

*you can send in others, here is fair, it
Brethrenly, Homer L. King*

Ye num'rous sects
which all declare
"Lo Christ is here,
Lo Christ is there."
Your stronger proofs
divinely give
And show me where
the Christians live.

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

"Where is Thy Church,
O, Savior, where?"
I heard the cry,
and then I heard:
"Here is My Church
where men still dare
To take Me at My word."

"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 for 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. 5

LEBANON, MISSOURI, JANUARY 1, 1932

No. 1

FROM PUBLISHER OF "OLD PATHS ADVOCATE"

I have reluctantly accepted the responsibility as Publisher of this religious journal, for I have thought that if I had any ability in the services of my Master, it was in the evangelistic field. This I still believe, but it seems to be the will of the editors that I undertake the arduous task of publishing the paper, and to this will I resign.

I appreciate very much the confidence manifested in selecting me to undertake this responsible duty, and I trust that I may ever merit this confidence. I feel very keenly my inability to carry on the work in the splendid way in which Bro. Harper has served as Publisher of "The Truth." I have nothing to promise you but a conscientious effort to give the best there is in me, and to the best of my ability, give to all a square deal.

With Brethren Homer A. Gay, J. D. Phillips, and H. C. Harper on the editorial staff with me, with their influence and assistance, I feel that my burden is made lighter. I believe that these are true and tried friends, upon whom I can rely. And, too, Bro. H. E. Robertson, a consecrated gospel preacher, of this community, has promised to assist me with mailing out the paper and otherwise as I may need his assistance. This will enable me to continue in the evangelistic work as I have in the past, otherwise I would not have undertaken the publication.

Finally, brethren, I ask you to be patient with my humble efforts and mistakes; pray for me that I may ever strive to keep the "Old Paths Advocate" true to the name, and that it may be a means of bringing us all closer together and of learning more of the Lord's will concerning us. To Him who loved us and died for us be all the praise, glory and honor.

Yours for the "Old Paths,"
Homer L. King.

EXPLANATION

It is with much consideration and hesitation that I give my consent to allow my name to appear as an editor. My past experience with papers has been very unpleasant.

My observation has been that each religious journal endeavors to become a **Ruling-Head**, drawing a circle around certain preachers who will boost the paper; consigning all those who do not, to the regions of endless night; thus forming factions. Many brethren desiring to find out where a man stands, will ask with what paper he

stands identified. The Bible only, and not papers, man, men, or set of men, is the "Measuring Reed," with me.

We believe, however, that the brethren and others will enjoy reading a clean religious news paper, such as we propose to make of the "Old Paths Advocate." We purpose to run a paper—not a bragging, begging machine.

I have much confidence in Brethren Homer L. King and H. E. Robertson and their ability to manage the publication of the paper.

Finally, my prayer is that we will all study the Bible more, love God and respect His word more; love each other better; and make a stronger effort to get closer together, instead of farther apart. Hear Paul, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory." (Phil. 2:3). "Let us therefore, follow after the things which make for peace." (Rom. 14:19).

Yours in Christ,
Homer A. Gay.

* * * *

Remarks

Like Bro. Gay, no doubt many others have had "unpleasant experiences" with religious papers, and have thus held aloof from them for some time. We are asking, however, that you follow the example of Bro. Gay in giving one more trial, sending us your subscription. We promise you a fair and honest deal.

Publisher.

WHY WE ADDED "ADVOCATE"

It was announced in the December issue of "The Truth" that the name of the paper would be changed to "Old Paths," and we began immediately to make our arrangements to that effect. Just about the time I was ready to send the copy to the printers, I received word from Bro. J. D. Phillips, relative to the fact that he had received word that there was already in existence a publication by that name, and advising that we change the name to something else. Hence, we have added the word "advocate" to the name, which does not materially change the thought expressed by the name, "Old Paths." We hope that all will be perfectly satisfied. This has made us a few days late, getting the copy to the printers.

Publisher.

Brethren, let's all get behind the "Old Paths Advocate" — we know it is a great work and worthy of our best support.

