesis 2:25, “ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” NKJV Clearly, we are told that to be naked in the beginning was normal and natural. This is the way God made us and put us on the earth. It was not until sin that this changed. Because of sin it became a shame to be naked. Adam and Eve felt the impact of shame after they ate of the forbidden fruit in the garden. This shame caused them to try and cover their bodies with leaves. The problem was that God is the only one who has the

remedy for sin, and no matter how many garments Adam would have made he would never have covered his shame.

We have a very interesting statement given by the prophet Job. It is found in Job 31:33, "If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom," NKJV Job many years after Adam knew that Adam had tried to cover his sin. I wonder how Job knew this? Let us go back to Genesis and see how Adam did this.

Look at what Adam did after sin had opened his eyes to the fact that he was naked, Genesis 3:7, "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings." NKJV This man, like many people today, tried to work out his own way, and it did not work. God was not pleased! Man has no right to work out his own way or live as he wants to. We were created to serve the Lord, and we will face consequences when we disobey even today.

God was not finished with Adam. Listen to what he did for both Adam and Eve. In Genesis 3:21, "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them." NKJV The word clothed in this verse is very interesting. Moses wanted us to realize that God covered Adam and Eve's body with a skin of an animal. Why was this?

Job said that when Adam covered his body in fig leaves that he was trying to cover his sin. What God did was cover their literal nakedness and at the same time He covered their spiritual shame brought on by sin. Again, to answer the question, why do we wear clothes today? We must go all the way back to the creation, and it is because of sin.

This was all pointing to something bigger and better. What do you suppose it was? In fact, what kind of animal do you suppose it was? Does the Bible answer that anywhere? To be continued ...

PITCHING TOWARD SODOM

BY RICHARD DEGOUGH

In view of the immorality flooding our nation, with every description of perverted lust that can be named, we must as Christians keep ourselves pure from these defilements that will damn our souls. The manner of life that is considered politically right in our nation is still an abomination in God's sight. The worldly minded have taken the position that when men and women are involved in the practice of immorality it is not a choice on their part, which is to say they could not help being of the nature to reject such, but they were born with that

inclination to practice such. (The genes argument etc.) The Word of God is still the standard of truth that we live by as the children of God. All the excuses and nonsense mankind gives for his failure to keep themselves from the defilements of the flesh are null and void in God's eyes. "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man upright; and they have sought out many inventions"(Eccl. 7:29) Would anyone be brazen enough to charge Him who made us, made us to sin, and then condemn us for not being able to refrain from lust of the flesh that condemns us. Who can believe it? James wrote; "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; ... But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his OWN LUST, and ENTICED. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, beloved brethren."

CONSIDERING THE EXAMPLE OF LOT

"And Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom." Gen. 13:12 The strife that arose between the herdsman of Abram and Lot, caused a separation between Abram and Lot. The land was not sufficiently able to support for lack of grass that was needed for their great herds and flocks. Abram, being wise was able to settle the matter. He said; "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsman and thy herdsman, for we be brethren." Abram gave Lot the choice of the land. If Lot chose the right hand, Abram would go to the left, etc. Lot lifted up his eyes; ... "and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." Lot being a pragmatist, chose all the plain of Jordan, and journeyed east, separating himself from Abram, while Abram stayed in the land of Canaan.

THE MISTAKE OF LOT

"All that glitters is not gold." The mistake of Lot cost him dearly, for the scripture: says "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." Their lives were filthy, wicked, ungodly, giving themselves over unto "vile affections", Paul wrote ... "the men leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." Involving themselves in an abomination to the Lord. Duet. 23:17-18, "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a "dog", into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the Lord thy God." The Sodomites are surely pictured by Jude "as brute beast, corrupting themselves, going after strange flesh, filthy dreamers defiling the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities Jude 7-8. It is true that Lot was grieved, disturbed, with all this wickedness. Peter writes of his

escape from Sodom; “And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds:) Lot’s choice of the cities of the plain turned out to be a terrible mistake. He was faithful to God and would not as a righteous man be destroyed with the wicked, but, he lost his sons-in-law, his wife, (a pillar of salt) for looking back ignoring the command of God not to look back. Read II Pet.2:7-8, Gen. 19. Lot was separated from his uncle Abram, who was the father of the faithful and a “friend of God” (Jas.2:23) Lot was fortunate to have Abram plead with God not to destroy the righteous with the wicked. “Evil communications corrupt good manners” I Cor.15:33 A good lesson for all of us who might make a choice that might benefit us materially. How many brethren have moved to somewhere for gain, a job, relatives, friends, where no Church of the Lord was. Maybe they had good intentions, but after awhile found themselves departing from the faith, no spirituality they once had, no communication and worship with brethren, no interest period. The results are, losing their children, wives, and themselves to the world. We can learn from the examples of Old.(Rom.15:4) Why expose ourselves, our children to the wicked degrading passions, shameful lusts, unnatural in every way.

