

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).

VOL. XCI

LEBANON, MISSOURI • FEBRUARY, 2019

NO. 2

## THE CHALLENGE TO END WELL

By *RICK MARTIN*

The most important aspect of any race is not how well you begin, but how well you end. We have all cheered some runner, driver, or horse that has come from the end of the pack to win a race. When a person obeys Christ, who has rescued him from the penalty and power of sin, he has begun his spiritual race.

Ecclesiastes 7:8 tells us that the end is better than the beginning, but oftentimes and how sad it is to know that some people start the race good, but the end is a disaster. Almost anyone can make a good beginning, but he can also make a wreck out of whatever he is doing before he gets very far.

The statement, “the end is better than the beginning”, is true only if growth accompanies the process. The life of Paul is a good illustration of the value of continuous growth. 2 Tim. 4:6-8 “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” Paul’s life was one of continuous growth. He never stopped growing spiritually and because of this he could look forward with great anticipation to the end of his life. When one meets the challenge of ending well, they can expect a crown of righteousness. Paul says there is one awaiting those who have obeyed and followed the doctrine of Christ throughout their lives. Paul was captured by the cause of Christ and he considered it to be greater and of more importance than himself.

For you and me to meet the challenge of ending well, we must let Christ take ahold of our lives as he did the apostle Paul’s. Christ lived in Paul. The life that Paul lived was as close to life of Christ as he could get it. Christ loves man and gave His life for man and because

of this man should live for Christ. When a person loves Christ, he will keep His commandments.

A Christian will never relax his efforts. He remembers he is a participant in a race that will not be won until the whole distance is covered. There is no place in life where one may stop-you must keep on striving for the victor’s laurels.

The apostle Paul had some goals. Because he had a desire to end well and be present with the Lord, Paul labored to live according to God’s will-2 Cor. 5:9. He wanted to be sure he would meet God’s approval. Paul says he had not attained that for which he was seeking and to attain it, he made it the most important thing in his life- Phil. 3:13-14. Paul forgot about all earthly aspirations, honors, and desires. He had no desire to look backward, he was reaching forward to take hold of the goal. Christ was the supreme purpose of his life. Paul had a definite plan for meeting the challenge of ending well. He wasn’t like many today, who have no definite plans and have not set any goals for themselves. Many people wander aimlessly through life without any plans. We should all have some goals and a plan. We should understand the purpose we want to accomplish.

God has made known His purpose and plan for our lives. Rom. 8:28 “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” God determined that man should be called by the Gospel; to be called according to God’s purpose is to be called by the Gospel-2 Thess.2:13-14. All those who believe the truth and follow it are God’s chosen ones and they are walking according to His purpose. God called all who believed the Gospel that He might purify, sanctify and fit them to obtain the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are to meet the challenge of ending well, we must walk according to God’s purpose. God has set the purpose, but the choice to end well is up to us. Man has the capacity for choice and responsibility and there are some things that we must do.

*continued on page 6*

**CONTENTS**

Vol. XCI No. 2



**ADVOCATE**

The Challenge to End Well ..... 1  
 Editorial ..... 2  
 Querist Column ..... 3  
 Restoration ..... 4  
 At Every Word a Reputation Dies ..... 4  
 The New Covenant ..... 6  
 Announcements ..... 8  
 Our Departed ..... 8  
 Field Reports ..... 9  
 WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE ..... 12

**PUBLISHER**

Don L. King  
 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550  
 Fax 925-454-8995

**ASSISTANT PUBLISHER**

Ronny F. Wade  
 P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

Billy Dickinson  
 Jerry Dickinson  
 Johnny Elmore  
 Greg Gay  
 Carl Johnson  
 Kevin Presley

**OLD PATHS ADVOCATE WEBSITE:**

www.oldpathsadvocate.org  
 Rick Martin, Website Publisher  
 Terry Studdard, Website Asst. Publisher  
 Brandon Steward, Webmaster

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

Single Subscription One Year ..... \$15.00  
 Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by **Old Paths Advocate**, Lebanon, MO  
 A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536  
 periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536  
 Send Form 3579 to **Old Paths Advocate**  
 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550.

All articles published in **Old Paths Advocate** contain the view of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and publishers. If you have any questions, please direct them to the author listed at the heading of the article.

**Editorial**

**AFTER THIS MANNER PRAY YE**

*By RONNY F. WADE*

In Matthew 6:5-13 we have recorded, the powerful prayer of example taught by Jesus. Previous to the prayer, He gives some general rules that govern our prayers. Pointing out in verses 5-8 that we are not to make long prayers, nor are we to pray in order to be seen of men. Prayer is private, and not for purposes of staging some kind of demonstration. We should not call attention to ourselves, but rather seek to communicate with God in an humble reverent manner. Beginning in v. 9 Jesus says we should pray:

**1. "OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN"**

This phrase recognizes the fatherhood of God. He is our father by right of creation (Genesis 1: 1), by right of preservation (Matthew 6:25-30), and by right of redemption (John 3: 16-17). We pray to God, not to the Holy Spirit, not to man, not to the Virgin Mary, but to God. This phrase also recognizes heaven. Jesus believed in heaven. In John 14:1-4 he affirmed that in his Father's house many abiding places existed. He has gone to prepare a place for us. Paul wrote "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Heaven is a reality, and those who deny it, deny the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. Only those who are His children can address God as "our Father". One becomes a child of God by faith and baptism, Galatians 3:26-28. We are born of water and Spirit (John 3:5). Hence only those in Christ, those who have been baptized into him can rightly claim to be the children of God. From this we can see how important it is to be in Christ where all spiritual blessings reside.

