

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. XC

LEBANON, MISSOURI • JANUARY, 2018

NO. 1

SEND MATERIAL INTENDED FOR FEBRUARY TO RONNY WADE

By the time you read this, we plan to be in the Philippines, Lord willing. As always, Bro Wade will do at least the February issue in our absence. Send all material intended for publication in February to Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814. After February you may resume sending to me as always. This will be the 37th annual trip for me and Ronny has always handled the publishing work during that time. Our heartfelt thanks to him for his faithful service.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS – JUBILEE!

By *JERRY DICKINSON*

“And you shall count seven Sabbaths of years for yourself, seven time seven years; and at the time of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years. Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet sound throughout all of your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you...” (Leviticus 25:8-10) These wondrous words, which by the way are engraved on the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, proclaimed the most joyous of all days in ancient Israel. If a man had mortgaged his land in the year of Jubilee the land would revert back to the original owner. If a man had sold himself into slavery to pay his debts, when the trumpet sounded he went free. The shackles were broken. In addition, all labor was to cease for one year, and those bound by labor contracts were released from them. One of the benefits of the Jubilee was the land and the people were able to rest.

This Year of Jubilee was a foreshadowing of the redemption and rest we have in Christ. In the very beginning of His ministry Jesus applied the words of Isaiah to Himself. “And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he found the place where it is written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke 4: 17-21) The “real” Year of Jubilee began when Jesus came! Interestingly, the Greek word for trumpet is “kerux” and the verb “kerusso” means to proclaim or to herald. When the trumpet was blown it proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord, the setting at liberty captives, and rest for all. Jesus declared that was all fulfilled in him!

“Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” “Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” These and scores of other statements made by our Lord underscore the fact that he has given us real freedom from the bondage of sin and given rest unto our weary souls. In Jesus we experience the real Year of Jubilee! The Jews celebrated every 50 years but we celebrate every day the freedom we have in Christ.

Having said all that, it is interesting that God declared they were to observe the Day of Jubilee every 50 years. Why 50 years? It certainly had to do with the multiples of the number seven, a number of great symbolism in God’s plan. The year following seven sabbatical years - year 50 - was the year to observe the Jubilee. Even today we celebrate certain events every 50 years. When a couple have been married 50 years they celebrate their “golden anniversary” with friends and family. We remember and commemorate various achievements and events on the 50th anniversary. Everyone recognizes the significance of the year 50.

I want to share, therefore, a 50th anniversary for me and my family. It was 50 years ago that the Dickinson family took our stand for scriptural worship. I was 17

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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

Bennie Cryer
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

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Editorial

WISDOM

By DON L. KING

NOTICE OF CORRECTION

Please make a note on page 8 of the December 2017 issue of Old Paths Advocate.

The second line in the continued article called "O Man of God" should have read "obviously this does not mean..." The printer apologizes for the omission that caused the error.

In making decisions, there are often situations among brethren where great wisdom is needed. Sometimes our own knowledge is not enough to allow a clear understanding of the matter at hand. We may not have all the facts before us. It is sad when we stubbornly forge ahead without taking time to investigate. This is especially important as we make decisions in spiritual matters and the work of the church. A wonderful bit of wisdom is found in Proverbs 3:5: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." Why not lean on our own understanding? Obviously because our understanding is often limited and lacking. The apostle wrote in Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." It would be difficult to find a better source of learning than the Proverbs. When decisions must be made among brethren, we all need to know as much as possible about the matter before blindly speaking out. If we do that, it is very likely that a wise decision, one that honors the Lord and His will, will not be forthcoming.

Proverbs 3:6 reads, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths." Undoubtedly the first thing we need is to seek the Lord in prayer when faced with difficult decisions. No, we are not suggesting the Lord will in some mystical manner "speak" to us. However, the answers are likely to be found in His Word through which He speaks to all men. Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 8:20 "To the Law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." When we venture ideas without knowledge (light), we are probably going to speak incorrectly. Brethren, let us check things out before blindly saying anything pro or con. We may find that we didn't know all the facts. The process of "acknowledging" the Lord

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QUERIST COLUMN

By CLINT DE FRANCE

Question: Please explain 1 Corinthians 11.25-26.

Answer: The verses under consideration are the conclusion of a thought, thus, for clarity we shall include and explain all the verses in the context.

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11.23-26).

In 1 Corinthians 11.17-34, the Apostle Paul addresses a two-fold problem in the Corinthian congregation. The Corinthians, like most ancient Christians, practiced an ancient form of hospitality called the Agape, or the Love-Feast, in which wealthy Christians provided food for less fortunate Christians and all ate together in happy association. However, the Corinthians’ feast became corrupt and charity was replaced with selfishness, cliquishness, and exclusivity.

Apparently, the Corinthians ate the Love Feast just prior to their worship on the Lord’s Day. But the wealthy Christians ate their food before the poor Christians arrived, thus, one was hungry and another was full (verse 21). This uncharitable conduct on the part of the rich humiliated the poor and filled them with bitterness. Consequently, when they came together “as a church” the attitude was not one of reverential honor toward Christ, but selfish anger toward each other.

