

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

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NO. 7

WILL ANY MAN STAND?

By RICK MARTIN

God’s people, for whatever reason, have always been faced with a need to fill leadership positions. During the days of the prophet Ezekiel, God looked for someone to stand up. **Ezekiel 22:30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.**

The sins that existed among God’s people in Ezekiel’s day are still common among His people today. The moral condition of the people had hit rock bottom. God sought for someone to stand up for Judah. He did not want the people to be destroyed. He looked for someone to uphold the standard and to shield His people from wrath, but there were none found.

God is looking for men to stand up today. Every generation needs someone that will rebuild and uphold the moral and spiritual foundations which popular culture and unfaithful Christians try to tear down. God needs men today. What type of qualities should be found in God’s men? The need for men in the church today is great and we must make every effort to develop into men who will please God. In this article I want to give you eight qualities that should be found in God’s men.

First, God needs men of service. Jesus left a great example for those who would be leaders of God’s people. He showed the type of leader he wants by modeling it himself. During the Last Supper, on the night that Jesus sacrificed his life for the church, his disciples argued about their own importance. Jesus, their Lord and Master, took water and washed their feet.

He gave them a visual demonstration of what a leader should be; he must be a servant. Many people let service opportunities pass by, because they are concerned about their dignity, position, or image. The man of God does not serve self or let his ambition get out of control. God’s man is a leader who sacrifices to serve others.

Second, God needs men who exhibit self-control. God’s man will not indulge in the pleasures of sin. He will follow the example of Paul.. **1 Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that**

by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. Self-control is essentially the ability to regulate our actions by principles and sound judgments. It matters little how good we claim to be or how much we know if we cannot control ourselves. From the wisdom of Solomon, we learn that a person without control over his spirit is like “**a city broken down, without walls.**” Without self-control, we are defenseless. Self-control requires constant attention. Men who want to please God, must exhibit self-control.

Third, God wants men with wisdom and knowledge. In search of wisdom the man of God turns to the giver of every good and perfect gift in prayer. **James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.** One must grow in knowledge, **2 Pet. 3:18.** When a person is a diligent student of God’s word, understands what he reads and is faithful and loyal to its teachings, he is the type of man that God needs.

Fourth, God needs men who are stable. Such a man is a rock that others can look to and depend upon. **1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.** The stable man helps to rekindle people’s hopes and strengthens their determination to live faithful and pure lives. The stable man encourages God’s people in an effective manner.

Fifth, God needs men of conviction. Conviction is the act of convincing or bringing certainty to mind. It means having knowledge and assurance of something. We are told today that we can’t know anything. To be dogmatic is frowned upon. It used to be that men were convinced they were right, now it doesn’t make any difference as long as a person is sincere. The man of God cannot be divided in his mind. **James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.** In **1 Kings 18:21** Elijah asked the people, “**How long halt ye between two opinions.**” Paul was a man of conviction even in error as we see in **Acts 23:1.** He lived in all good conscience before God. When Paul was converted, he continued to be a man of conviction. **2 Timothy 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto**

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Editorial

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

By CLOVIS T. COOK

Some folks claim they were born too soon, others too late, because of various events they seem to have missed and certain people they wish they could have known. I have never been bothered with that problem for I feel very fortunate to have come into the Kingdom of God at the time I did and to have known and worked with some of the best informed and most able men of our time. I would have been impoverished indeed had I not lived in such a time as that.

Space will not permit me to name **every** man, and the many incidents and situations in which I watched them take corrective measures to halt the encroachment and threat of departures from the word of God in the work and worship of the church. Those men (late corners to the Restoration Movement) never doubted their authority to reject the heretic (Tit. 3:10), to speak, exhort, and rebuke with all authority (Tit. 3:15) as evangelists. Men like Dr. GA Trott, H.C. Harper, J.D. Phillips, and doubtless many others, were not afraid to cross swords with any man they thought to be in error. As to whether those men had come to the kingdom “for such a time as this,” we will let you be the judge, but there is one thing for sure. As Bro. Tom Allington would say, ‘When they got their ducks lined up’ and threw up their line of defense, the devil and all his angels could not penetrate it. No one had to second guess where **they** stood.