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Editorial

A MILESTONE

By DON L. KING



Don L. King and Pat King in 2021

The Old Paths Advocate begins the 90th year with this January issue. It will be a special issue, and we have several pictures to share with you. One that is special is a picture of H.C. Harper standing near the original building of the New Salem, MS congregation. That picture was recreated in a painting done by Jim Hickey which is shown in black and white here. Brother Harper held many meetings there before his death, on December 1, 1936. We have been unable to date exactly when the picture was originally taken, but it had to be somewhat near the time of the birth of Old Paths Advocate in January of 1932. By the way, his briefcase sits on top of my bookcase at home, along with my father's briefcase still containing his sermons, chalk, pointer, and small notebook in which he recorded his meetings through the years.

Since the early beginnings of the paper have been written by others, I'll not mention it here. However, I will briefly note some memories I personally have of things remembered from childhood in Missouri. Until I was about three years of age, we lived in a rock house built by my father on our farm. (We later moved less than a mile away and from there I went to school in a one room school, eight grades under one teacher and a long switch for discipline.) Near the rock house was a garage with a second story above it. It burned down after the farm was sold in 1945. In that room was where Dad did his writing for the paper, and he and others gathered to put it together and prepare it for mailing. Later, that job

continued on page 5



H.C. Harper standing near original meeting house in New Salem, MS



Homer L. King approximately 1937

**SEPTEMBER 1929 ISSUE OF THE TRUTH
PLEA FOR UNITY
By HOMER L. KING**

David said, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” Perhaps, only those who have had the sad experience of division can really appreciate the force of David’s words, and can know “how good and how pleasant it is to dwell together in unity” As I view the sad state of affairs in the Church of Christ today, and see the dear Church of Jesus being torn to pieces over the innovations that are being forced into the work and worship, it makes me sick at heart. How brethren can love those things, that cause division, (even if those things were permissible), better than they love the unity, for which our blessed Savior so earnestly prayed, is more than I can understand.

I just can’t understand how brethren, who, even profess to love the cause of the Lord, can afford to contend for the use of societies, instrumental music, classes, women teachers, human literature as a text, and a plurality of cups in the observance of the Lord’s Supper, when they are aware of the fact that such contention will ultimately cause division in the Church of God. It appears to me that there must be something seriously wrong with a man’s heart, who will admit that the commands of Jesus can be obeyed without the use of the above things, and then keep up a contention for them to the dividing of God’s people. Brethren, can it be possible that you love those things better than you do the unity of God’s people? You admit we can worship God without them, then why not give them up that we all might be one?

There are brethren, whom I dearly love, who are giving their time to contending for one or more of the above-mentioned things, and it pains me to see them sowing the seed of discord among brethren by such contention. May God help us to heed the language of Paul, thus: “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Rom. 14: 19. Why not, brethren?

Submitted in love, Homer L. King

**PUBLISHING OLD PATHS ADVOCATE
A BRIEF HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
By DON McCORD**

From “Sermons and writings of Homer L. King”, this is Brother King’s biographical account: “Brother King began his writing in the Apostolic Way; wrote for *The Truth* (published by Brother Harper) being on editor. In 1932, Brother Harper turned the publication to Brother King, and the name was changed to Old Paths Advocate. He published this for 30 years, until he suffered a stroke, and it become necessary to turn the paper to Brother Don McCord.”

From “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” -- A Commentary; this is Don’s brief biographical account: “Don was publisher for nearly 14 years. ---In 1976, Brother Homer resumed publishing, (with the capable assistance of his son, Don), with only love prevailing between (both of them and Don McCord”), as it ought to be, and with never a cross word between (or among) them.

During my 14-year tenure as publisher, I made many

mistakes for which I will ever be sorry. I was most blessed with assistance from many. Among the many, were some godly women, who in a woman's place, stood by me through thick and through thin. In most reverent respect I mention them. They were Wanda, my wife; Helen King (Brother King's wife and Don's mother); Veta Wissinger King, Agnes Himelhan, and Glennis Faust. All are gone on now but Veta, Their memory is an abiding benediction.