In verses 25-26, Paul reminds them that the pattern for the Lord’s Supper includes focusing our minds on Jesus and discerning the sacrifice of Christ in the emblems – that is, we “do this in remembrance” of Jesus.

When Christians partake of the Lord’s Supper, it requires more than just setting the table with the correct items. Each worshiper must examine himself and focus his heart on thanksgiving to Jesus Christ. Each worshiper must discern Jesus’ body, given for us - pictured in the one loaf; his blood, shed for us - pictured in the fruit of

the vine; and the New Covenant instituted by Christ’s blood - pictured in the one cup from which all drink.

Earlier, in 1 Corinthians 10.16-17, Paul says that sharing the one cup and the one loaf in the communion makes us one body in Christ! Taking the Lord’s Supper with hearts full of hate and bitterness toward others is an “unworthy manner” that actually makes it “morally impossible to eat the Lord’s Supper” (J.W. McGarvey on 1 Corinthians 11.20).

Paul summarizes his case for keeping Christ at the forefront of our minds in the Lord’s Supper in verse 26: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” Jesus Himself said, if we draw near to him with our lips, but our hearts are far from Him – our worship is in vain (Matthew 15.8).

Question: Does Matthew 19.9 correspond to the teaching of Moses on divorce and remarriage?

Answer: No. In Matthew 19.3-6, Jesus affirms the sacred bond of marriage, and the intention of God that marriage be a life-long arrangement. This led to a question about the Mosaic teaching on divorce in verse 7: “Why then did Moses command to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?”

To this question Jesus responds with both a history lesson and a revelation of what the law would be under His reign: “He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.”

Moses’ permission of divorce and the regulations associated therewith are found in Deuteronomy 24.1-4, “When a man takes a wife and marries her, and it happens that she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, when she has departed from his house, and goes and becomes another man’s wife, if the latter husband detests her and writes her a certificate of divorce, puts it in her hand, and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her as his wife, then her former husband who divorced her must not take her back to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the LORD.”

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**THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY -
GOD'S ASSIGNED ROLES**

By GREG GAY

Part of God's creation on the sixth day included the first humans, Adam and Eve. We read, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27-28 NKJV).

This verse indicates that from the beginning there are only two human genders, male and female. After Adam and Eve's creation, gender is established at conception for all, and is intended to be honored for life. Today, God's intention is no longer deemed sufficient by many.

Not only is it possible in many states in the United States to change one's birth certificate gender upon request, regardless of how one was born, now it is possible to identify as a third gender that is neither male nor female.

USA Today reported on October 19, 2017, "The state of California will now legally recognize non-binary as a third gender on official state identification documents. Gov. Jerry Brown signed SB179 on Sunday night. The bill, dubbed the Gender Recognition Act, will allow a third gender choice on driver's licenses, state identification cards, and make it easier for people to change their gender and name on state identification papers" (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/10/19/female-male-non-binary-california-legally-recognizes-third-gender-identification-documents/779188001/>).

Taryn Luna in the October 16, 2017 Sacramento Bee reports on the new law and offers experts' quotes. "Jody Herman, an expert on gender identity law and policy... said Oregon, Washington D.C., Australia, New Zealand, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Thailand and parts of Canada already offer some form of legal recognition of a third non-conforming gender..."

Luna also reports, "One 'pro-family' group blasted the new law. 'This new law calls transsexuality good, when science, health, logic and love inform us it's bad,' said Randy Thomasson, president of SaveCalifornia.com." "Pushing so-called 'nonbinary' upon 15-year-olds applying for a learner's permit or 16-year-olds getting their driver's licenses tells them a big lie about sex. It's an un-changeable law of Nature that you're male if you've inherited a Y chromosome from your father; if not, you're female ... Now that Governor Brown has

signed this illogical bill, parents will have to work even harder to teach their children the reliable facts of life" (<http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article179062891.html#storylink=cpy>).

Additional California legislation in the last year or so requires all-gender inclusive signs on single-use public restrooms and correct pronoun usage in the workplace for those who are identifying as a non-gender person or as a different gender than how they appear.

A likely result of today's promotion of gender choice and marriages between anyone, regardless of gender, will be further confusion about the roles God has assigned. As Christians, our reaction to this news should never include disrespectful behavior toward those who promote or make these choices, but to concern ourselves with how God directs our lives in his word to honor the gender of our conception and the assignments he has for our gender in our homes and in the church.

One passage that helps us understand God's role assignments is, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3 NKJV).

God the Father is the supreme ruler over all, occupying that role appropriately by virtue of being the eternal existent one, the "I Am" (Exodus 3:14). God's role as ruler is one of his attributes and cannot be separated from who he is. Jack Cottrell, in his work, *God the Ruler*, has a chapter on the sovereignty of God. He states, "The sovereignty of God may be concisely summed up as absolute Lordship...Sovereignty is lordship, lordship is ownership, and ownership is control. This seems to be the essence of the whole matter."