SOME EXAMPLES

Let me give you an example or so: I obeyed the gospel in 1930. J.L. Musgraves was a young preacher in my home congregation about that time. A young man with great ability, but not much stability (as we later learned.) When the Sunday School and Cups church at Olney, Texas offered him a job as a pastor in 1931 (as I remember) he took it. Bro. King (and I have always thought Bro. Stewart) went and convinced Lewis that he was wrong. **He came back and confessed his wrong. They would have it no other way. Those men did not compromise or bend the rules.**

Bro. J.D. Phillips, in the O.P.A. 1935 (April issue) gave us the full history of Musgrave’s wobblings, after his second step into humanisms, when he

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is it scriptural to meet at two services on Sunday and partake of the Lord's Supper twice?

Answer: All Christians are commanded to observe the Lord's Supper. In 1Corinthians 11:25 Paul wrote "For as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me..." The word (hosakis) "as often as" implies that the Lord's supper was regularly observed. From Acts 20:7 we learn that the disciples gathered every first day of the week to "break bread." That the Corinthian church had such an assembly seems apparent from 1Corinthians 16:1-2. There fore we may conclude that early disciples gathered weekly to participate in this spiritual feast. The scriptures also indicate that early Christians gathered at other times to pray, study, and encourage each other Acts 15:4-6, Acts 4:31 etc, yet there is no record of their having the communion at those times. We learn from Acts 2:42 that the Christians continued in the "breaking of bread," Acts 20:7, however, is the only example of the church gathering for that purpose on the first day of the week. There is nothing in the scripture that indicates anyone partook of the Lord's supper except when the church assembled for that purpose on the Lord's day. We have no bible example of any Christian partaking of the communion twice on Sunday. We have no bible command indicating that a Christian should partake twice. We have no inference that anyone ever partook more than once on any given Sunday. Most, I'm sure, would agree that there is no authority for any congregation of Christians observing the Lord's supper more than once on any given Sunday. But what about someone who has communed at a congregation on Sunday morning and later in the day they attend another congregation that regularly meets in the afternoon. This church, as a part of its worship, will observe the Lord's supper. Is it permissible for this visitor, who has already communed, to commune again a second time? I have searched, but I can find no scriptural justification for such a practice. If one can do so twice, why not three or four times, if indeed he/she could find and get to that many assemblies where the supper was being observed? There are two things that are distinctive about the Lord's day assembly. We commune and give. We do neither at any other time. If one may commune twice should they not give as they have been prospered twice? If not why not? To argue that one couldn't sing, teach, or pray misses the

point. We may sing, teach, pray, at any gathering. However we may not commune or give at times other than the weekly assembly of Acts 20:7 and 1Corinthians 16:1-2. One might think of a number of reasons why they believe no harm is done by communing twice on Sunday, especially in mission work areas, however, the question has to be what scripture or scriptural precedent justifies such a practice? We all commune as individuals, however, the Lord's supper involves congregational action. It is congregational in nature. When I assemble with a congregation and discharge my duties of remembering Christ in the communion and give as I have been prospered, I have fulfilled my duty in that regard for that Sunday. To do so twice or three times is to act without scriptural justification, in my view. All of us know it is right to commune once, why take a chance on something we don't know? I do not question the motives or sincerity of those people who communes more than once on Lord's day. I do, however, question it being justified by the Scriptures. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net).

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST PREVAILS!

By VIRGILIO O. DANA O

Did the Church Jesus established in 33 A.D. continue to physically exist up to the present? Many honest God fearing people have diverse answers to this seeming controversial question. There are those who say that because of apostasy, and persecutions during the Dark Ages, the Church ceased to physically exist. Other claim that since history is nebulous and obscure, as to the record of the continuity of the Church, it is said that there was a time when the Church disappeared; but later, it reappeared through the efforts of religious leaders who desired to restore New Testament Christianity. Still, there are those who claim that the Church of Christ continues to exist, since her establishment up to the present. But what does the Bible say?

The primary objective of this humble treatise is to show that the Church of Christ revealed in the Scriptures has been incessantly in existence since her establishment in 33 A.D., and up to the time when Jesus comes again to judge the world.