It is difficult to keep ourselves in the love of God, (Jude 21) when we live in a nation that has turned around and supports the sin of homosexuality, being flaunted before our eyes as natural, not sinful in this modern day. Politically right, says our government. They march, they shout, they plunder, litter, despise and blaspheme God and the Bible. They talk against Christians who try to maintain “holy ground, giving out that we are the wrong doers, and should be banned from speaking against the sins of these individuals. They are given over to a “reprobate mind.”

What happened to Sodom? God “turned them into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow,” raining fire and brimstone out of heaven, and when they viewed that terrible scene; “lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.” An example of the wrath of God for sure on the sin of Homosexuality. Ten righteous could not be found so God could spare those cities. When God “gives men up” who will not repent of their sins and change their ways, all hope is lost. This nation ought to remember these words; Psa. 9:17; “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God.” Remember; “God judges the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.” (Psa.7:11)

What should be our attitude toward the wickedness of this world? Paul said: “and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” (expose them) “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” Jude 21 Jesus gave himself for our sins; “that he might deliver us from this present evil world,

according to the will of God and our Father.”(Gal.1:4) Hughson, CA.

MISSING PIECES IN THE FAMILY PUZZLE

By WYN BAKER

Have you ever put together a large jigsaw puzzle, only to find that pieces of the puzzle are missing? The result is the missing piece(s) hinder the beauty of the whole picture that the puzzle was intended to convey. As we view our homes, we can often see this same thing happening as the family becomes tainted with missing pieces. In this article we want to consider several missing pieces seen today in our homes that can taint the whole beautiful picture of the modern family scene.

1. Godliness - Godliness can be defined as doing that which is godly, or doing those things that are like God. To be like God, portrays the principle of imitating God and following His ways. Do we do this in our homes as we should? So often, godliness is a missing piece that is not seen nor practiced in our homes at all. A common situation may reveal children imitating their favorite sports star, or musician, or portraying the popular trends seen in the actions of their peers. Adults may do this by imitating what their social relationships are portraying, rather than developing godlike character traits.

The Bible conveys that we need to be following and imitating Jesus. In I Corinthians 11:1-2, the Bible says, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.” In I Thessalonians 1:6, Paul also taught, “And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost”. Godliness is a trait that will bring great joy even in the presence of great affliction. It’s little wonder why many homes are places of sadness and distress rather than godliness which is able to fortify the souls of our loved ones (I Tim 3:16).

2. Contentment - Benjamin Franklin once said, “Content makes poor men rich, discontent makes rich men poor.” The word contentment is a very important word to remember. W.E. Vines defines it as: “to appease the desires of; to limit (oneself) in requirements, desires, or actions; freedom from care or discomfort; contented, satisfied”.

Surely we can agree that we live in a society that is unsatisfied. Our homes may be no different if contentment is a missing piece. In Philippians 4:11-12, the Bible says, “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full

and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.” We learn here by Paul that contentment is a trait we learn and know. It is not instinct, but rather an action we acquire by exercising restraints with control. Sadly, our homes can have little comfort, when little or no constraints are placed upon our desires, wants and actions. In I Timothy 6:6-7, the Bible says, “ But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

3. Discipline - This is another important piece to the family puzzle that is often found missing. Without discipline, there can be no guarantees in fighting against the forces of evil and wrong doing. In Job 36:9-12, the Bible says, “Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.” The teaching from Job is that those who live without discipline will die without knowledge. Friends, our homes must contain discipline, so that our families can live and enjoy days in prosperity. This teaching is especially needed for parents, as they teach their children by implementing discipline to receive the knowledge of God, as fathers with mothers by their side, raise up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

4. Stewardship - The idea portrayed in being a good steward as the Bible teaches is the act of being a good manager of things. Strong’s defines the word steward as, “ house distributor”. The one who oversees the distribution of things within a house is a house distributor. Are we good stewards when it comes to how we distribute things that are given to our care and keeping within our homes? As we see our country’s economy facing deficits and massive debt, is it not possible that such in our country can be traced to a big missing piece in the family puzzle ... a lack of biblical stewardship? In Romans 13:7-8, we learn the result from being a good steward when Paul says, “ Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.” As a family we must work diligently to rightfully and lawfully distribute all things unto their right places. Bills must be paid and on time. Taxes are to be rendered, debts must be satisfied in their completeness, and the time in which God has given us to work must be redeemed (Eph. 5:16).