Cottrell continues, "Basically the term lord signifies the owner of something, a meaning preserved in our common term, landlord. To say that God is sovereign means that he is Lord in the sense of the owner of all things. Melchizedek and Abraham refer to him as 'possessor of heaven and earth' (Genesis 14:19, 22)... Psalm 24:1 echoes this: 'The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it...' 'All the earth is mine,' says the Lord (Exodus 19:5). 'Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine' (Job 41: 11)" (pp 266-267).

The New Testament reveals that honoring the supremacy of God is part of the details of the final judgment. After writing about the certainty of a bodily resurrection and final judgment, Paul writes, "But now Christ is risen

from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:20-28 NKJV).

For Christ to deliver the kingdom to God the Father at the end of time means it is his to give. He did not just presume the right to this headship and authority, it is within the assignment he was given from God the Father and is according to the Father's will.

Paul explains this to our brethren at Ephesus: "... according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He [God the Father] put all things under His [Christ's] feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:19-23 NKJV).

Christ, who is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:23) declared, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18-19 NKJV).

Jesus was voluntarily submissive to the assignment of his role as Savior and Redeemer with all it entailed, even death on the cross. Jesus prayed, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42-43 NKJV).

Thus far, hopefully it is clear that God the Father appropriately occupies his role and that Christ appropriately occupies his. But, God's role assignments do not stop in heavenly realms. His assignments in 1 Corinthians 11:3 include commands for men and

women. God has assigned Christ as the head of man and man as the head of woman. Put another way, woman is to be voluntarily submissive to man, as man is to be voluntarily submissive to Christ, as Christ is voluntarily submissive to God the Father.

These role assignments for men and women are so important God has commanded that we wear a visible symbol of obedience. Obviously, obedience observed outwardly is intended to reflect a submissive heart. Paul wrote to servants they were to obey, "not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6 NKJV).

The visible symbol God commands we display to acknowledge his authority and our submission to that authority is our hair. A man who is submissive to his role assignment will cut his hair and a woman who is submissive to her role assignment will not cut her hair (1 Corinthians 11:1-16). One very simple way to look at this whole passage is that a woman's hair must not be "shorn or shaved" and a man's hair must be "shorn or shaved" (1 Corinthians 11:5-6).

Length of hair for women is often discussed due to the translation into English as "long hair" of the single word that is a verb in the original. Louw and Nida comment, "In a number of languages it may be necessary to translate koma as 'to let one's hair grow long' or 'not to cut one's hair.'"

When a woman's hair is not shortened, when she just lets it grow, her hair is correct, regardless of length. Notice the similarity and simplicity of the Nazarite Vow of the Old Testament: "All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head... Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow" (Numbers 6:5-6 NKJV).

When brothers and sisters ignore these truths, it is not only their hair they should be concerned with, but also their eternal reward. Women who cut their hair are putting themselves into a man's place, and men who supposedly give their wives or daughters permission to cut their hair are putting themselves in Christ's place. Similarly, a man who insists on letting his hair grow is putting himself in a woman's role, and is just as wrong, because all indicate rebellion against God. Paul writes it is a "shame" (degrading and disgraceful) to violate this assignment (1 Corinthians 11:4, 14).

Notice this additional reminder from Paul: “Submitting to one another in the fear of God” (Ephesians 5:21 NKJV). Whether this passage is to be understood contextually with what is before, or what is after, or that it stands alone, as different scholars comment, it still states a principal of submission that applies to all.

This concept can apply to our obligation to acknowledge our role assignments of leadership and follow-ship. We are all required to exemplify submission before God and one another.

Sadly, when we have rebellious hearts and usurp God’s assignments we are walking in the footsteps of someone we do not want to get to know, Satan.

As we recall, Satan would not occupy his assigned role as an angel of God and thus fell because of his rebellion against the authority of God. “And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6 NKJV). Bengel comments the angels did not keep “the state once for all assigned to them...” Zerr adds they left their “proper domain.”

Satan and his followers wanted God’s place. Their rebellion resulted in them being cast out of heaven and losing their good relationship with God.

As Christian men and women we have a “state once for all assigned” to us both in gender and role. Men are assigned to submit to a leadership role in the home and in the church and women are assigned to submit to let men occupy that role and are to deliberately refrain from assuming their role. Paul states, “submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything (Ephesians 5:21-24 NKJV).