**2. "HALLOWED BE THY NAME"**

The word "hallowed" means to render or pronounce holy. The name of God should always be celebrated, venerated, and esteemed holy at all times. This simply means that we should never take the name of God lightly or in an irreverent manner. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7). "God is greatly to be feared...and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psalms 89:7). Today men use God's name as a by-word, often carelessly, sometimes irreverently. All such language is forbidden. Anyone who so uses the name of deity demonstrates not only a lack of knowledge, but a lack of respect as well.

*continued on page 7*

## QUERIST COLUMN

By CLINT DEFRANCE

Question: What are “love feasts” (Jude 12)?

Answer: Jude 12 is the only passage in the New Testament that mentions “love feasts” directly. However, using early Christian literature and extra-Biblical literature from the ancient world, we can formulate a fairly convincing idea of what Jude meant. Barclay says that the ancient Greeks would conduct “feasts of charity” in which wealthy patrons would pool resources together for a community banquet to which the poor and indigent were invited. These feasts were usually dedicated to some deity worshiped in the city or village. The “charity” which was exceptional in pagan culture was common in Christian practice. The earliest Christians met “daily” - “breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart” (Acts 2.46). In this passage, the phrase “breaking bread” is not the same grammatically as that used in verse 42 of the same chapter in reference to the Lord’s Supper. Verse 46 describes the Christians sharing common meals in one another’s homes. The Scottish Restorer James Haldane has more to say on this early Christian custom, which he identifies as “the love feast”: “It may refer to Christians meeting together in smaller companies, not as a church, just as they do now in visiting, eating and drinking together, and enlivening their society by joining in prayer, and singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (The Social Worship of the First Christians). Thus, the love feast was what we in modern times call a “church dinner.” Originally, these meals were conducted in private homes, most likely the same homes where the congregations would assemble for worship, but at separate times from the worship gatherings. The love feast was a natural outgrowth of Christian charity, rather than a commanded expression of Christian worship or service. It is possible that 1 Corinthians 11.17-34 describes how misconduct at a love feast was adversely impacting the worship service, and Paul’s instruction was that if the love feast could not be corrected it should be abandoned. In the early post-apostolic era, Ignatius wrote an epistle to the Roman Christians in which he counseled that love feasts should only be celebrated with a bishop present. This is probably in reference to the issue addressed by Jude. False teachers would attend the love feast,

which did not always include the whole congregation being in one place. These gatherings were informal and the false teachers could use them as opportunities to secretly spread their destructive teachings. Jude says, “These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves.” “Spots” is literally “sunken reefs” or hidden dangers. These men targeted the love feast because it gave them an opportunity to secretly reach the weaker members of the congregation “without fear.” Thus, the early Christians said a gathering like this must include the elders of the church (at least one), who could keep watch over the situation. On a more positive side, the ancient practice of the love feast shows the wisdom and goodness of Christians spending social time together, enjoying one another’s company, and encouraging one another to focus on spiritual things from day to day.



## SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Please send all subscriptions, questions,  
and concerns regarding your subscriptions to:

**David Griffin**

**P.O. Box 1038  
Lebanon, MO 65536**

### RESTORATION

*By PAUL O. NICHOLS*

In the 1800s there was a great religious movement in this Country, an effort to restore ancient Christianity. There were men who were concerned and eager and who worked hard to see that true Christianity should induce honest and sincere religious people to return to the Scriptures for their faith and practice; honest men and women who really wanted to do the will of God. Some of their slogans were “Back to the Bible” and “We speak where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent.” This movement appealed to conscientious and honest people who wanted to serve God in His own appointed way, neither adding to, nor taking away from that which was given by inspiration. The movement gained momentum and in the 1800s the Church of Christ was the fastest growing church in this country. Honest religious people wanted to do what was right, and they began to search the Scriptures and to listen to those preachers who were calling men and women back to the Bible and what inspiration taught rather than to continue to listen to the false teachers of that time and continue to practice error.

Many preachers and others at that time came to realize that they were in religious error. And when they saw that they were wrong and that their practices were not authorized by God, they were converted to the truth they learned. They were made to realize by a closer study of the Scriptures that they were worshipping in vain. Honesty demanded that they give up the religious error and accept the Truth; religious error that some of them had practiced for generations. This was not easy; and in many cases caused separation of families and friends. But for the sake of doing the will of the Lord they made the sacrifice.

We are a conservative Church of Christ, and the reason is because we understand the need of speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where it is silent. We realize that we will be judged by Jesus according to “That which is written.”