In summary, our tasks at home are made much simpler, if we will restore these missing pieces back into the family puzzle. By extending our efforts to imitate God and not man; by being content as we should be for the blessings we have been given; by exercising lawful discipline within our homes; and practicing righteous stewardship,

we will in the end see the result of a beautiful home that God intended for us to enjoy. Let us be sober and honest about this now as Christians, so that someday our earthly families can enjoy a blessed home in heaven.
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“NOT FOR SALE”continued from page one

not sell out, even to the King! “The Lord forbid that I sell out! Not For Sale!” Ahab takes to his bed and sulks like a spoiled child until Jezebel comes to his rescue and has Naboth murdered so Ahab can have his kitchen garden. Of course, in the end both Ahab and Jezebel end up as food for the dogs because of their blatant brutality and mockery of God’s justice. Nevertheless, thank God for men like Naboth. May we have the courage to never sell our inheritance. Our forefathers sacrificed their fortunes, their good names, and even their lives so we could have the scriptural pattern for the church, worship, and salvation. How can we give up what they have passed on to us from God’s Word? Let us declare as boldly as did they, Not For Sale!

Jesus, I declare as reverently as I can, is our ultimate hero because he was not for sale at any price. According to one of the accounts the last temptation of Jesus in the wilderness consisted of Satan taking Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain. He shows the Lord all the kingdoms of the world in a moment and then bids Jesus to fall down and worship him. “All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me,” Satan tempts. Jesus answers, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, you shall worship the Lord your God, and him only you shall serve.” (Matthew 4:9, 10) In a nutshell what Jesus told the Devil was, Not For Sale! Later, just a little while before his death on the cross, Jesus took the disciples up to a high mountain and told them for the first time that he was going to be put to death, buried, and then raised from the dead. Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked him saying, “Not so Lord!” Jesus rebukes Peter with the surprising words, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” (Mark 8:33) Jesus addresses Peter, but the Lord recognized that Satan was working through Peter still trying to get him to sell out and not fulfill the Father’s will. Jesus tells Satan again, Not For Sale! Jesus would not sell out but went to the cross, thus making a way for our salvation. Thank God Jesus was not for sale. May the examples of the heroes we have reviewed today, along with many other examples in the Scriptures inspire and motivate us in our dealing with the world and the Devil. Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 6: 19-20 that we are not our own, for we were bought with the price of the precious blood of Jesus. Let us then, since we are bought and paid for, boldly declare to all who would tempt us with worldly riches or accolades, Not For Sale! misterjld@msn.com

SOME SAID IT THUNDERED continued from page two

As long as men have heard the word of God, some have obeyed while others seemed to hear thunder. During the restoration, the gospel was preached plainly and human creeds discarded. However, by the end of the war between the States, things were changing drastically. The ideas of men were creeping into the church once again. The Missionary Society, instrumental music, and many other innovations were a problem. A new term had come along. It was called "liberalism." Preachers in some places were teaching that the "pious unimmersed" (a nice way of speaking of good people who have not obeyed the gospel) would be saved along with those who had been baptized into Christ for the remission of sins. F. D. Srygley who was an editor of the Gospel Advocate since 1890 found that ridiculous. He wrote in part: "... We have been lavish of our sympathy for the pious unimmersed. What, now shall we do with the pious unbeliever? Is any body going to be damned? If not, I am disposed to say in the language of the inimitable T. W. Caskey, "You may as well convert hell into a calfpasture and be done with it." His language certainly shows his country way of thinking, but it makes a great deal of sense. Liberalism changes the plan of God so drastically that it almost appears no one will be lost at all.