Jesus only intended to build one Church. He said, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my Church, and the gates

of Hades shall not prevailed against it" (Matt. 16:18). Should He plan to build many churches, He should have said, "*I will build my churches.*" The culmination of His plan occurred when the apostles first preach the gospel of salvation in 33 A.D. and 3,000 souls responded and were baptized in Jerusalem (Acts 2:41, 47). The Church that Jesus built was called Church of God, Church of Christ, Church of the Firstborn and other names we read in the New Testament (Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16; Heb. 12:23). However, the Church is also referred to as the kingdom of God's dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, or the Kingdom of God (Col. 1:13; Mark 9:1; Acts 2). The Church and the Kingdom is used interchangeably in the New Testament. But the question is: Did the Church Jesus built continue to physically exist up to the present time?

Prophecies plainly tell us that Christ's Kingdom, or His Church, will never be destroyed. In Daniel 7:13-14, we read, "*I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*" See also Daniel 2:44 and Luke 1:33. "*Son of man*" was our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 24:30); and "*his kingdom*" was His Church (Col. 1:13, 18, 23). His kingdom, or His Church, "*shall not be destroyed.*" Then, this proves the continuity of the physical existence of the Church of Christ.

Jesus explicitly stated that "*the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*", the Church (Matt. 16:18). Commenting on this particular verse, in Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary, p. 931, we read, "*I will build my Church... and the gates of Hell -of Hades, or, the unseen world; meaning the gates of Death: in other words, 'IT SHALL NEVER PERISH'*" (Capitalized for emphasis is mine - vod). Matthew Henry also writes, "*Christ here promises to preserve and secure his church, when it is built; the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; neither against this truth, nor which is built upon it... While the world stands, CHRIST WILL HAVE A CHURCH IN IT in spite of all the opposition of the power of darkness, They shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew Henry's Commentary, p. 232; emphasis is mine - vod). If the Church shall never perish, and if while the world stands, Christ will have a Church in it, then there was not a time that the Church stopped to exist since her establishment.

Apostle Paul writes, "*Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end*" (Eph. 3:21). The seat of God's praises is in the Church (Ibid. p. 700). This proves the continuous presence of the Church. If the Church ceased to exist, whenever this may have occurred in the history of the Church, then there was a period of time in the Christian dispensation when God was not glorified, praised and worshipped.

In Hebrews 12:23, 28, Paul writes, "*To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven ... Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*" The Greek word, ASELUETOS which is translated, "*which cannot be moved,*" means "*not liable to disorder and overthrow, firm, stable*" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, p. 79). According to Paul the Church of the Firstborn is the Kingdom which can not be moved, "*not liable to disorder and overthrow.*" Therefore, this shows the incessant physical existence of the Church.

In Revelation 12:6, Apostle John writes, "*And the woman fled in the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there, a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*" In Matthew Henry's Commentary, we read: "*We see how the church is represented in this vision. (1) As a woman, the weaker part of the world, but the spouse of Christ and the mother of the saints... She fled in the wilderness, A PLACE PREPARED BOTH FOR HER SAFETY AND HER SUSTENANCE. The Church was in an obscure state, dispersed; and this proved her security through the care of divine Providence*" (p. 1160; emphasis is mine - vod). The Church is represented by the woman who fled in the wilderness, in a place prepared for her by God. God had provided her provision, "*feed her there... in the wilderness.*" This proves beyond the shadow of the doubt the continuous existence of the Church. How could a dead, or a non existent, being be fed?

Truly, the Bible teaches the Church that Jesus built has been in continual existence since her establishment. The preaching of the gospel by the apostles, and the early disciples, contributed in the rapid spread and continued establishment of the Church of Christ during the First Century. However, though Christ's apostles had long been dead, through the ages, they still continue to preach through their written words (Heb. 11:4; John 5:46,

47). The word of God is likened to an incorruptible seed (Luke 8:11, 1 Peter 1:23). God designed the law of propagation (Genesis 1:11, 12). If a tomato seed is planted, it produces, not squash or eggplant, but tomato fruit, for “every one having its seed in itself after its kind.” If the seed, the word of God, is preached, without addition, subtraction or substitution, and is planted, embedded, in the heart of honest people, and they humbly obeyed all Jesus’ commands that install them to become parts of the Church, the Church of Christ is produced, established, whenever and wherever this happened. This is the primary factor that demonstrates the continued physical existence of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ since her establishment in 33 A.D.- Honolulu, Hawaii