To ignore God’s role assignments in the home and in the church contributes to the chaos we see in too many homes today as well as to the religious confusion that exists everywhere. Larry Christenson, writing in *The Christian Family*, quotes Thiersch’s *Christian Family Life* from 1854, “Any change from that which His will has ordered only brings forth a misshapen form, for which there is no cure except a return to God’s original order” (pp 18). The first part of Christenson’s book is a

very helpful treatise on God’s Order for the Family and is beneficial for understanding the will of God for our homes. Future articles in this series will seek to identify God’s original order for each of us in our roles in our homes. 5109 Chicago Ave., Fair Oaks, CA 95628. 916 804-3787 gregorypgay@gmail.com

GRAVE REMINDERS

BY AARON STUDDARD

Not long ago, I was out for a walk near home and made a detour by our local cemetery, the Memory Gardens. While there, I visited the burial sites that meant the most to me while recalling fond memories of those I have known. There were others there, of course, which I never knew. The thought occurred to me that in just a few years, these graves would hold less sentiment to future generations than me that day. If the process of decay teaches us anything, it’s that none of these physical memorials will last forever. However, the soul that was once borne in the body that has been returned to the earth in that spot will live on forever somewhere in eternity. As my thoughts vacillated between fond memories and these solemn truths, I realized that there are some grave reminders about this short life that cannot be ignored, especially in a cemetery.

First of all, each marker in a cemetery is engraved with a name by which the body there interred was known in this life. Some of those names bring back fond memories while others stir different emotions. Isn’t it funny how just reading a name can jog the memory to recall so much? Solomon leads us to consider the value of a good name in Proverbs 22:1 - “A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold.” Again in Ecclesiastes 7:1, he says, “a good name is better than precious ointment.” The value of a name is directly proportional to the character of the person who wore it. What do you think when you hear the names of Adolph Hitler, Saddam Hussein, or Osama Bin Laden? You know, Judas was a reasonably popular name when our Savior walked the earth, but you don’t hear many kids named Judas today. Why is that?

There are many benefits to a good name besides fond remembrance. Many of us at one time have reaped the benefit of an association with someone who had a good name, either through a job recommendation or loan application to buy our first house or car. If folks don’t know you, they can trust the good people who do.

There is no better way to garner loving favor than to build a good name in which others can trust. We must demonstrate character, build a reputation of integrity, and be trustworthy to earn a good name. As we view the grave markers of those who are now in eternity, let us not forget the value of a good name.

Secondly, each grave marker usually has two dates inscribed into it. Those are usually the most remembered dates from a person's life, but those two dates are not nearly as important as the timespan between them. That little dash between those two dates looks so small and insignificant on a tombstone, but it represents one's entire life. Whether careers, hobbies, or service to the Lord, all that a man undertakes, he does so in the dash of life. We must realize that our dash will be meaningless unless it includes a commitment to God and obedience to the gospel. Acts 13:36 records a very brief sentence about the life of David, but one which speaks volumes for his dash: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers..." It is incumbent upon each Christian to serve our own generation by the will of God today. If not, our dash will have been wasted. In 1996, Linda Ellis wrote a poem for a radio station in Atlanta that has since become rather popular. The last stanza reads, "So, when your eulogy is being read with your life's actions to rehash, would you be proud of the things they say about how you spent your dash?" Our dash is quickly fleeting so we must get busy making it count in God's service now.

Thirdly, in a cemetery, I am reminded of the terrible curse of sin. In the beginning, man had everything he needed to live a happy existence in the Garden. Romans 5:12 reminds us that "sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. By one man's sin, death entered the world." Every heartache, sickness, sadness, or evil circumstance that has ever befallen man is the result of sin either by its direct commission, or indirectly by the curse we have inherited in the flesh. Cemeteries are filled with the bodies of those who have succumbed to the curse of sin. Even worse though, a majority of the living population today are spiritually dead because of sin. The curse of sin is awful and eternal, but God has supplied the antidote of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ. Verse 19 says, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." Only through obedience and a faithful life spent in service

to our Savior can we hope to escape the punishment reserved for the disobedient (Rom. 5:9). For them, wrath beyond mortal words awaits. When I see a grave, I am reminded of the awful curse of sin and its payday awaiting those who have not obeyed Him (Rom. 6:23). Moreover, I am reminded of what our Savior endured to save us from that punishment. God be thanked!

Finally, there is a feeling of finality for some who stand before fresh graves with the sad thought that they will never again see them. This is not the case for those who have passed through the veil as faithful Christians. Most cemeteries are designed to face the east in anticipation of the Lord's return from that direction and many throughout the centuries have buried their dead with this hope. The Thessalonian brethren were concerned about their dead loved ones so Paul wrote to them this consolation on the matter:

1 Thess. 4:13 - "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Nothing our minds can imagine will come close to the excitement, happiness, and joy that we are going to experience that day. Can you imagine the reunions with loved ones, meeting those we have read about in the Bible, and most of all, seeing our Lord and Savior who died for us face to face! It is going to be an indescribably wonderful day for which the saved of the ages have longed and "even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for" (Rom. 8:22).