Those who strive to hold out for the Bible way today are also derided by those of a liberal persuasion. Liberalism is still warring against the truth. Gospel preachers who warn against sin and disobedience from the pulpit are scorned and seen as trouble makers by the opposition. Those who write in religious journals in opposition to liberal policies among brethren are also spoken evil of and ridiculed. The old time Bible way is scarcely tolerated in some circles. A preacher who still preaches against women cutting their hair or not dressing modestly may not be called to some places. Insults and derision are the order of the day against those who still preach the old time gospel. One liberal preacher during the restoration said, "liberals are never dogmatic." Perhaps not, unless one disagrees with them.

Often when the gospel is strictly preached, the speaker is labeled a "legalist." We say "amen" to the comments of Moses E. Lard in an article in the Gospel Advocate of March 1890. Lard said, "Not to insist on obedience to these commandments is legalism. Against it, of late, not a little has been said, and nothing wisely. The term

legalism I do not like. It is an offensive term with a bad sense as popularly used, and should, therefore, not be employed. Obedience to the commandments of Christ is its exact equivalent, and should always be used in its stead. But few men, however, could be found bold enough to speak against obeying the commandments of Christ. The result here would be too glaring. None could fail to see it, and few would hesitate to pronounce it infidelity. A more insidious method is adopted. Legalism is the thing inveighed (protested DLK) against. But the act amounts to the same. Legalism and obedience to Christ's commands are the same. Hence to speak against that is to speak against this. Nor have I any respect for the man who masks the law of Christ, and then speaks against it, than I have for him who insults it indirectly."

Things have not changed brethren, as history tends to repeat itself. We fight many of the same battles today and will continue to do so. We must not be discouraged. The Lord's church is stronger than ever and reaching into the far corners of the world. Take courage and know the church will be here when the Lord returns. Thank the Lord for that comforting thought.

Yes, indeed, some hear the voice of God through the preaching of the gospel and obey it. Others hear only thunder. -Think on these things. DLK

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THINGS SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

Christians must have conviction and courage if they are to be saved by the Lord. The conviction must be based upon what the Bible teaches. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

We believe there is one God. Why do we believe this? Because the Bible says, "there is one God" (Eph. 4:6). The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, "For though there be many that are called gods, ... to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things ... " (I Cor. 8:5, 6). We do not question this. We simply accept it by faith.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus said, "... Ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). The apostle Peter declares, "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living

God” (John 6:69). And Jesus says, ... “For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24).

We believe the Holy Spirit is the third entity in the Godhead.

The Bible says, “And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:16,17). In this account all three of the Godhead are involved. Christ being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, and the voice of God in heaven expressing His divine approval. At this time God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power (Acts 10:38).

We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God. Jesus promised the apostles, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth ... “ (John 16:12, 13). The apostle Paul writes, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16,17). Peter says, “ ... his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (II Pet. 1:3).

We believe Christ promised to build only one church. He said to the apostles, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The church was brought into existence on the day of Pentecost, AD 33 (Acts chapter 2) and is made up of the saved. “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). In the final day when Jesus comes again we believe that He will ... “present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27). “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it ... “ (Psalms 127:1).

We believe the church is the spiritual body of Christ. We are told that God “ ... Hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22,23). “There is one body ... “ (Eph 4:3). “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jew or Gentiles, whether we be bond or

free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (I Cor. 12:13).

We believe God has a plan of salvation.

This plan was ratified with the innocent blood of Jesus. We are told “without the shedding of blood is no remission [of sins]” (Heb. 9:22). Paul says, “ ... by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. 12:9). However, in order to benefit from this sacrifice one must follow the plan of God. The plan that He gave in His infinite wisdom demands that we believe the testimony of His word. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). His word testifies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus says, “if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). When one accepts the fact that Jesus is the Son of God he must repent of his sins. We are told, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out ... “ (Acts 3:19). Jesus says, “I tell you, Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). This plan also demands that we confess our faith in Jesus Christ. The confession is made with the mouth from the heart (Rom. 10:9,10). “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” is the confession made by the Ethiopian convert in Acts 8:37. This is an example of the confession that God demands today. One should be more than happy to proclaim his faith in Jesus the Christ. Then, as a matter of faith, one is to be baptized for the remission of his sins. “Repent and be baptized, every one of you,” was the order of the Apostle Peter, “for the remissions of sins” (Acts 2:38). This is God’s plan.