There are some things in the Bible that do need special study and consideration. For instance, the eldership and deaconship. The qualifications for these positions in the church are difficult, and the Bible is very clear, that there is a need for such men. But they must qualify, and the Scriptural qualifications are not easily met, and most men in the church do not qualify, and that includes some who have been appointed to these positions. But

because some over zealous preacher has ordained them, such men accept these positions even if in their own minds they know that they are lacking. Some desire the prestige, some want the authority, and some because they have been shamed into accepting these positions in the church. The apostle Paul writes in Eph. 4:10, 11, “He that descended is the same that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” Each of these positions is different from the other. The position of an apostle was different from that of a prophet. The position of prophet was different from that of the evangelist; and the same can be said of the pastors (elders) and teachers. Jesus told the apostles to evangelize the world (Mark 16:16) “Go teach all nations” (Matt. 18:19, 20). But this was not the work assigned to elders. The elders were told that their duty was to “feed the flock which was among them” and to keep them safe from “wolves” (false teachers) (Acts 20:28-31). We do not believe that elders who are over a flock (a congregation) can be an evangelist at the same time; holding meetings all over the country or the world, while neglecting their duty as a ruler and care taker over a flock (congregation) (Heb. 13:7; 13:24). He is either an evangelist or an elder; one or the other. We would not think of hiring a traveling salesman to be shepherd over a flock of sheep, and the Lord never suggested that we have “elders” who neglect their duty at home while doing the work which is assigned to the position of evangelist. We are made to wonder if pride and money are not part of the equation. We at Stony Point do not have elders hold our meetings. We have evangelists come and do the work of an evangelist, and let the elders stay at home and do the job they have been appointed to do.

### AT EVERY WORD A REPUTATION DIES

*By JERRY CUTTER*

At every word a reputation dies.” These words were written by the poet Pope concerning eighteenth century English society. Today, sadly we write, the same thing is taking place in the church in many instances. Some people are willing to tell things and others are willing to believe them, whether they are true or not, and that to the detriment of the church.

First, we would like to consider three words that Paul used in Romans one. 1. Malignity: A baseness of

nature by which we take things by the wrong handle, and expound things always in the worst sense. It is the malignant interpretation of the actions of others, an attributing them all to the worst motive. Did YOU ever do that? 2. Whisperers: These are cowardly sneaks who have not the courage to come out in the open and say damaging things of others, but secretly peddle their slanderous insinuations against the person of their spite. They are “snakes in the grass.” “An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.” Pro. 16:27, 28. In contrast, “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.” Did YOU ever do that? 3. Backbiters: Slanderers, defamers who delight in destroying the good name of others. Whisperers and backbiters are of the same breed, excepting backbiters are more bold. Neither has the courage to face the accused with their slanders, and worse than that, both have left their slimy trails in the church. Were YOU ever guilty of this?

Do you know what Paul mentions next in his list of sins? “Haters of God.” To be guilty of any of the above sins is to be a hater of God. Why? James gives the answer. “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, WHICH ARE MADE AFTER THE SIMILITUDE OF GOD. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My Brethren, THESE THINGS OUGHT NOT SO TO BE.” In fact, this cannot be. “SO CAN NO FOUNTAIN YIELD SALT WATER AND FRESH.” So we hate God when we speak evilly of man that was made after the similitude of God. How much worse when we speak evilly of ‘OUR own brethren? Without any injustice to the scriptures it can be said that our words are pictures of the soul. They show the inner man like a magnifying glass. “Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly,” Pro 17:8. But now notice, “Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding,” Pro. 17:28. So our words are magnifying glasses of the soul.

Again, our words are seeds and “what a man sows, that shall he also reap.” “Who is a wise man and endued, with knowledge among you? ...For where envying and strife, is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is SOWN IN PEACE of them that make peace,” Jas. 3:13-18. So by our words we

can sow, we can sow Heaven or Hell, and we shall reap what we sow.

Also, the tongue is a fire, a fire that no water can quench. “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. The tongue is a fire a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and is set on fire of hell,” Jas. 3:5-6. Note this thought provoking poem by William Blake:

#### A POISON TREE

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.  
And I watered it in fears  
Night and morning with my tears,  
And I sunned it with smiles  
And with soft deceitful wiles.  
And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright,  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine-  
And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole;  
In the morning, glad, I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

In meditating on the poem you will notice that “my wrath did grow” is comparable to, “Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth.” And speaking of poison, James further said, “But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” Note the poem again, “In the morning, glad, I see my foe outstretched beneath the tree,”

Offenses will come, so may the wise reader read carefully the concluding remarks. “A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city,” Pro .. 18:19. But if through some weakness you do offend, hasten to take this advice, “DO this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go humble thyself, and make sure thy friend. Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler,” Pro. 6:3-5.

Last, Jesus said, “We shall give an account of every idle word that we shall speak.” James said, “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.” Paul said, “And that ye study to be quiet, and do your own

business,” 1 Thess. 4:11. Remember, when sick, to take medicine carefully is to LIVE.

### THE NEW COVENANT

By MELVIN BLALOCK

In the previous article we established that the old covenant had become obsolete and therefore no longer in force, Heb. 8:6-13. Add to this the testimony that is found in the Apostle Paul’s writing to the Galatians: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free,” Gal. 4:21-31. From this scripture we learn that these two women and their sons were symbolic of the two covenants. Hagar, the bondmaid and her son symbolize the Old Covenant. Abraham’s wife, Sarah and her son represent the New Covenant. We remember in the Genesis account that Hagar and her son were cast out, Gen. 21:14. Ishmael was not to be heir with Sarah’s son, Isaac. The Holy Spirit chose these two women and their sons to show that the old covenant would cease, giving way to the new. We find in this text that this covenant embraced the Law of Moses. We are no longer subject to the Law of Moses. There is no part of the old covenant that is binding on the New Testament Christian. The Ten Commandments are described as the covenant that was given to Moses and the children of Israel. “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel: So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the

covenant, the Ten Commandments. Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the Testimony were in Moses’ hand when he came down from the mountain).....“EX. 34:27-29. Paul explained in his Allegory that “we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free,” therefore, we are not subject to the Law of Moses. Our allegiance is to the perfect law of liberty. In James’ Epistle we read, “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does,” James 1:25. —OPA