Maybe someday soon you will stop and stroll through a cemetery; pay your respects, shed a few tears, or just enjoy a memory. After that though, look ahead and rejoice in the hope we have as Christians. "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15:55)

CELEBRATING 50 continued from page one

years old in 1967 when we first visited the old Aurora Street church in Houston and discovered a brotherhood that still kept the Bible pattern for the Lord's Supper. We were a part of a group in Churches of Christ that opposed Bible classes but used individual cups. We had been taught that the container had no significance in the Lord's Supper but as we really began to focus on the Bible pattern it became apparent that the cup of the Lord was a cup containing the fruit of the vine. We quickly were convinced that the Bible pattern instituted by Jesus was one loaf and one cup of the fruit of the vine. Not long after taking that stand Lynwood Smith came and preached in Houston and I'll never forget a sermon he preached on the Lord's Supper. In Lynwood's inimitable way he declared, "Jesus said this cup is the New Testament in my blood. We're not trying to be hard to get along with or narrow minded but that's what it says! That's what it says!" I sat there listening and I thought to myself, "He's right - that's what it says!"

That was 50 years ago and I still believe in the Bible pattern. That's what it says! I tell folks who are concerned about germs and catching something by drinking with others from the cup during the Lord's Supper, I have been drinking from one cup for 50 years and it hasn't hurt me yet. The Lord knows all about germs and he will take care of us if we take care to follow his pattern. Jesus came to set us free from sin and the traditions of men. He came to give us rest. He came to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. He is our Jubilee!

WISDOM continued from page two

would appear to be designed to help us trust the Lord and His Word, not ourselves.

Another thing we need to do is listen to wise counsel. Solomon said in Proverbs 11:14, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." This simply instructs us to listen to the counsel of others who may know more than we do. In Proverbs 18:2 we read, "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself." Another translation renders this: "A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion." It would appear that we rob ourselves of wisdom when, and if, we disregard the knowledge of others who are wise. That could be various persons from elders, preachers, or other brethren who have experience in the area we are investigating.

We have learned through the years that it is often wise to listen to those who don't agree with us. If they don't agree, it could be they have a good reason. Godly counsel is useless if we are willing to hear only those who agree with us. This can be a difficult thing for many of us to learn. When others push back against us, it is difficult. To be fair, it is certainly possible that when brethren push back they are mistaken to do so and have not considered everything before them. If this happens, it is likely a mistake to simply dismiss out of hand what they said. After all, they may be right while we are wrong. Listen to all sides before making the decision. Solomon said, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise." (Proverbs 12:15)

When we make decisions, it is assumed we do so believing in the Word of God. If we have been wise, we have Listened to the wisdom, or counsel, of others who are wise and then make a decision based on the very best information available to us. However, we must always keep in mind that the final authority is the Lord above, and we must always be willing to accept His will.

One final passage from Proverbs: "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety is of the Lord." In other words, the battle and whether or not it is won, belongs to God. Our job is to get the horse ready for battle and make the very best decisions possible by ourselves. However, always keep in mind that whatever happens, the Lord is over all and it is His will we should desire. May the Lord help us to be a wise people and may we always know we belong to Him. Think on these things. - DLK

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Matt Martin

1000 Stonecroft Lane
Woodstock, GA 30188
Phone: 770-318-8495
mattsmartin@att.net

QUERIST COLUMN continued from page three

The reader will note that two obvious differences between Moses' teaching and Jesus' teaching relate to the justification for an acceptable divorce and remarriage. Moses allowed divorce if a wife, "finds no favor in {her husband's} eyes because he has found some uncleanness in her." The expression "some uncleanness" comes from a Hebrew idiom, literally, "the nakedness of a thing." Taken literally, this expression may sound sexual, but idiomatic language should not be taken literally – this is a figure of speech.

According to Hebrew scholar Dr. Jeffery Tigay, "A better translation would be: "If a man takes a wife and possesses her, and she fails to please him because he discovers her doing something obnoxious" (JPS Torah Commentary on Deuteronomy). He continues, "Something obnoxious' apparently refers to any kind of offensive conduct. In 23:15 the same Hebrew phrase, 'ervat davar, refers to obnoxious bodily emissions. What the husband might find similarly offensive is obviously a subjective matter. According to ancient Near Eastern documents, typical motives for divorce included suspicious absences from home, wasting or embezzling the husband's property, humiliating him [and] denial of conjugal rights...." Dr. Tigay notes that in some ancient Near Eastern cultures adultery was a cause for divorce "when it was not punished with death." However, the Law of Moses clearly assigns the death penalty to all adulterers and adulteresses (Leviticus 20.20). On the other hand, Jesus says that adultery is the only justification for divorce and remarriage - according to His decree.

Thus, Christ's law in Matthew 19.9 differs from the Law of Moses in two respects: whereas Moses commanded the death penalty for adultery, Jesus did not. 2) Whereas Moses permitted divorce for several reasons, Jesus limited justifiable divorce to only one cause - adultery.