HE IS MY BROTHER

By DON McCORD

HE IS MY BROTHER - In corporate, scriptural worship, we are the same, consistent in belief, preaching and practice, penitent believers, immersed for the remission of sins, members of the Lord's church. In matters of indifference, and matters of opinion, we do not always see eye-to-eye. All things considered in such matters, I have a hard time drawing a line against him. Such makes no Scripture sense, nor does it make common sense. Such will divide us. HE IS MY BROTHER. Regardless, in matters of immorality and irresponsible divisiveness, he does not expect to get my approval or acceptance, still HE IS MY BROTHER. Before I judge or condemn him, I will hear his side. I will give him a fair hearing, man to man, eye to eye. I will not condemn him based upon what others say, what others tell, what others hear, or what others believe. HE IS MY BROTHER. His name does not belong to me. His name I will not misuse to abuse him publicly or privately; it is not mine. HE IS MY BROTHER. Whatever I say to his back, I will say to his face. To otherwise treat him is to be a hypocrite. HE IS MY BROTHER. In public or in private I will not snub him, embarrass him, mistreat him, or have nothing to do with him. Condemned by association means nothing to me; it is sinful. After all, HE IS MY BROTHER. When his good name is abused in my presence, to his face or to his back, or his character or reputation is maligned, I will defend him and pay whatever price is necessary, regardless of what those present say, think or do. HE IS MY BROTHER. In following the example set by Christ and the Apostles, that the gospel preached anywhere, can be preached everywhere, regardless of where, I will defend him. HE IS MY BROTHER. If I sin against him, his reputation, his name, his wife, his children, I will be man enough to confess to him, without "if" prefacing my confession, knowing that an "if confession" is no confession at all. I will just be man enough to confess, "I have sinned, I am sorry, please forgive me" HE IS MY BROTHER. I will to the best of my ability, set the example of what a Christian is by living before him Ephesians 4:31-32,



Homer Gay holding Greg Gay (Neither of us look very happy!)



Clovis, Velma and Travis Cook early 40's



L-R: Lynwood Smith, Tom E. Smith, Homer L King, J.D. Elmore, Raymond Bray, Gaylord Osburn.
At the site of a singing normal at Ardmore in 1946.

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice; And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”. HE IS MY BROTHER. “Two little boys were walking down the road. One was smaller than the other. The smaller boy was carrying the larger one. A caring man passing by said, ‘Son, you should not be carrying that boy. He is too heavy. The little boy, trudging on, respectfully replied, ‘No, Sir, he is not too heavy, HE IS MY BROTHER’.”

A MILESTONE....continued from page two

was done in the kitchen of our log house near the old Lees Summit church building. Mailing out the paper was a monthly chore I vividly recall. It continued for the 30 years he was publisher wherever we happened to be at the time. The family would gather, a meal was enjoyed, and then the work began. Each paper was hand addressed by my mother, two sisters, Velma and Nola, individually wrapped by someone (sometimes myself or Travis Cook) with paste made of flour and water, and carefully placed in a large box. Clovis Cook also helped with some of those jobs. Dad would take it to the Post Office in Lebanon the next day and it would go out. The paper went to a large portion of our Brotherhood as well as several foreign lands. Since this was long before

television, cell phones, and computers, the paper was about the only communication our brethren had from our preachers. They wrote articles for publication just as they still do today. Nearly every preacher sent a field report every month so brethren would know about their work. If you look at the old papers it was common to see 25 or more field reports.

Brethren loved the preachers and eagerly read their reports monthly. A subscription to the paper was a single dollar per year for eight pages every month. The paper became 12 pages with the June, 1944 issue. The price remained one dollar. By the way, a dollar in 1932 was approximately equal to \$20 today. Considering that, the paper is cheaper today than in 1932. Our people then were very poor. Clovis Cook once remarked that “a dollar in those days looked as big as a saddle blanket.” Roads were often little more than dirt, highways were no more than two lanes, and cars were not luxurious to put it mildly. Telephones were few and far between, and brethren looked for the paper every month which my father was careful to see that it was always on time to the readers.