We believe that when a person obeys this plan he becomes a member of the spiritual body of Christ, the church. (I Cor. 12:13: Acts 2:47). He is to “present his body a living sacrifice, wholly and acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1, 2). He is to live “soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12). He is to be “an example of the believers” (I Tim. 4:12), and be “a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7).

We believe that in order for a Christian to be saved he must remain faithful to the Lord. The promise is “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of righteousness” (Rev. 2:10).

Paul O. Nichols has served the Church of Christ faithfully for over sixty years. Reprinted and supplied by friends of Paul O. Nichols: For copies please contact John Catron 7538 Mackey O.P.KS 66204 Email: jocatron@everestkc.net

BREAKFAST WITH LYNWOOD

By Andy Trent

It's been said that moments will pass, but memories last a lifetime. I am thankful this is true, and that God blessed us with the ability to remember. Our memories can serve as an avenue to smile on good times past, and be a useful tool to live better, or different, in the future. Relationships live on, even after the passing of a loved one, because of those sweet memories. At the beginning of every New Year it is customary for people to look back on their life, reflecting upon what they have or have not accomplished, and attempt to adjust their life accordingly. My memory is put to work every New Year because I pause to remember some of the best moments of my life; having breakfast with Lynwood.

The first time I remember meeting Lynwood was about fifteen years ago at the New Year's meeting in Oklahoma City. On New Year's night, along with all of the other kids, I did not go to bed. Staying up all night is just what we did. As morning arrived I grew hungry, so I moseyed over to the hotel restaurant. Standing there, waiting to be seated, I noticed Lynwood. He was sitting by himself. The hostess began leading me to a table set for one, where I also would be by myself. I stopped short at Lynwood's table, and asked if it would be okay to sit with him. Without hesitation he welcomed me, as if he had been waiting for me. The conversation started and what began as a spontaneous decision to sit with Lynwood became one of the best decisions I ever made.

The New Year's meeting was something I looked forward to all year, every year. The greatest speakers the Church of Christ had would be speaking. The most beautiful singing you ever heard would be at this meeting. It was very spiritually uplifting to me. "I also knew I would see friends and family I had not seen for quite sometime. All of these elements of the meeting brought about a yearning for December, but there were not many things I looked forward to more than my breakfast with Lynwood. Every year, New Year's morning, we met in that little restaurant and had breakfast together. He was an amazing story teller and had the ability to make me laugh until I cried. I asked him one time If he knew who I was. He just smiled and said, "Boy, I knew you before you were ever born." All I could do was laugh.

On Friday mornings my dad and I meet at Denny's for breakfast. I think of Lynwood often during these moments. Every time the waitress tries to fill my coffee cup before it's empty, I think about Lynwood's complaint when they would try to fill his cup before he was done, therefore, ruining his mixture. I think of how every time he saw me he would say, "There's my buddy!"

I was always so happy to see Lynwood. He was my buddy. I saw him as a great example of someone who was serious about denying himself, and taking up his cross daily. I respected Lynwood and all he did for the Church. His songs are beautiful in word and tone. His sermons were one of a kind and always from the truth. Lynwood loved Jesus Christ and His Church so much that he would cry just talking about it. It was an honor for me to be able to sit and talk with a man like this.

I will never forget the day I got the news he passed. I was at work when my mom called to let me know. It was very difficult news for me to hear, but I was also happy for him. He would finally get to see that home he had written so many songs about. I also couldn't help but think about 2 Timothy 4:7, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness ..." Lynwood left a lasting impression on the Church of Christ. His knowledge of God's word, his wisdom, his love for the Church, his amazing ability to paint a picture in vivid detail, using only words, are all characteristics that I will continually strive for. Lynwood was a genuine Christian. I will never forget hearing him speak. I will never forget listening to his stories. I will never forget seeing him laugh, and I will never forget having breakfast with Lynwood.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. Psalms 116:15

Announcements

The Oakwood Church of Christ in Edmond, OK is currently in search of an experienced evangelist to work with the congregation on a long-term full-time basis.

If interested, please contact Wes Roe at (405) 282-6868, email at coc.oakwood@gmail.com or via mail at PO Box 1223, Edmond, OK 73083.