Our Departed

FISHER - Johnny Fisher departed this life on November 16th 2017 after an extended illness of several years. He was 88 years of age when he left us. To know Johnny was to love and appreciate him. His love for the Chapel Grove congregation near Lawrenceburg, TN was well known. He had worked tirelessly for a number of years among these people by whom he was respected and loved. His early life was filled with disappointment and

sorrow. When Johnny was seven years of age he, his two sisters and one brother were made wards of the state. The children were placed, as foster children, in the home of George and Edna Chandler in Portland, OR where he remained until he graduated from High School. Later he joined the Marines and for several years served in a number of different locations. In 1950 Johnny moved with his Dad to Tennessee. This move changed his life forever. While there he met Arlene Williams who would later become his wife and the mother of his children. Arlene led Johnny to the truth and in 1956 he obeyed the gospel. From that time forward he gave his life to preach and work for the Lord. He would in later years conduct gospel meetings in various places, but at home in Tennessee he seemed to shine the brightest. In later years after Arlene died Johnny married Mable Fisher who was his constant companion. On November 19th a large crowd of relatives and brothers and sisters in Christ gathered at the Neal Funeral Home in Lawrenceburg for a service honoring his life. After the service we all made our way to the Chapel Grove cemetery where his earthly remains were laid to rest to await the resurrection. This writer and brother Ed Daniels conducted the service. –Ronny F. Wade

LAY - Fred Lay passed away Dec. 1, 2017 at the age of 100. He was born in Marshall, Arkansas but grew up in Oklahoma. In the early 1940's he and his wife moved to California eventually settling in the San Diego area. He served as an elder of the Pepper Drive church of Christ in El Cajon, CA for many years. He was the last surviving founder of that congregation which began around 1959. He was known for his generosity and kindness towards the poor both in and out of the church. Paul said, "Let us do good unto all men, especially those of the household of faith." (Gal 6:10) This verse is just one of the many that was exemplified by the life he led. He was an avid Bible reader. The home he shared with his wife of 73 years was open to countless preachers and travelers over the decades. His wit and humor were well known, but more so his solid grasp of God's Word and his commitment to the cause of Christ. His wisdom and guidance will be sorely missed. He was predeceased by his wife Bea in 2014. He is survived by children Freddie, Del, Larry, Dan, Tanya and a number of children and grandchildren. Lifelong friend Walt Fisher gave a loving tribute to this humble servant who lived by the Lord's words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." –Larry Lay

COBLE - Grady Cleburn Coble, 96, departed from this life on Friday, December 8, 2017. Grady was born to the late Annie and Henry H. Coble in Lamar County on July, 4, 1921. He resided in various cities in Texas including:

Eola, Dallas, Hurst, Marble Falls and Waco. Grady was a kind, loyal and hard-working man who had friends of all ages from babies to adults. He was dedicated to the Fossil Creek Church of Christ during his time in Hurst. He enjoyed playing various stringed instruments, solving crossword puzzles and jumbles and reading the newspaper. He was not extravagant, but rather saved money and helped others. His mind was very sharp and he had a keen memory for details, which served him well in his career at Trailways. Grady loved well and had many "adopted" children and grandchildren. He will be greatly missed, but we are grateful for the legacy he leaves us. Grady was preceded in death by his wife, Sara Ann Coble; brother, Morris Coble and sister, Jewell Williams. Grady is survived by his daughter, Jackie and husband, Billy Goshen; grandson, Kurtis Goshen; granddaughter, Wendy and husband, William Holtz; great-granddaughter, Eleanor Holtz.

I am indebted to Randy Cantrell who conducted the memorial service for Grady. It is difficult for me to remember a time that I didn't know Grady. He attended the old Vaughn Blvd. church in Fort Worth when I was a very young boy. He was always present on the Lord's Day when we gathered for worship. His love for the church and his parents was evident in the way he lived, and the things he did in caring for others. He will be greatly missed in the congregation of the redeemed where you would always find him on the Lord's Day.
-Ronny Wade

Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, December 9, 2017, old_paths@juno.com - As we begin this 86th year of publication under the name Old Paths Advocate, we look forward to a prosperous year for the Cause of Christ. So much has changed in those years, so many who were stalwart and faithful have gone on to their rewards, and yet we take heart that many have stepped up to the challenge and are working for Christ. We are thankful for every good thing done by anyone for the church thus far but we must not rest on the past. This new year finds our nation in some turmoil and we are grateful to know that our Father is still in control. The church faces new enemies too, of course, because the Devil never stops working, nor can we. The month of January, Lord willing, will be spent in the Philippine Islands by us as it has for 37 years. The work is still growing and we are so thankful for that. To God be the praise and glory. We look forward to having Bro Frank Brancato with us again this year and also our Grandson,

Landon Baker. We need workers for the paper as always. If you are willing, try to send a gift subscription for someone this year. That is a good work and it is only \$15. Preachers, we remind you that we continue to need your articles and reports as always, and we need them by the 12th of each month in order to send the copy to the printers by the 15th. Our thanks to all who used us in any way in 2017. God bless the work everywhere.