In those early times, brethren looked for ways to be together. Around the 4th of July and New Year, there began to be meetings take place. The older preachers would preach at night and the younger ones in the mornings. Brethren came from miles around and



Clovis and Velma Cook. Harold King in background.

sometimes camped out to hear the preachers they loved and respected. It was a wonderful time of being together, and a great brotherhood was forming. Those meetings were often called “spiritual feasts.” It was common to see brethren and preachers embracing each other, which was their expression of brotherly love. One could sometimes see tears of sadness at the last service. The church still needs the loving companionship of others of “like precious faith.” (2 Peter 1:1)

There were occasional difficulties, of course, but usually brethren looked for ways to follow and pursue peace. It is much easier to arrive at a peaceful resolution when both sides really love each other. Because of love, they seek peace! They are not looking for a fight, don’t want one, and will do almost anything to avoid one. God be thanked for His people who seek peace, no, not at any cost but, if at all possible, they will arrive at a peaceful resolution. Paul said: “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” (Romans 14:19) Through the years, the Old Paths Advocate has continued to be a useful part in the lives of many Christians.

Of course, all cannot be said but a few things must be written for posterity. I am especially grateful that the paper has had a great impact on our foreign mission work. About 1949 Sister Elizabeth Byford, sister to gospel preacher Edwin S. Morris, learned that spiritual help was needed in Africa. She sent my father a dollar for a year’s subscription to the paper. He began sending the paper to E.C. Severe who lived in what was then known as Nyasa land, Africa. In 1952 Paul and Wilma Nichols went there to live and work. Later, Gayland and Roetta Osburn also lived there with the Nichols.

Today, the churches in Africa number in the thousands. Amazing what a dollar can accomplish when given into the right hands.

About 1978 we learned that a well-known digressive preacher who was a subscriber of the OPA had been sending his copy to the Philippines. He was sending it to them to make fun of our old-fashioned way of worship with one cup, etc. We knew nothing of this, and it seems to have gone on for quite some time. The Filipino brethren, however, began studying the issues. The short story is that the true church began in the Philippines. Several of our preachers have gone there since then and I personally have made 39 trips. The church is still spreading into the several thousand islands of the Philippines. Now, there are brethren and preachers in that Country who never knew anything else but the scriptural way of worship. On our first trip there we personally saw many copies of the OPA in their homes. They had studied the articles our preachers had written for the paper over several years and still do. Filipino preachers sometimes build sermons from articles our preachers write in the paper. How humbling it is to realize that God has used even our enemies to put the truth into the minds of people in a foreign land. Who knows where this may be happening even as I pen these words? I know only a little about the work in Mexico but we’ve been told that the paper played a part in that work also.

We have no idea how the Old Paths Advocate first went into Russia or by whom. However, the first contact was in the form of a letter from Moscow to the Old Paths Advocate addressed to our business office in Lebanon, MO. It was addressed to the “one cup, no Sunday School

church of Christ in care of Old Paths Advocate.” I tried to learn how they happened to read the paper but have been unsuccessful. We hope this 90th year special issue can help brethren realize how powerful the printed page remains. It will always be useful. Brethren everywhere need to utilize it.

Today things are somewhat different. Unfortunately, many are now so busy they barely have the time to attend services regularly, and in fact do not. This, needs to change. We need to rearrange our schedules if this is a problem! The church must be first, and other things later. We need to take time to be together, not only in worship but otherwise as well. Yes, I realize I am prejudiced about the paper. I’m sure it shows. It has been a part of my life, virtually all of my life. I grew up with it, and now at 79 years of age I am still putting out the paper every month. However, it seems to me that it still serves a vital purpose and can help everyone stay in touch with Spiritual things if they subscribe to it. If you are not a subscriber, we hope you will become one today. To say the very least, OPA is a conservative voice in a very sinful world of madness and chaos. God help us to keep His way, the Bible way, within our hearts as we journey on. Think on these things. DLK

Our Departed

HOWELL - Annie Pearl Howell left this earthly realm on November 17, 2021. She was eighty-four years of age. Sister Howell was born December 2, 1936 in