AN EARNEST CONVENTION

By MICHAEL BOLTON

We live in a society where love trumps truth, unity trumps morality, and tolerance is the greatest and highest virtue. In 2002 George Barna revealed a fact that provides an interesting barometer of so called religion in America: “For the first time since he’s been doing research, the most oft quoted verse was not “For God so loved the world...” (John 3.16) it was, “Judge not, lest you too be judged” (Mt 7.1). He goes on to say, “Even among evangelicals, we have succumbed to the hypnotic drumbeat of the incessant mantra: “Who are you to judge?” An author commenting on this said; the clear implication, among people of faith, is that none of us has the right to say, *that lifestyle is wrong, or that preacher is a false teacher or that doctrine is heresy.* In fact, says this commentator, the one word that could describe our society is “WHATEVER!”

Jude in writing to the church in the first century said in early and permanent opposition to this philosophy to “earnestly contend for the faith”. This is to be the mantra for all those who name themselves with the name of Christ. But what does this mean to contend or even more to earnestly contend?

We understand and are most thankful for the faith. And that it was earnestly delivered to the saints. This faith of Jesus Christ, in that he is the Son of God and was born and lived his life without sin, then died vicariously for all mankind who would hear and obey his word. In doing so he purchased with his blood the remission of sin. And he gave the right to the obedient and faithful to be sons of God and joint

heirs with him in eternity.

So what does it mean to contend for the faith? Mr. Thayer says that to contend is to “lift up one’s heel against”. In other words we are to fight. And indeed throughout the Word of God we find ourselves being admonished to; fight, stand, make up the hedge, be valiant. Consider the following passages; Nehemiah 13.25, 1 Timothy 1.18,11 Tim 1.13, Revelation 12.11. There are many, many others in addition to these. But one of the most poignant is found in I Timothy 6.12 where Paul says “Fight the good fight of faith lay hold on eternal life whereunto thou are also called...” Clearly he was here exhorting young Timothy to be active and aggressive in the pursuit of Godliness.

When we contend for the faith there some specific things we fight for; the gospel of Jesus Christ, the authority of the scriptures, the one church which was created by our Lord. One contends for the gospel of Jesus Christ first of all and most simply by obeying it. The steps of obedience to the gospel are simple and straightforward and can easily be found. Consider the following: Romans 10.9-10, Matthew 10.32-33, Mark 1. 15, & Acts 2.38. The steps as outlined throughout the New Testament is to believe that Christ is the Son of God, confess said belief, repent or turn away from sins, and be baptized for the remission of sins. So when one contends for the faith by obeying the gospel he is in effect saying he is willing to submit to the authority of the scriptures in his life. That person then further contends for the gospel by daily searching the scripture to find how to live and govern himself in his affairs in or out of the church. Finally, one contends for the faith once delivered to the saints by associating himself with ones of like precious faith. That is, he is found in attendance at the assembly of the church, the ecclesia; or the called out ones. These called out ones are the one church of the New Testament. Michael W. Bolton, P.O. Box 446, Blossom TX, 75416 - mwbolton2001@ yahoo.com 903-491-6802.

SOME IMPOSSIBILITIES

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

The first impossibility that must be realized and accepted is that God cannot lie. When God speaks, He always speaks the truth. In Titus 1:1-3 the apostle Paul says, “I Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth

which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour..." This should convince us that when we read the scriptures, we can be assured of the true facts. The same apostle says, "...let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4). Men make mistakes because all are fallible. But God is infallible. Jesus prayed to His Father, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" John 17:17).

Another impossibility is for a person to neglect his salvation and still be saved. In Hebrews 2:1-3, the writer says. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him..."

It is impossible for anyone to be saved without the shedding of blood. Not his own, but the blood of a sacrifice. The scriptures say, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). This refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ for our redemption. Again, we read, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." The apostle Paul writes, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14).

Another impossibility is for one to be saved without faith. In Heb. 11:6, the inspired writer tells us, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." When Jesus gave the apostles their last instructions before He went back to heaven He told them, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). A sinner could be dipped in water a thousand times, which would accomplish nothing without faith. But baptism in water for the remission of sins is the proof of his faith. He believes the word of God, and therefore he submits to baptism for the right reason (Acts 2:38).