Greg Gay, 5109 Chicago Ave., Fair Oaks, CA 95628, 916-804-3787, papagreg@aol.com, December 2, 2017 - We were at Placerville, California on November 12 to assist the congregation in ordaining Darrell Newman and Don Davis as Elders. I was honored to be asked to be part of the process. As we know, this wonderful part of God's plan for the church happens far too rarely. I was in Spokane, Washington November 22 - 25 for the 65th annual Northwest Thanksgiving Meeting. I appreciate all the work that Juergen Deutsch (JD) and the rest of the congregation did in preparing for and hosting the meeting. I enjoyed spending time with Michael Bolton and family who made the 2 plus hour one way drive from Kennewick three days of the meeting. Area preaching appointments this month include Clovis, Yuba City, and Redding, plus our work continues at 64th. St. in Sacramento, for which we are thankful.

Jerry L. Cutter, 10712 Sunset Blvd., OKC 73120, lindacutter@yahoo.com, December 7 - I have not written to the OPA for a long while. In the early years of my preaching life, I wrote every month, but now seldom. To make it simple, I am now old and not very active in traveling and preaching. I was ordained as a preacher (evangelist) in OKC in July 1951, and from that time to this I have preached full-time, preaching both at home and abroad. However, I have retired from going abroad. I quit in 2014. For those who might want to know, I am still in good health and active. I am very thankful to the Lord for His wonderful blessings throughout my life. I love the brotherhood, a brotherhood that has, in my lifetime, spread all over the world. I have recently finished notes on the computer having to do with the book of Romans. These notes are not a commentary, but rather they are an overview of the whole book, following Paul's format. They are free to anyone who wishes to receive them.

Frank Brancato, 12718 Larkin Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93312, December 4, 2017 email: frankbrancato@sbcglobal.net - Since last reporting, I had the pleasure of holding meetings in Sharonville Ohio, and Nashville Tennessee. This was my second meeting in Sharonville, and I enjoyed it very much. Local congregations supported the meeting, and we pray that much good was accomplished by our efforts. It was wonderful staying

with Barney and Bea, and I enjoyed being in their home. The attendance in Nashville was encouraging, and it was great to see those brethren again. The congregation has grown since I was there in 2009, and we pray that all were edified and encouraged. Tina and I stayed with our good friends Tracy and Julie Stephens, and we had a wonderful time together. The work here in Bakersfield continues to progress, and we give God the praise. If the Lord wills, I will be making another trip to the Philippines in January with Don King. This trip will be my 9th in 12 years, and I pray that it will be a safe and fruitful one. Please pray for the faithful everywhere, and that God will continue to bless all of our efforts.

Darrell Crawford, bugz1955@hotmail.com, 405-473-6407, 208 E Baldwin Rd Unit S, Panama City, FL 32405, November 4, 2017 - The church here in Panama City is doing well and growing spiritually at this time. We continue to have visitors nearly every week. We just returned from the October preachers study in Shreveport, La. It was a very good study. We renewed old acquaintances, and made new friends as well. It is very encouraging to see the men here participating in services and growing more all the time. We are excited about doing one or two festivals other than the Friday Fest we have been doing the last 4 or 5 years. It has changed and is no longer a viable venue for us to do. We plan on doing one at the local mall, and we were told that Wal-Mart lets religious groups pass out literature outside their stores. Hopefully, this will work out as a good venue for us to do. We can't thank everyone enough for the support, both financially and with prayers for the work here. If anyone is in this area. Please be sure to stop and worship with us here, "we love folks!" We meet at 11 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. on Lords day and at 6:30 P.M. on Wed nights.

P. Duane Permenter, 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI, 96797, email: duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com, December 2017 - Dear Brethren, I have been home now for three weeks and all is well. Laurie and I send out our greetings. May the Lord bless us all in His divine kingdom. The work in Hawaii continues to move forward and to God be all the glory forever.

Waipahu Elementary, Waipahu Street, Waipahu, Hawaii. We recently made a move to the Elementary school just a block away from the house. We were able to acquire the cafeteria for both services on Lord's day starting this Sunday, December 3. We will be able to put up signs that will lead anyone coming to the room where we are meeting from Waipahu Street up to the Cafeteria. We will continue to meet Sunday morning at 9:30 AM the afternoon service will need to be moved to 12:30 PM rather than 1 PM. We hope this move

will give us a little more exposure to the community and open some new doors. If you are planning a trip to Hawaii, plan to spend the day with us. We will now be finished by 1:30 rather than 2 PM and would love to have you with us.

Ponoy Power Radio 650 on the AM dial. Our radio program continues each week on Saturday afternoon and we are now recording it with the hope that it will be replayed at least once during week nights. This was an offer made to us by the owner of the station. We have only had a few calls and we are not sure how many people are listening; although, we believe a strong following in the Filipino community for this station is there. This is why we translate everything. Philip, my son, and Melvyn Ventura were successful to keep the program going in my absence during my trip into Zambia and Mozambique.