Randolph County, AL to Millard and Mary Brown. She married Harlon Howell in 1955 and they spent sixty-six blissful years together building and keeping a Christian home. Sis. Annie Pearl obeyed the gospel of Christ as a teenager and served the Lord for seventy years. They were charter members of the church in Birmingham and made their home there for most of their married life. To their union five children were born, all of whom obeyed the gospel and have remained faithful to Christ. This within itself is a wonderful accomplishment and defines Annie Pearl’s life a success. Annie Pearl only desired to be a Christian and a devoted wife and mother. In the first years of their marriage, she secured a job at a local laundry but only worked one day. She came home and told Harlon that her job was taking her away from her duties as a homemaker. Harlon promised her that day that from then on, he would earn the living and she could keep the home. This agreement lasted through the years and their investment paid off in a devout Christian home. Amazingly, Annie Pearl never drove an automobile but yet raised five children in a large city in a modern time. She always saw that the children got to where they needed to go. She was a wonderful cook and her home a haven of hospitality for countless preachers and other Christians from across the brotherhood. She instilled those skills and values in her children and grandchildren. Annie Pearl loved Christ and His church more than anything in this world. She and Harlon were bulwarks in the Crescent Ridge church. They traveled thousands of miles to attend gospel meetings, not only through the southeast but across the country. Their family circle was broken last



A group of preachers in the 1940's. Among them: Homer L. King, Fred Kirbo, and Homer A. Gay.



Charles Goodgion, Barney Owens, Dan Wissinger, Johnny Elmore, Irvin Barnes and Ronny Wade

year with the death of their son, Ryan. His passing broke their hearts but Annie Pearl handled her trials with grace and faith in God. Their close family and their legacy of faith is a testament to the faithfulness and impact of this godly woman. She leaves to mourn her passing her husband, Harlon, along with four daughters: Melody Snyder, Angie Wallace (Steve), Donna Bryan (Mike), Janet Benson (Craig), and a daughter-in-law: Sandy Howell. She also leaves fourteen grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren who affectionately called her "Memaw". This writer conducted the service along with her beloved grandson, Blake, who shared several family memories. Matt Martin did a wonderful job leading the congregation in song. May God bless the memory of this wonderful saint and may He bless this world with more Christian women, wives, and mothers like her. —Kevin W. Presley

MEARS - Lonnie Lee Mears of Springfield, MO was born on Jan. 16, 1936 in Norwood, MO and died on Nov. 29, 2021 at the age of 85. Suffering from non-alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver caused by auto-immune hepatitis, he died peacefully at home with his loving family by his side. He was preceded in death by his parents, Raymond and Esther Keller Mears, and by his wife of 60 years, Verla Louise Rogers. They were blessed with the birth of two precious daughters, Linda Louise and Deanna Lee, who brought them much joy in life. He is survived by Deanna Lee Mears Harris, son-in-law Gregory Harris and grandson, Gavin Harris of Overland Park, KS, but sadly, Linda passed away in 1990. He is also survived by a brother, Larry Wrinkles

and wife Teresa of Mountain Grove, MO, an aunt, Irene Dooms of Ava, MO and other family members. Lonnie had to grow up fast as he had many responsibilities helping on the farm as a young boy. At age 17, he moved to Kansas City and went to work at Western Electric and later became a Warehouse Supervisor. Retiring after 30 years, he continued his business of breeding and training Walker Coon hounds. He was well known throughout the United States for being careful to keep the Mears Finley River bloodline true to that breed. He was so successful in training his dogs for hunting and for showing in bench shows, he won numerous trophies and awards-- Best In Show, many Grand Nite Champions in local hunts and even won the World Hunt as well. He was also awarded Breeder of the Year, often called on to judge at the dog shows or hunts, and he judged the World Hunt in 1982. [Get on the Internet and google Lonnie Mears and you'll find many Web Sites paying tribute to him, including an article in the AMERICAN COONER -- a monthly magazine for enthusiasts in this sport] As Irvin Barnes said at the funeral, Lonnie became a "legend" to those involved in breeding hounds and producing champions in the big hunts. Incidentally, I never heard Lonnie boast about any of this. Indeed, he was a gentleman in every way, someone who was humble and soft spoken, and a genuine Christian who blessed us all with his life. He obeyed the gospel at a young age and remained faithful unto the end. At the time of his death, he was a member of the Pleasant View congregation in Springfield. Having known him for 23 years, it was an honor to read the obituary and pay tribute to someone I loved