It is impossible for one to be saved except through Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the

life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Sinners often try to circumnavigate the scriptures, thinking they can get to heaven without accepting Christ as the Son of God. But the Lord makes it plain that this is impossible. He is the only way for one to be saved. He died for the sins of the world, Jesus told the people, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). A sinner must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and realize that He is our Savior.

It is impossible for one to be saved if he neglects his salvation and death overtakes him unprepared. We are informed by inspiration "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:27, 28). The apostle Paul would remind us, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

All of these impossibilities are revealed to us in God's holy word. It would behoove us to consider them carefully and take advantage of the time we have available to us.

What is a daily Christian?

He lives well, he laughs often, loves much, and has gained the respect of children. He will leave the world better than he found it. He loves the earth's beauty, is awed by the expanse of heaven. He looks for the best in others and gives the best of himself. He is a servant every day, and especially of God, a mortal who looks for immortality, an earthling who longs for heaven.

-Selected

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him against that day. God needs men of conviction.

Sixth, God needs men who are bold. The man of God will be bold when it comes to preaching and teaching. **Acts 4:13** **Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.** Men must be bold in preaching to the lost. It was bold preaching by Peter that convicted those who crucified Jesus on the day of Pentecost. God’s man will be bold in standing against error, wickedness, worldliness, and immorality. It is not enough just to be right. Certain things must be opposed. This is only reasonable. There is a temptation to be for right, but not take stand against error. One cannot be for God without being against Satan. One cannot be for truth without being against error. The bible teaches that we must sound forth a warning: **Isaiah 62:1** **For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.** We must sound forth a warning today concerning doctrinal matters and immorality. God needs bold men today.

Seventh, God needs men who will stop those who contradict truth. Paul made no allowances for those who would contradict truth. **Titus 1:9** **Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.** Notice that Paul did not suggest compromise or tolerance. Paul identified people who would contradict truth and directed elders to exhort and convict them. In **Titus 1:11,** Paul said that those who would subvert the faith and teach error must be stopped. He emphatically states, **“Whose mouths must be stopped.”** Subverting the truth is not just a personal matter; it is a matter of eternal consequences. God needs men who will function as guardians of truth and who will realize their responsibility to teach and uphold truth and to oppose error and those who contradict truth. What happens if those who subvert the faith and teach error are not stopped? In some places men who have taught false doctrine and contradicted the truth have not been confronted because they are popular among the members. As a result they have led others to rebel against the will of God and have done great harm to the body of Christ. They have even led whole congregations into apostasy with the blessings and the endorsement of the elders; the very men whom God charged with the job of watching for souls and with stopping the mouths of those who subvert truth.

Eighth, God needs men who will not associate with false teachers. The Spanish adventurer and writer Miguel Cervantes said, “Tell me what company you keep and I’ll tell you what you are.” Some country folks, I have known say the same thing in a different way. They say “Lie down with dogs and you’ll get up with fleas.” Who you choose to associate with can elevate or harm you. People will be known, judged, understood and revealed by the company they keep. Is there such a thing as guilt by association?

When brethren continually seek the fellowship of men who are false teachers and congregations where such teaching is taking place, should we begin to question their doctrinal soundness? **Romans 16:17** instructs that the **false teacher is to be marked.** **2 Thess. 3:14** tells us that **if any man does not obey the doctrine of Christ we are not to keep company with him.** **2 John 10-11** says, **“If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”** Every Christian must be very cautious. This passage forbids us to do anything that in any way would encourage the false teacher. There is such a thing as guilt by association. People may share in the false teacher’s guilt by silence, defense, approval and praise. Perhaps the most common way is to align themselves to the false teacher by an obvious disobedience to John’s command, **“receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:”** Congregations need to examine the men they secure for gospel meetings. Preachers need to be careful where they go. Remember if you **“lie down with dogs, you’ll get fleas.”**

In conclusion as we look back at **Ezekiel 22:30;** it says, that **“God looked for and man to stand in the gap and found none.”** What a sad commentary on the people of that day. How sad it will be if the same is said of our generation. In this day of moral decline and when whole congregations of God’s people are being led into apostasy, God needs a man to stand up. Surely, there will be a man. The question is “Have you and I prepared ourselves to be that man?”