### THE CHALLENGE TO....continued from page one

As individuals each of us have a capacity for responsibility and choice. Each of us have a self to live with, a character to build and a God-given personality to develop and if we expect to meet the challenge of ending well, we must get God’s point of view and set our lives in order. Each of us must live with self and we should attempt to prepare ourselves now to meet the challenge to end well. No one knows what the future has in store, we don’t really know what to expect in the future; but even though we don’t know about the future we can adequately prepare for the future. We have the choice to decide which way we are going to take as we go down life’s road and we also have the responsibility to end well. Only you can prepare yourself to end well, no one can do it for you and you must prepare now. The possibility of ending well is going to rest on the foundation that we lay today.

We need a training that will instruct our head and inspire our heart. Is your training giving you the inspiration that you need? Is it helping you be the Christian that you should be? If your training is not helping you be the best you can be, then you do not have much to build on. Without the proper knowledge of God man is left in a confused state; he is like someone staring into total darkness and can see nothing but blackness. Our training should give us a faith; because we must have faith to end well. God’s word gives us the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen- Heb. 11:1. The evidence of that Word will give us the proper concept of God. Faith gives us hope and it evidences the fact that things which we have been promised but cannot see do exist.

Our training should help us set a goal to live by and it should help us leave an example fit to live by. We should have the same goal as the apostle Paul had. Phil. 3:14 “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

We must also have a good outlook. No person will ever rise any higher than his thoughts. A person's soul will be dyed the color of his thinking. The position we occupy tomorrow will be greatly influenced by the disposition we have today. Man's happiness is not determined by his circumstances, but rather by what he does with those circumstances. Phil. 4:11 "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Everything didn't always turn out the way Paul wanted it to. Circumstances were not always the best for him, but he learned to make the best of them. Whatever condition he was in, he was content. Circumstances do not determine our ability to end well.

It makes no difference how great we might be in the eyes of man; if we do not end well, nothing else will matter. Col. 3:2 "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Worldly pursuits will mean nothing, we must meet the challenge to end well.

In meeting the challenge before us there can be no halfheartedness at any time if we expect to be successful. 1 Pet. 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." The devil will constantly assault the work we do for the Lord. If we try to carry out our duty half-heartedly, we will be unsuccessful in ending well. We must accept this duty with great zeal. We must accept the Lord's help and strength which available through prayer.

We must make a definite effort to end well. Lk. 13:24 "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." We must make the effort by living right and following the will of God. We must obey His commandments to end well.

Are you serving the Lord today? Have you given your life to Him? Rom. 6:16 "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Yield your life to Jesus Christ today.

It's not how you start life, but how you end. Are you making the choices today to seek God and His kingdom above all else? Are you meeting the challenge to end well? —Rick Martin, mmartin@bellsouth.net

*AFTER THIS MANNER...continued from page two*

### 3. "THY KINGDOM COME"

It is noteworthy that the first thing mentioned in this

prayer is the kingdom or church. Even though the kingdom had not come at that time, it occupied first place in this prayer. No wonder Jesus commanded us to seek first the kingdom (Matthew 6:33). At this time Jesus and those about him were waiting for the Kingdom to come.

1. He promised to build it in Matthew 16: 18

2. He taught that it was not an earthly kingdom in John 18:36

3. The scriptures taught that "it was at hand" that is it was about to come in the near future. Matthew 3:2 and 4:17

4. Jesus even taught that some living at that time would live to see the kingdom come. Mark 9:1.

5. In Acts the second chapter we see the establishment of the church or kingdom come to pass. This was on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ.

6. We also read that the members of the church at Colosse were in the kingdom according to Colossians 1:13. This is true of members of the church everywhere. Thus we see Jesus giving recognition to the Church and its importance in this prayer. Many today relegate the Church to a place of insignificance and unimportance. Not so with Jesus. He realized and taught its necessity. The impending establishment of the Lord's Church was of primary concern in this prayer. Today we cannot pray for the kingdom to come, since it already has. However, we can pray for its growth, welfare and future. If it was important to Christ then, it should be important to us today. Are you in the Church? Have you been baptized into Christ? If not, you need to do so today.

### 4. "THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"

Jesus recognizes that God's will has priority over any man's will. Therefore we must always obey God rather than man. Our Lord exemplified this principle in his own life. "I seek not mine own will but the will of my father which sent me" (John 5:30). "... nevertheless not my will, but thy will be done" (Luke 22:4). Man's whole duty is to fear God and keep his commandments (Eccl. 12:13). Henry Ward Beecher called this part of the prayer "most fearful". If applied to our lives, it is without doubt, revolutionary. We all know that God's will is done in heaven. We are here told to pray for the same thing on earth. We often say these words, but what would happen if God answered them, in detail, immediately? What would happen to your business if His will was done on earth as in heaven? What would happen to your home, your church relationship, your thinking, your speech, your friendships, your time, your money? Would there be revolutionary changes? Very likely there would be for many.

#### 5. "GIVE US FOR TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

This recognizes God as the provider and giver of all material blessings. "Every good gift" comes from him (James 1:17). This phrase also recognizes and emphasizes man's dependence upon God. "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). Without God we would be helpless and hopeless in this present world.