Philip's family have settled in. Philip has established a good rapport with the members and leaders which he wanted to do. He has been a good asset to the work. In addition to the radio program, Philip kept two of the studies going that I had started before my African work. I know the children have also been a help. They have established friendships with the other children in the congregation. Amie, Philip's wife has also contributed to the work and we are grateful to have them all. Obviously, having family here has been a good help for Laurie and I. Their tentative plan is to leave after two years. If they decide to make it longer this will change our plans for the future and God willing the work will benefit. Thank you again and God bless all.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 14352, Springfield, MO 65814 December 12 - Currently we are at home enjoying the worshipping with our home church Mission Hills. The churches in this area are working in peace and doing our best to share the gospel with the lost. I recently conducted a meeting with the church in Greenfield, MO. Several from surrounding congregations came to help and encourage us in the work. The church here is small but are working hard to let the light of the gospel shine from its presence. During the meeting a family of five returned to duty after having been away for several years. This was a good shot in the arm for those who regularly meet there. We are hoping that in time others will come and be a part of the church. The Lord willing I will be at the preacher study in Grapevine, TX and then on the New Year meeting in Dothan, AL. All in all 2017 was a good year both for our family and the church. Alfreda is recovering well from her hip surgery and should be back to traveling with me soon. The Lord's blessings to all.

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THE BACK PAGE...

SECURING CHURCH PREMISES

By CARL M. JOHNSON

A little after 11 AM on Sunday morning, October 21, 1979, a man with a high-powered rifle bursts through the double-doors of the assembled church in St. Albans, West Virginia, and shouts, "Freeze! Nobody move!" The assailant is 31 year-old Harold Mann, who lives with his wife and three children in a ramshackle house beside the church on US Highway 60 East in St. Albans.

Mann positions himself in a corner at the back of the auditorium and keeps his rifle trained on the members. He tells the congregation he is a Vietnam veteran, has been having severe migraine headaches since he has gotten out of the service, and the government is not doing anything to help him.

He shouts, "I want the press, the news media in here!" At first he demands live coverage from all three Charleston and Huntington television stations and live coverage from radio stations. He picks out Ethel Hirst and tells her to get in touch with reporters and tell them to come to the scene, and warns her that if she does not come back he will kill her husband Russell.

When the media arrives, television crews explain they do not have the equipment for a live broadcast, so Mann agrees to a single live radio broadcast by WHCS Radio in Charleston. He then begins releasing hostages, beginning with children who are with their parents and later releasing older members of the church. Reporters go inside the building in their place.

The yard in front of the church building becomes a maze of cables and wires as crews prepare for the broadcast, and police block off the road and move sharpshooters, armed with high-powered rifles, into position around the building.

Mann grows impatient with what he perceives as stalling tactics by the media crew and declares that the news media will be the first ones to die if anyone stalls again. While his main grievance is with the government, he complains, "Reporters are as bad as the government!"

Finally, everything is set up for the radio broadcast and Mann begins a 10-minute profanity-laced rant against the government. He says, "I'm so fed up with the government!" He complains about severe headaches, a result of his Vietnam tour of duty, and he says the government is not doing anything but giving him narcotics. He says, "I've had these headaches for over three years now, and they (the government) don't try to do a (expletive deleted) thing!"

When Mann finishes his rant and is satisfied his words are broadcast live over the radio, he surrenders himself to authorities.

As you would expect, the congregation was very shaken by the incident. One member said, "There were a lot of scared people, and a lot of praying." John and Kathy Stevens who were visiting his mother in St. Albans said, "He pointed that gun an awful lot with his finger on the trigger." More than one of the members confessed, "I really thought I was going to die." A brother had a mild heart attack during the two-hour hostage ordeal and was carried from the church building on a stretcher.

Preacher Frank Staggs said, "I am just so glad no one was hurt, and that they didn't have to hurt him (Mann). It was a terrible thing to happen, but God was with us."

Such a traumatic experience seemed so rare in the 1970s, but they are becoming more commonplace today. Recently, a gunman clad in all-black with a military-style rifle in his hands, opened fire on worshipers at a Sunday service at a small denominational church in rural Sutherland Springs, Texas, killing at least 26 people. At last count, there have been more than 780 deadly attacks in places of worship in the USA in the past 15 years.

After the St. Albans attack, brethren took action to make the building more secure during worship services. Since the attack in Sutherland Springs, brethren all over the country are asking what congregations can do to secure their buildings during the time of worship.

Some of the suggestions I have heard from security pros include: Adequate lighting and surveillance systems to monitor the parking lot and entrances into the building. Experts say failure to provide adequate lighting is the most common liability risk churches assume. Enhanced lighting reduces the risk of slips-and-falls, criminal activity, and theft of property. Others have suggested having an attendant at the door, vetting those who want access after services begin, or a buzz-in system at the door (similar to nursing homes) that can be activated during services. Brent Sandlin of First Security Systems offers several suggestions for churches to consider on his web site.

There are many options available, but the first order of business is for congregational leaders to discuss the matter among themselves in order to be of one mind concerning how to make the church premises more secure and how to respond properly to any crisis event. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com.