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THANK YOU

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to all who donate to the Old Paths Advocate for foreign subscriptions and those who cannot afford to pay for subscriptions. We could not do it without you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. -DLK

Our Departed

BEE, Mildred (Lockard) Hadden Bee departed this life on Feb. 13, 2011 at the age of ninety-four while a resident of St. Andrew's Village, White Township, PA. Mildred was a member of the Lovejoy church of Christ. Mid had lived in

the Lovejoy area most of her life with the exception of a few years spent in Greenville, PA while she was married to Lawrence Bee who preceded her in death. She was survived by two brothers and their wives, a sister-in-law, and eleven nephews and nieces. Her brother, Eugene Lockard, conducted the memorial service at the Rairigh Funeral home with burial in the East Mahoning Cemetery in Purchase Line.

LOCKARD, Hallin Lockard departed this life on February 22, 2011 at the age of ninety while a resident of St. Andrew's Village, White Township, PA. He is survived by his wife of 68 years Evelyn; three children, four grandchildren, and the only remaining brother of the Lockard family, Eugene. Hallin was a long time member of the Lovejoy church. Lovejoy at one time was a growing thriving congregation. Time, however, has taken its toll as one by one the members have answered the call of death. Eugene conducted the funeral service for his brother Hallin and had only a few days earlier conducted the service for his sister Mildred Bee. Eugene has served the Lord and the brethren of that area well for many years. He continues to serve and work as his health permits. May the Lord bless all those who grieve the death of these dear saints.

Field Reports

P. Duane Permenter, 1705 Pecan Dr. Cleburne, TX, 76033, Mar 10- It has been my privilege to preach at Cleburne several times since last reporting. Brother Melvin Blalock works with four different congregations and his schedule is very heavy. We have been able to do visiting together and conduct some Bible studies along and this has been encouraging. We are thankful to be a part of the work in this area. It is wonderful to be back in America and we are looking forward to our meetings this summer. The work in Zambia continues to move along for I hear from the preachers several times a week through email. They are learning to deal with problems and the work on their own. What an honor to be a part of the brotherhood! God bless the brotherhood! Duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com Telephone: 817-240- 1944

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA, 94550, old.paths@juno.com, March 14- We are enjoying being at home at the present. Recently it was my pleasure to baptize our grand daughter, Nicole, into Christ. What a thrill to hear her boldly declare that she believed Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Of course, we pray God's richest blessings on her always. There have been a number of baptisms in recent times and we give God all the praise and glory for that. We believe all is ready for Eric Stone to move to Hawaii. Lord willing, he will arrive on April 4th. We appreciate the congregations who previously supported our late Brother Danao continuing their support for Eric. We pray God's

continued blessings on that work. We also thank those of you who have continued to support the Old Paths Advocate with your subscriptions and renewals. Let's keep up the good work.

Richard DeGough, 1809 Flora Vista Dr. Hughson, Calif. 95326 E-mail--Rdegough@gmail.com Our short meeting with Bennie Cryer was very good. Bennie preached on the real need of the church to watch for innovations that are prevalent and that have arisen among our brethren. Denominational organizations have influenced many and the "social gospel" has taken the place of the "saving gospel" more than many realize. Beware brethren, these things have become the order of the day. Involving the church in the social affairs, civil, etc. has no place in the responsibility or work of the church. We enjoyed Bennie and Joan staying with us. It was encouraging to hear sermons that deal with issues that trouble us and to hear what strengthens the church. I pray God will raise up more young men, preachers that "cry aloud and spare not". "See and ask for the old paths, and walk therein." Surely we are not as Israel who said: "we will not walk therein". May the Lord bless the brotherhood throughout the world. We never want to be a part of the problem that troubles Israel, but a part of the solution.

Brett Hickey, 8373 Highway 5 South, Mountain Home, AR, 72653., unityseeker@hotmail.com • LetTheBibleSpeak.com • (870)736-0774 March 10- We thank all for the prayers on behalf of Louise's brother, Frank Brancato. He learned today that his cancer is in remission. We generated four new studies in the last two weeks and baptized one last week. The congregation here continues to grow in maturity and is maintaining efforts to bring the lost and erring to services. We have a lot of Indians and no chiefs. When a study appeared to be leading to a baptism. Darryl Haun dropped everything and left work in the middle of the day to clean the baptistry and have it ready. Joey continues to improve as a song leader and has now given four lessons. We rejoiced to be with brethren at the Preacher's study and New Years' meeting in Oklahoma City. Our family enjoyed immensely the weekend meeting at Green Oaks (Arlington, TX). Our stay with Joe and Joann Norton was too short. I so appreciate the work that Brother Norton and Brother Nathan Battey are doing. It was also good to be with preaching brethren Melvin Blalock, Bob Johnson, Duane Permenter and Jonathan Edwards. Brethren from seventeen congregations in Texas and Oklahoma attended and at least eleven visitors came in response from the TV program. One of these developed into a very productive study. The evangelistic enthusiasm in the Metroplex was heartening. We will be next at Ceres, CA, March 20-27th, 85th & Euclid (Kansas City, MO) April 29-May 1 and Houston, MO May 8-15. We look forward to our meeting with Joe Hisle, May 15-22. Since last reporting, the TV program began airing out of Lubbock, TX, and Jackson, MS. The new congregational singing began airing in Springfield and Joplin and will begin airing in most other