#### 6. "AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS"

Here we see the reality of sin, the need of forgiveness from God, and the need of forgiving others. Sin is all about us. We see it in broken marriages and homes, ruined hearts and lives. Sin is a debt. Debt often brings shame, guilt, burdens, and misery. Forgiveness for this great debt comes from God. All men need it and must have it in order to be saved. Jesus said "If ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins..." (John 8:21). The need to forgive others is also taught here. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you your trespasses" (Matthew 6:4). Hence, we must learn to forgive others, if we expect to be forgiven by God.

#### 7. "AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION"

Let us not be put to the test. Temptation is real, not an illusion. All temptation comes from Satan. Such things as pride, selfishness, passion, hatred, lies, unbelief, self-will etc. come about as a result of our being tempted by Satan to sin. We may cause our own downfall by putting ourselves in the way of temptation. We cannot afford to "pitch our tent" toward Sodom as did Lot. When we do, we suffer the consequences as he did. We are taught that God tempts no man, but we are tempted when we are drawn away of our own lust and enticed (James 1: 13). Paul tells us that "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able to bear." (1 Cor.10:13) This same verse teaches that God will with the temptation provide a way for our escape. We must, however, look for it in order to find it.

#### 8. "BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL i.e THE EVIL ONE.

The idea is deliver us from Satan. The work, influence, and power of the devil are real. Jesus never made light of the devil, he never joked or pretended that he didn't exist. He was well aware of his power from the encounter recorded in Mt. 4:11. We are told that "...then the devil leaves him and the angels came and ministered unto him." Paul wrote that we should avoid Satan getting an advantage of us (2 Cor.2:11). James tells us to resist the devil and he will flee from us (James 4:7-8). We should all stay as far away from the evil one as possible.

Encounters with him are always bad for the person trying to live right.

This beautiful prayer of example is concise and to the point. It is not "wordy" or lavish, just simple and direct. It points not only to the necessity of prayer, but to its power as well. We must ever remember that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16).



Front row, left to right: Homer King, Barney Welch, B.F. Leonard, Homer A. Gay, Fred Kirbo, Clarence Kisinger, Merwyn Buffington, Lynwood Smith. Back row: Paul O. Nichols, Joe Casleman, Wesley Ballard, John Staley, ?, Jesse Waters, Clovis T. Cook, J.B. Spradley, Ervin Waters, Tom Smith, Claton Fancher, James R. Steward, Jack Smith, Jack Bledsoe, W.H. Reynolds, Jesse Boush, H.C. Welch

## Announcement

### Commentary on Revelation

The new commentary on the book of Revelation by Brother Don McCord is now ready for mailing. If you would like a copy send your request to Darnold McCord P.O. Box 1773 Covina, CA 91722. The cost is \$16.00 plus postage of \$4. For a total of \$20.00.

## Our Departed

ROTHROCK - On December 28<sup>th</sup> 2018 the Mission Hills church in Springfield, MO lost one of its young dedicated members due to a horrible automobile accident. Scott Rothrock was on his way home from work when he was rear-ended by a semi-truck trailer and forced into another truck in front of him. The ensuing fire took his life. He leaves behind his young wife and two little girls. The tragedy of the accident has left its mark on the entire congregation. We have struggled to be of aid and comfort to his wife and children while deep within all of us there is a hurt that refuses to go away. At the visitation over one thousand people came to pay their respects to the memory of a young man who had made his mark on their lives in



one way or the other. The funeral director said that in all their years of operation the number of well-wishers exceeded any they had ever had. Out of all the sorrow that has enveloped us we are reminded of the power of a Godly example and the effect it can have on the people around us. Scott is survived by his wife Lindsey, daughters Jolee and Grace, his mother and father and one brother Jeff, as well as a host of other friends and loved ones. Brother Richard Bunner and this writer conducted the memorial service. —Ronny F. Wade

**DEWITT-MINGS** - Irene DeWitt-Mings was born September 6, 1918 in Seminole, Oklahoma and passed away December 23, 2018, in Yuba City, California a few months past her 100th birthday.

Irene is survived by her daughters: Pat Kido, Virginia (Alvin) Smith, Sandy DeWitt, Karen (Tiny) Herota; sons: Stephen (Bev), and Charles Dewitt; daughters-in-law: Kathy DeWitt and Latrisha DeWitt. In addition, Irene had 31 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren, and 6 great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Sammie DeWitt and her second husband, Calton Mings; daughters: Carol June DeWitt (died in infancy), and Onetia Watson; son, Sammie DeWitt; and sons-in-law: Bill Watson and Frank Kido.

Irene struggled in her early years with all the temptations anyone would have whose spouse is not a Christian and made it difficult for her to be at worship. An excerpt from her handwritten memoirs that was read at her funeral acknowledged that struggle, but her life told the story of a woman who had the conviction of her faith to overcome those difficulties and get herself and her eight children to worship consistently and faithfully. Irene loved writing and composed at least two songs that have been in our songbooks, plus numerous poems, some of which were compiled into a book.

As a family, the DeWitts were farmworkers for years, following the harvests from California and Oregon between school years. Eventually, Irene began working as a custodian for Marysville, CA High School where she was employed for 18 years. When she was interviewed in 1975 by the school newspaper she talked about what was most important to her: the church and her family. She said: "My idea of true religion is worshiping exactly according to what the scriptures say. Church is everything to me. The thing I enjoy most in life is going to church and knowing that my children and grandchildren are there around me."