Luvella, Susie, Homer A., and "Sonny" Gay

and admired. Kendall Cook, a nephew, spoke on behalf of the family, sharing with them lighthearted stories that involved Lonnie. Irvin Barnes concluded the service by also speaking words of tribute and looking to the scriptures for comfort. Interment took place in the Hazelwood Cemetery in Springfield. Lonnie awaits the judgment and resurrection now, safe in the arms of Jesus. That was his hope in life and it is our hope for him in death. —Billy D. Dickinson

Field Reports

Greg Gay, 3816 Tambos Trl, Edmond, OK 73034, papagreg@aol.com, 916-804-3787, December 8, 2021. I closed a meeting at Gale, Oklahoma on December 5 that was well attended by members and visitors including preaching brethren George Battey and Carl Johnson. I enjoyed every meal and visit, and extra time spent with Ken and Kat Holland. I was able to stay near Ada with my mother during the meeting and enjoyed being with her, as always. Cassie was able to go with me to Longview, Florida in November for a Sunday through Wednesday meeting. The members attended their own meeting, which is always great, plus we also had community visitors. We were pleasantly surprised Sunday afternoon by DJ and Kathy Hastings from Lubbock who were vacationing in Florida and took time to come to the meeting after hearing it announced where they worshipped that morning.

We were able to spend time with several families in homes and restaurants during the meeting. We enjoyed the hospitality of Don and Barb Davis at New Smyrna Beach during and after the meeting. They are transplants from California to Florida who are enjoying living there very much. My Facebook group, God's Good News from Greg, continues to grow in members and each video sermon has good interest around the world. Since last report, a new congregation has begun in Northern India. Brother Saganty Lazarus was able to travel from his home in Southern India to Northern India in November to confirm the sincerity of a couple I have been studying with since they began watching the videos in July. Manohar and his wife were baptized, are worshipping faithfully, and are sharing the gospel with others in their family and among their friends with more baptisms anticipated. We are looking forward to ending our year at the preacher's study, hosted by 21st. Street in Oklahoma City, and at the Oklahoma New Year's meeting, hosted by the Norman congregation. As 2021 ends, our blessings are many! I am thrilled to have the support and good will of our home congregation, West View in Piedmont, Oklahoma. Our work continues there with good interest in worship and studies. I am thankful for every opportunity I had to share the gospel in person and on line in 2021 and look forward to doing more of the same, Lord willing in 2022!

David Griffin, December 2021. Things have been going well at the Lee's Summit congregation near Lebanon,



Leon Farcher, Pinky Bryant, Lynwood Smith and Johnny Elmore

Missouri. The Lord has blessed us. In October, we were able to have a meeting with Brother Jimmy Cating. Jimmy did some great preaching for us. We had no visible results, but the church was edified, and hearts were no doubt convicted by the word of God. It was a thrill to have a meeting since it had been so many months (over a year and a half) since we had had a meeting. Jimmy has a pleasant personality and is a joy to be around. He is a great blessing to the brotherhood, and we look forward to having him back in the future. At present we are looking forward to the Preachers' Study in OKC and the New Years Meeting to follow. God bless all and may the New Year bring great strides for the cause of Christ!

Irvin Barnes, 3218 E. Farm Road 88, Springfield, Mo. 65803, Irvinbarns@aol.com, December 1, 2021. Bro. William St. John held a meeting here at Pleasant View, Nov., 7-14. The first part of the meeting we had great preaching, good crowds, and wonderful singing. During the last 3 days of the meeting we suffered a Covid outbreak which ruined everything. We closed the meeting with the morning service on the 14th. Fifteen people in the congregation became ill with Covid 19. Bro. Kent May and I had the inoculation shots, but both of us fell ill and tested positive for the disease, We both received anti-body infusions which shortened the time we were sick. Others who were sick received the infusion and it seems that we are all recovering. Unrelated to covid, 2 of our members passed away recently. Nancy Crooks died from congestive heart failure. Lonnie Mears died

as a result of acute liver failure. Both were long time pillars in the church here. Their service and Godly influence will be greatly missed. Please pray for these 2 families and the congregation here.