markets this summer. Mark Triplett, Austin McConnell and David Killingsworth made considerable upgrades on the audio and HD video. I appreciate the untiring work of Wesley Cockrum, Mark Lewis, Matt Enos and others behind the scenes for the TV program. It was good to be with the Mission Hills brethren one Sunday recently. They remind me of boat #14. Responses from the TV program continue to increase in Dallas, Birmingham, Little Rock, Texarkana/Shreveport, Sacramento and Joplin. "We shall reap, if we faint not!"

Darrell Crawford, 208 Baldwin Rd Unit S, Panama City, Fl. 32405 March 3, 2011 bugz1955@hotmail.com Greetings to the faithful everywhere. We hope all are doing well, it seems that spring has sprung here in the deep south! Things are getting better here. It is hard to believe we have been here in Florida for a year now, my how time flies! Not only are we still studying with the same digressive couple (taking baby steps with them) We have had 2 digressive preachers agree to studies. We are waiting on their replies to set up definite dates for these studies. We are praying for the Lord's blessings in these and other matters. An older lady we have met has come to services for several weeks now and seems to really enjoy services. We are having more participation in services here for which we are thankful. We are still working towards afternoon services here and are looking forward to seeing that in the near future. Lord willing. We can be available for preaching appointments one Lord's day a month and for a few meetings along as the Lord permits. If you know of anyone in the area we can contact, please let us know and if you are visiting in the area please come by and worship with us here in Panama City. We love visitors!! May we always stand for the truth and may the Lord bless His church everywhere.

Wyn Baker- mrbwynl@suddenlink.net. 229 Orchard Street, Wayne, WV 25570 (304) 633-7354. March 5, 2011. Our work here in the tri-state area of West Virginia continues to move along. We have suffered some heartache recently in losing one of our local teachers at Garrett's Creek to the world, but we press on toward the mark for the prize of high calling. Our work has expanded in many ways. We continue to host a weekly radio program through WEMM 107.9 out of Huntington, WV. This is one-of largest broadcasting venues in the region and we continue to receive good response from this 30 minute program. You can listen to our program over the Internet at 8 a.m. every Lord's Day EST. Just use a search engine and type in WEMM. After you find their website just click on the live button where it says, "The Gospel For Today". Anyone that has broadband can listen to our broadcast for free, and we encourage all to do so. We also have rebuilt a website that we are using to reach the lost and edify the saved. Our web address is www.thegospelfortoday.com. We continue to expand this effort as we add information and new features regularly to gain the attention of many. It is our hope that such efforts

will encourage others in our brotherhood to use our modern conveniences to reach the lost in their local communities as well as reach many in all the world. What a blessed time we live in! We enjoyed attending the great meeting over the new year in Dothan. The experience of being with brethren at this meeting was so exciting, enriching and enlightening. The singing and preaching were very helpful to my own family, and we look forward to going back next year.

At Garrett's Creek we have a gospel meeting taking place very quickly with brother Barney Owens. Our hope is for a great uplifting meeting and we long for many community people to attend. In April we are traveling to Chestnut Ridge, KY for a Wednesday through Sunday meeting. Come be with us if you are in the area. Blessed regards to all the faithful!

A GREAT COMPLIMENT

My Grandpa Lankford loved the paper, and took it till he died. He was a quiet humble man that led by example, and stood strong against all innovations in religion. He and my Grandmother raised three of the finest faithful Christians I know.

My parents, have taken the paper for as long as I can remember, and for the 39 years of my life, it has been readily available to me.

In my opinion, the OPA is one of the best sources anyone can go to for help in study, and for encouragement.