Irene was and is a wonderful influence in her family and

in the Yuba City community with many of her family faithful in the Lord's church. Two of her grandsons and one great grandson work with congregations: Rod Watson at Sebastopol, CA, Sammie DeWitt, at Olivehurst, CA, and Matt Hayes at Reno, NV.

Darren Whittaker and I were honored to be asked to assist at the service where a large crowd gathered to share their love and support of the family. —Greg Gay

**JONES** - Brother Bill M. Jones long time member of Southside Church of Christ in Andrews, TX. was born in Wills Point, TX. on 10/12/1923 to Ora & Marcus Jones. His family relocated to Trent TX. where they were dry land farmers. He was the youngest of 9 siblings and lived through the great depression. He loved music and taught himself to play the guitar and often played for the residents of Andrews nursing home. He loved sports and especially baseball. He played semi-pro baseball in Lamesa, TX. In the 1940's and later came to Andrews, TX. and worked for Humble oil, which is now Exxon and retired after 35 years. He married Dora Alice Graham in Trent, TX. On December 24 1944 and she preceded him in death in 2009. They both were faithful at Southside Church of Christ in Andrews, TX. Bill is survived by one daughter Annette Gore and her husband Charles Gore, 2 grandsons, Chris and Chase Gore, and five great grandchildren, Christopher Gore, Tate Gore, Sydney Rowland and Presley Gore. Bill at 95 was an inspiration to all and loved by His brethren and sisters in Christ. His death inspired his grandsons to be baptized and restored to the church and his great grandsons to be baptized as well, which was a memorable time, through which brother Bill lives on for time to come. Myself and Morgan Stripling attempted to speak words of comfort and warning to those gathered at his grave-side service. Our prayer is that all of the above named survivors will remain faithful until The Lord comes again to judge us, and give us a home in heaven as He Promised the faithful. —C. A. Smith

## Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, email: old\_paths@juno.com, January 1, 2019. By the time you read this we should be in the Philippines, Lord willing. The work there is still growing and spreading into new areas. To God be the praise. The Lord has given us another New Year. We could look back and either be happy or sad, however, we can't do much about the past other than ask forgiveness for failings and thank Him for good things. Yesterday is gone and cannot be changed. Tomorrow is uncertain and may never come.

If it does, we may accomplish wonderful things with God's help. Today is ours that we may accomplish His work. We pray the New Year meetings were great and look forward to a prosperous year in which to work, if God is willing. May we encourage all of the preachers to send reports and articles this coming year? Brethren enjoy reading of your success and knowing where you are going next. We have received a number of complimentary remarks about the increased number of field reports. Thank you all so much, and let's keep up the good work.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, cmjthebackpage@gmail.com, January 14. I preached both services yesterday here at home and I am scheduled to give the chapter study on Wednesday. I continue to preach often at home during the winter months. We are scheduled to be in Healdton next Lord's Day. I attended two days of the annual preachers study in OKC. The studies I heard were consistently excellent. It was obvious the teachers had searched and researched their subjects well. After the first day, I mentioned to some of the preachers scheduled for the next day that the bar of excellence had been set pretty high. They agreed, but their presentations were of the same excellent quality. Ron Courter and Richard Bunner were in charge of the study, and Ron closed out a day's session with one of his classic, inimitable observations. He said, "If you came here today HOPING to be disappointed, you are disappointed, because you were NOT disappointed." Vintage Ron Courter. Phyllis and I also attended almost all of the Oklahoma New Year Meeting. The meeting was an inspiration. I had the privilege of preaching at Whispering Pines, the host congregation, on Lord's Day morning. Over 900 people were in attendance on the last day. May God bless us all in 2019 to bring glory and honor to His name.

Ronny Wade, P.O. Box 14352, Springfield, MO 65814. It has been my privilege in the recent past to preach at the following churches: Lee's Summit near Lebanon, Mo, Montreal, MO, Hartwell near Huntsville, AR, and my home church here in Springfield. The work in this area is moving forward with churches working peacefully together in an effort to reach the lost. The Lord willing I will be with the Pleasant Grove Church near Brazil, IN March 17-24, then April 17-21 at Houston, MO. We look forward to these meetings and pray the work in your area is progressing with good success.

P. Duane Permenter, 94-371 Ikepono St., Waipahu, HI 96797, (808) 773-5523, pdpermenter@outlook.com, Jan 3. The weather in Waipahu has been nice and cool for which we are thankful. Our teaching locally is getting better and better. God, through His amazing grace is

helping us to develop. We meet once a week and study our next chapter for Wednesday evening and this is helping to teach our beloved brethren to study correctly. It is fun to encourage the singing here for everyone loves to sing new songs. Philip and Amie have been gone to Texas and Oklahoma and we will be glad when they return. We continue using Facebook to try and help with new leads in Hawaii. We are getting some results although we have not yet converted anyone. Visitors continue to attend from the community. January 25-27 are the dates for our next meeting. Philip Permenter will be doing the preaching. Phillip Prince, June 3-8, will conduct our singing school this year. Hopefully, some vacationing will help with this effort. We have enjoyed our visitors so much. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your coming and even spending the day with us. God bless the faithful!