Darrell Crawford, 210 E. Baldwin Rd., Unit A, Panama City, FL 32405, Bugz1955@hotmail.com. It has been a while since our last OPA report. The work here continues to grow. We have one man who saw the LTBS TV Program and drives 45 miles each way from Blountstown, Fl. He seems very interested; we have had several studies that have been productive. There is also a young man from the community who has been coming the last several weeks, he also seems very interested in studying. We are preparing to have a meeting in February with Brett Hickey, from the L TBS TV program. Hopefully we can stir up more interest. We have been very blest here that no one from the church has contracted the Covid virus yet. Our sister Carol Bacon is continuing to decline in health. Prayers for her are requested. Please pray for the work here. May the Lord bless His church everywhere.

Kevin W. Presley, 108 Mulberry Court, Dothan, AL 36303, Dec 10, 2021. 2021 was a busy and productive year in the Lord's work. I enjoyed some wonderful meetings in the Ozark's. We had a wonderful meeting in Harrison, AR. Jimmie Smith has a powerful influence in his community and he and the church worked hard for the meeting. Jimmie knows how to create excitement surrounding a meeting. We had numerous visitors

and feel that doors were opened to future results. The congregation appears to be doing well with a good future ahead. A few weeks later, it was a privilege to be back with the Mission Hills church in Springfield, MO. We had large crowds at every service. Young people filled the first few rows every night and are some of the finest you will find. The singing was thrilling and the enthusiasm surrounding the meeting made it a wonderful week. Richard Bunner spearheaded a door-knocking campaign, yielding some visitors from the neighborhood. Best of all, a man who has attended services with his wife for many years decided to obey the gospel. Many tears of joy were shed by longtime friends and members who have known and loved him for so long. The Lord is patient and merciful and we give Him all of the glory for His grace and for the never-abating power of His gospel. In November, we had our annual meeting in Rogers, AR. Don Pruitt always works to ensure the meeting is a great success. He does a great work with the church here, along with their capable elders and deacons. We had numerous community visitors from our television program. The Rogers congregation is a vibrant group and I look forward to our meetings from year-to-year. This week, I closed an encouraging meeting at Hartwell, AR. The building was full each night and numerous visitors from the TV program attended. The end of the meeting was dampened by the passing of longtime leader, Cliff Wood. Cliff was a wonderful man and a bulwark of the congregation at Hartwell. He had been sick and in the hospital throughout the meeting. His will be sorely missed. Lord willing, I begin my last meeting of the year in Aurora, MO tonight. They have a hispanic work underway in this community and are already seeing

great results. I look forward to working with them over the next few days. Our television work continues to grow. Several baptisms resulted this year and the viewership continues to expand. If your congregation would like to look into airing the program, please contact me. May 2022 be a year of great increase in the kingdom of our Lord and bring great glory to Him. God bless the brotherhood.

Rick Martin, teachermartin@gmail.com. With this report 2021 is now gone. We are thankful for the blessings of the past year. We were able to see a bit more normalcy over the year with Covid being a bit better controlled. Most congregations were able to have meetings and the big meetings returned, although a bit smaller in attendance. In October, I was able to hold an enjoyable meeting in Broken Arrow, OK. The crowds were good, with the support of surrounding congregations. Preachers who attended were Larry Combs, Clint DeFrance, and of course, Bill Ferguson, who works with the congregation. I appreciate the support and confidence that the congregation had in me. As of late, I have preached in LaGrange, GA, Napoleon, AL, and here at home. The Marietta congregation continues to support the "Let the Bible Speak" television program, hosted by Kevin Presley. The Napoleon congregation has agreed to help in the expense of the program, and we are extremely grateful for this support. We have several people enrolled in the bible study program from the metro Atlanta area, as well as from around the state. Please pray for the success of these efforts. Our prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless His people every where during the coming year.