I have been heartbroken by those who have attacked the paper, and it's staff. While the OPA is not inspired, most of its articles serve a great purpose combating religious error in these times we live in.

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THE BACK PAGE...

CROSSAN'S IMAGINARY CLOTHES

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

The Easter season is upon us and we, therefore, should prepare ourselves for the annual media onslaught that calls into question our beliefs about Christ and the resurrection. It happens every year at this time and John Dominic Crossan, co-founder of the "Jesus Seminar" has already fired the first volley in his just-released book, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*. Crossan and his book are featured in a CNN.com article entitled, "John Dominic Crossan's 'Blasphemous' Portrait of Jesus," by John Blake (Feb. 27, 2011).

Crossan co-chaired the Jesus Seminar from its beginning in 1985, with the late Robert Funk. The Seminar consists of a small group of self-selected marginal-scholars ("Fellows") who initially met twice a year in different cities around the country and debated the reliability of Scripture.

They have concluded that the Bible is not inspired and the miracles attributed to Jesus never really occurred. They argue that Jesus was a secular sage, but not the Son of God. They claim He was a political rabble-rouser, uncertain of His mission, in constant hiding from His Roman pursuers, and that the idea of starting a new religion was the furthest thing from His mind. They conclude that Jesus died a beggar's death on the cross, His body was eaten by ravenous dogs, His resurrection is a myth, and the New Testament writers fabricated much of the Gospel message.

Such blasphemy is nothing new. Centuries ago the Jewish Talmud (commentary on the Jewish Scriptures) accused Jesus of being—among other things—an illegitimate son of a Roman soldier. What makes the Jesus Seminar different is its ability to manipulate the media into disseminating its bilge. Crossan, himself, has become a best-selling author of several books and he appears regularly on the History Channel and the Discovery Channel offering his perspectives of Jesus, especially during the Easter season.

Crossan's blasphemous portrait of Jesus is founded upon theories formulated by a group of 19th Century German scholars, such as Julius Wellhausen, Rudolph Bultmann, and Martin Dibelius, who applied the principles of "higher criticism" to the study of the Bible. Higher criticism is a complex system of literary research that questions the integrity, authenticity, and credibility of literary works. The major flaw with this approach to Bible study is that critics are forced to approach the Bible just as they would any other book. They begin with the presupposition that the Bible is NOT an inspired volume. When you begin your investigation of the Bible with that prejudice, you are limited in the conclusions you can draw about it. If the Bible is not inspired, you would have to conclude that the miracle stories, the virgin birth (Mt. 1:23), and the resurrection (Mk. 1:16) are myths.

When these theories first began to surface in the 1800s, many academics who wanted to be known as scholars readily accepted them. They accepted them primarily for political reasons, however, and not because the theories actually had merit. It was the attitude, "The Germans are renowned scholars. They are more advanced than we are. They must be right. If we go along with their conclusions we shall look scholarly too."

This reaction reminds me of the Hans Christian Andersen short story about a vain emperor whose only concern in life is to dress in elegant clothes. He changes clothes almost every hour and loves to show them off to the people. Two con artists hear of the emperor's vanity and decide to take advantage of it. They introduce themselves as professional tailors and claim they have invented an extraordinary method of weaving a cloth so light and fine that it becomes invisible to anyone who is too stupid and incompetent to appreciate its quality. The emperor falls for the con job, and he gives the two men a bag of gold coins to begin working on the miraculous fabric immediately.

When the time comes for the emperor to try on the new clothes the con artists have pretended to weave for him, he is shocked that he cannot see or feel the texture of the garments himself! He is relieved when he realizes no one knows he cannot see the fabric, and, therefore, no one can conclude he is stupid and incompetent.

The farce continues as the emperor is cajoled into showing off his new clothes to the people gathered outside. As he emerges from the palace everyone shouts, "look at the Emperor's new clothes! They're beautiful!" No one will admit they cannot see the clothes, because that would be an admission of their own stupidity and incompetence.

Children, however, are brutally honest. They know nothing of diplomacy and duplicity. One such child speaks up in the midst of this elaborate farce and protests, "But, the emperor is not wearing any clothes."

Keep this story in mind during the next month as John Dominic Crossan is paraded before us by the popular media as "one of the world's top scholars on the 'Historical Jesus.'" Because this scholar is clothed in the vacuous theories of higher criticism, he is not really wearing any clothes either. carlmj@cableone.net