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Jan. 7. It was my great privilege, as well as a blessing to my soul, to attend the Oklahoma New Year's Meeting. What a great way to end the old year and begin a new one! The final midnight service left me on a spiritual high, as we sung many of the old hymns by memory, ending with "Rock Of Ages," and a final prayer was offered to God as we entered the opening gates of 2019. While there, on that Sunday of Dec. 30, I worshiped with and preached at the Piedmont congregation. This is Cliff Arney's home congregation, a dear brother in Christ whose friendship I treasure, and it was wonderful to be with him and all the others who were present that day. Indeed, there were several visitors from various places with different states being represented. The first quarter of this year should be a busy time for me. In the second week of March I will attend and participate in the annual study in Columbia, MO. The topic assigned to me has to do with whether or not the "guilty party" (the one put away for sexual immorality) has the right of remarriage. It will be my contention, according to the Scriptures, that they do not. Lord willing, I plan to attend several nights of that study. Also, I am scheduled to hold a meeting at Neosho, MO on the dates of April 3-7. My prayer is that the Lord will bless us all in the upcoming year, especially when it comes to preaching the gospel and saving souls.

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX 76031, Jan. 4, 2019. We continue to enjoy a good work among the congregations in North Texas. The church in Cleburne has enjoyed some growth over the past couple of years. We have had two families move into the area which has been a real boost. We are blessed with several children in this congregation. Seven of our young people have obeyed the gospel during this time period. The church at

Cleburne has enjoyed several guest speakers over recent months. They are Glen Osburn, Ronny Wade, Jason Coon, Al Felder, Bob Johnson, and Philip Permenter. The church at Weatherford continues to do well. We have seen additions to this congregation as well. One of our young men recently obeyed the gospel, as well as an elderly gentleman within the last couple of months. Brother Kenneth Curley of the Phalba congregation had a big influence in this conversion. Brother Curley was our first convert in the Amarillo work in 1971. Kenneth continues to be a zealous worker in the Lord's church. He helped me to make contact with this man and get him introduced to the church in Weatherford. This man was baptized on the fourth Sunday of last month after I had spoken at Weatherford. After church he talked to me about being baptized. He was persuaded that he needed to be baptized that day. Recovering from back surgery, I requested that Brother Weldon Couch, a leader in the Weatherford congregation take care of the baptizing. I took the confession and Weldon took care of the rest. Within the past year we had a man and wife who are members, begin meeting with the church in Weatherford. They are assets to the church. Another family from a cups congregation has also begun attending. We are optimistic about the future of these congregations. I continue to assist the Mineral Wells and Duncanville congregations on a limited basis. On the fifth Sunday of December I was privileged to be with the Hoyte congregation near Cameron, TX. I always enjoy preaching for these brethren and enjoy the good fellowship. We are looking forward to a good year in the Lord's work. It is our prayer that God will bless our faithful brethren everywhere.

Irvin Barnes, 3218 East Farm Road, Springfield, Mo. 65803, Jan.14, 2019. I am glad the OPA is putting renewed emphasis on field reports. I have a 1944 issue of the OPA. It contains 45 field reports. I wish I had been more diligent in reporting to the paper in over 50 years of preaching. My children and grandchildren in years to come would have some idea of when and where I held meetings, by reading back issues. I find the field reports in the 1944 paper both interesting and encouraging. One thing of special interest is a report showing my father had sent \$6.25, from the church at Maple, Ark., to help the C. P. S., boys. Reaching on back, Brother Rue Porter introduced cups and classes in the church at Oakgrove, Ark., where my grandfather John Wesley Barnes was a member. Grandpa had great confidence in Bro. Porter. Somehow, Grandpa received a copy of the Truth, published by Bro. Harper which later became the OPA. He read articles in opposition to cups and classes. He went before the church and warned them that they had followed Bro. Porter into digression and pleaded with them to restore the Biblical

pattern and quit using Bro. Porter. He was invited to leave. He left. Eventually, a church was started in the home of Bro. Joe Clayton. This later became the cong., at Maple, Ark., and later Hale, Ark., of which I became a member in 1961. The church here at Pleasant View, seems healthy in most every way. We have one item of special mention. One of our deacons, Bro. Jay Rice, in my opinion is an electronics genius. He shares his talent by making discs of sermons and sending them all over the world. Our meetings are recorded and put in a disk album. Our members and others pass them to friends and relatives. I would be afraid to estimate how many gospel sermons have been distributed in this way. The church is also involved in work in various places in USA and overseas. Several people have asked about tracts. My wife, who did more than half of the work in printing and mailing the tracts underwent a massive surgery to rebuild the vertebrae in her neck. She also is to have knee replacement surgery soon. The tract situation is somewhat uncertain for now.

Paul O. Nichols, 14217 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221, pon.win.ks@juno.com. Time is fleeting. The days are swiftly passing and the coming of Jesus seems more and more imminent. Things are getting worse and worse in the political world. Liquor was illegal, but laws were passed that legalized it, and wrecks on the highways increased and death on the roads multiplied. Dope has been legalized and recently more people have died in car wrecks than ever before. Same sex marriage is now legal in more and more countries. Abortion of innocent unborn infants is now justified by many people. The apostle Paul tells us in no uncertain terms that the time is coming when men would be "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God..."(2Tim. 3:4) We are there. Members of the church will drive hundreds of miles to attend a ball game, who wouldn't drive across town to attend a Gospel meeting. Congregations are closing their doors, and buildings are being sold to the denominations for worldly businesses or false worship; these buildings which have been erected with the Lord's money. We of the Stony Point congregation in Kansas City continue to "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." There are congregations that advertise their meetings with food and drink to entice attendance and some of the meetings are more social affairs than meetings to convert the lost. I am thankful for the result of the teaching of our local teachers. We continue to have people being baptized and others making confessions of faults. And, yes, we do have people leave the congregation from time to time who find our stand for the truth too strict for them. May the Lord bless the faithful around the world who contend for the faith, wherever they live.