At the Hoglands house after lunch, Lee's Summit Congregation, Missouri 1940. My relatives in the picture include my daddy, grandparents and great grandparents (Greg Gay).

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WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE...

ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS (GET OFF THE PIG TRAIL!)

By JERRY DICKINSON

“Thus says the LORD: Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk in it. Also, I set watchmen over you, saying, listen to the sound of the trumpet! But they said, we will not listen!” (Jeremiah 6:16-17) “Because My people have forgotten Me, they have burned incense to worthless idols. And they have caused themselves to stumble in their ways, from the ancient paths, to walk in pathways and not on a highway, to make their land desolate and a perpetual hissing; everyone who passes by it will be astonished and shake his head. I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will show them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity.” (Jeremiah 18:15-17)

When the Lord said he had set watchmen over the people He was referring to prophets like Jeremiah whom the Lord had raised up to sound out a warning like a trumpet. But the people said, “We will not hear!” They refused to heed the message of Jeremiah that judgement and destruction were coming on the nation because of their idolatry and sin. The destruction would be so severe and complete that those who passed by would hiss and shake their heads. God said He would show them His back and not His face. Oh, to have God turn His back on you! Could there be anything more devastating and terrible? It was not just because they had sinned that God turned His back on the nation, but because they would not listen to His warnings and pleadings. They said, “We will not listen!”

When I was a Behavior Management Specialist (what a title!) a student would be sent to my office for disturbing the class. I would ask the student, “Why did the teacher send you to me?” He would answer, “because I was talking while the teacher was talking.” I would then tell the student, “No, you were not sent to me because you were talking, but because you would not stop talking! The teacher warned you repeatedly to stop talking while she was talking and you would not stop. Right?” The student, who had not thought of it that way, nodded in agreement. So it was with Judah - it was bad enough that the nation had burned incense to worthless idols, but the real issue was that they would not listen to God’s warning and pleading through prophets like Jeremiah. Not only did they refuse to listen and repent, they relentlessly persecuted poor Jeremiah. Jeremiah was isolated and ostracized, he had rocks thrown at him, he was tossed in a well and would have drowned except the well was dry, and finally was killed after the coming of the Babylonians, but not by the Babylonians but by those of his own nation.

In Jeremiah 6:16 the prophet utters the famous phrase which adorns the masthead of this journal. “Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths ...” In the prophet’s mind the people were as travelers who have taken a self-chosen path which leads to a place of peril. He urges them to stop and ask for the old paths. In Jeremiah 18:15 he calls it the ancient paths: This could be literally translated, the eternal paths. Interestingly, in Jeremiah 18:15 he says they have been walking in pathways and not on the highway. The King James translation reads, “to a way not cast up”, which refers to a built up highway. In other words, instead of walking on the ancient highway, built up by the Word of God, they were walking on pig trails. Why would you use a pig trail when you could use an interstate superhighway?

Arkansas State Highway 23 runs from Clarksville to Huntsville and is known as “the pig trail” because many Arkansans on their way to football games in Fayetteville would use it as a shortcut. The problem is there are over 500 curves and it is a precarious drive to say the least. I had a meeting at the Hartwell congregation a few years ago and decided, since I was in no hurry, to take Highway 23 instead of my usual (and better) route of Interstate 49 up to Fayetteville. I’ll not do that again. I could almost see my own tail lights on some of those hairpin curves! I told the brethren when I arrived I had taken a pig trail and they laughed because they knew exactly what I was referring to. Like Judah, our world has left the superhighway paved by God’s word and are trudging along the pig trail of sin and degradation which leads to the same desolate end that awaited Judah.

Our task is the same as Jeremiah’s, to sound the warning like a trumpet and implore people to ask for the old, ancient paths that the great old saints walked on. Why plod along on a pig trail when you can be on the King’s Highway? Ninety years ago when Homer King and his cohorts chose a title for this paper they reached back and appropriated the awesome words of Jeremiah. The Old Paths Advocate has been striving to point souls to the old paths and the good way for nine decades. Let us carry on the work. Inspired by the original publishers of this grand old journal, let us continue to sound out the message - “Ask for the Old Paths!”