If the date near your name and address reads 2-19 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK  
Send all subscriptions to: David Griffin @  
P.O. Box 1038, Lebanon, MO 65536

## WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE...

### A MIDNIGHT JAILBREAK

By JERRY DICKINSON

“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners heard them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed.” (Acts 16:25,26) Thus began the most extraordinary jailbreak ever recorded. There are several remarkable aspects of this jailbreak.

1. First, it took place at midnight. It is interesting that many significant events in the Scriptures took place at midnight. In Exodus 12, at midnight, the Lord went through Egypt and all the firstborn perished, excepting those whose houses had blood on the doorposts. At midnight, Samson carried off the gates of the city of Gaza, bar and all. (Judges 16:3) At midnight, Boaz found Ruth lying at his feet, and declared his love for her. (Ruth 3 :8) David arose at midnight and gave thanks to the Lord. (Psalm 119:62) Paul preached till midnight on a Lord’s Day at Troas. (Acts 20:7) Jesus indicates His coming may be in the morning or the evening, or even at midnight. (Mark 13:35) It is midnight in the innermost part of the prison. Paul and Silas were brutally beaten earlier in the day and then thrust into the inner prison and bound with chains. Amazingly, they begin to not only pray but to sing praises to God. The Bible says the prisoners heard them. I do not think anyone had ever heard singing in the dungeon. They had probably heard a lot of cursing and moaning, but not singing! Wonderfully, it wasn’t just the prisoners who heard them. God was listening too!
2. That brings us to the second remarkable aspect of this jailbreak. Paul and Silas were not criminals. They were not guilty of murder or rape or some other heinous crimes. These two prisoners were preachers! They had been beaten and locked up for casting an evil spirit out of a slave girl. But these two preachers are about to be sprung. Their chains are going to fall off and the prison doors are going to be opened. Two preachers are about to be released from confinement at the midnight hour.
3. The third remarkable aspect of the jailbreak is the fact that God Himself sets them free. God, as noted earlier, heard the prayers and songs of Paul and Silas and decided to act. Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. Notice, it was not a tremor or a small quake, but a “great” earthquake. The very foundation of the prison was shaken and all the cell doors were opened. Even the bonds and chains on the prisoners were loosed and fell off. God miraculously intervened to set Paul and Silas free.
4. The most remarkable aspect of all, however, is the fact that even though the prison doors are open and the chains of all the prisoner fell off not one prisoner escaped. Has there ever been a jailbreak like this one in all of history?

The jailer had fallen asleep and is jolted awake by the earthquake. When he sees all the doors open and empty chains on the floor he naturally assumes that there has been a jailbreak and all the prisoners have escaped. Knowing that he will be executed for losing his prisoners, he decides to commit suicide by falling on his sword and running himself through. But Paul cries out with a loud voice, “Do yourself no harm, for we are all here!” What must have gone through the jailer’s mind? No one has escaped? Why not? Could it have something to do with these two preachers? No doubt he knew that they had been preaching that men could be saved. Perhaps he had heard them praying and singing about salvation before he went to sleep that night. That has to be so because of the question he asked them next.

Calling for a light, he ran in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Notice that he ran in! He did not sit down to think: about his situation. He did not procrastinate or hesitate. I wish we could see more people running to the Lord to obey the Gospel! Note too, he fell down trembling. What is needed today is a good old fashioned fear of God. Someone has said, “One good scare is worth ten good sermons!” Sadly, I am afraid that is the truth. I wish we could see more people tremble because of their lost condition.

“What must I do to be saved?” is his urgent question. Paul and Silas tell him to believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved. No, they did not tell him all you have to do is believe and you will be saved. Nor did they tell him the moment you believe and accept Christ as your personal Savior you will be saved. Neither did they say believe on the Lord and there is nothing else you have to do. In fact, right after they tell him to believe on the Lord we are told they spoke the word of the Lord to him and all in his house. The first step to being saved was believing, but there were more steps, and they spoke the word of the Lord to him so he would know what to do. Immediately, the Bible says, he and all in his house were baptized. After all, Jesus said “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved.” Notice two things about his salvation which are very important. The Bible says after the jailer was baptized he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. When did he rejoice? After he was baptized. When was he a believer? After he was baptized.

This midnight jailbreak happened in the city of Philippi. Many years later Paul wrote a beautiful letter to the church in Philippi. When a letter from the Apostle Paul arrived at a church, someone in the congregation would get up and read the letter to the congregation. Perhaps this former jailer is the one who reads the letter to the congregation. If so, I have no doubt the tears stream down his face as he reads the words of the man who literally saved his life that night so long ago, and brought him to the Savior who saved his soul. Surely for the rest of his life he could hear in his mind the loud cry of Paul and Silas, “Do yourself no harm for we are all here!” Maybe every night he thought about that long ago midnight when he almost committed suicide and went into eternity unprepared to meet God. What a midnight jailbreak indeed!