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FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIScontinued from page two

accepted **another** job as pastor in El Centro, California. He said:

“He wriggled in and he wriggled out
 Always, leaving the folks in doubt,
 Whether the snake that made the track
 Was going on or coming back,”

After Musgrave’s second fling with the “transgressives” (As Bro. Phillips called it), I met Lewis and tried to persuade him to come back to the truth. He said, “You are just using arguments that Bro. King gave you.” (I had never met Bro. King at that time), I replied, “No, I am only giving back to you what you gave me, remember?” Bro. Phillips referred to the actions of Musgraves as “Back To Babylon.”

Otis Harmon, moved from Burlington, Iowa to Missouri 1934-35. I worked with Otis in a mission meeting or two. But pretty soon we were to learn he was advertising in the **Apostolic Review** and the **Church Messenger.** Both papers were of the cups persuasion. The situation had to be dealt with. Brethren King and Gay asked me to sit in on a

meeting with them as they decided how to handle the matter. They decided on a direct approach. They said: **“If you are going to kill a snake, hit it on the head! Otherwise, it might turn on you and bite you.”** They put a notice in the **O.P.A.** after our meeting with him, warning brethren to **Beware!**

I worked with both men mentioned. With Bro. Musgraves in several meetings and other work 1930-1934. I worked very little with Otis Harmon in 1934-35. I have shown you how those brethren dealt with innovations and departures from the word.

Bro. King seemed to have written more on “Church Discipline” than others, perhaps. He wrote an article for the Apostolic Way in 1926 on that subject, not that other great men of his day differed with him. They didn’t, not in the least.

When these men, a generation before me, mounted the platform of public polemics, sound words fell from their eloquent tongues like rain drops from heaven. They cared not on whom they fell and when many of them sat down to write, their pens came alive. Much of what they wrote is still with us to this day.

I always felt so inferior to those men when in their presence, and more especially, when asked to speak before them. I tried to stay in the background and learn my lesson well. That was not a one man show, but the work of a great team.

In the next article, we plan to talk about our work with the next generation after the one before us. There is both good and bad to report.--OPA

Announcements

Effective Immediately:

Members of the Lord’s Church in Chouteau, Oklahoma are no longer meeting in that community. Please make the necessary changes in the church directory.

For more information contact Adam Warren, 918-557-4311. -Bill J. Ferguson



The Church of Christ in Duncanville, TX will be changing the time of our afternoon service starting on May 16, 2010. The new time for the afternoon service will be 2:00. All other times remain the same. Please post this in your next issue of the

Old Paths. Thank you for all that you do for the work of the church. -Alex Barefoot
972-636-9940



NEW SONGBOOK AND CD

The new songbook “Glory Echoes” is now available for purchase. The book contains 238 old and new songs. You will find new compositions from some of the great gospel music writers of our day that are fresh and challenging but suitable for good congregational singing. The cherished hymns of the past are included and there are a number of favorites from the 1960’s -1980’s that have not been in one of our books in many, many years. They will bring back wonderful memories for many of us and be new to the newer generation. The book is \$5 plus shipping. There is also a CD including 45 songs from the book available for \$10 postage paid. For more information, contact me at (334) 618-1550, legacymusicpublishing@gmail.com, or log on to www.legacymusicpublishing.com. It is my hope the book will rekindle our interest in good singing throughout the brotherhood! May it be used as a vehicle to glorify God and build up the church! - Kevin W. Presley



ANNOUNCEMENT

Subscribing and renewing subscriptions for the Old Paths Advocate is now much easier. You can subscribe and pay online at www.oldpathsadvocate.org You may specify if you want the paper version or the online version. The online version is the same as the paper version. We are excited about this feature and feel that it will be a great help with foreign subscriptions. Subscription price is \$13.00. Be sure not to let your subscription expire. You can also follow us on Facebook. We will be posting articles, announcements and reminders on the group page. If you are a Facebook fan, we invite you to join the Old Paths Advocate group.

Our Departed

ZIGLER- Nancy Louise Zigler was the eldest daughter of Chester and Louise King. She had suffered some serious health issues for some time before her passing, April 19, 2010 at Springfield, MO. She was born November 16, 1940 at Hollywood, Calif. in the home of her grandparents, Carl and Henrietta Nichols. Nancy obeyed the Gospel at the age of 14 years, and endeavored to live the life of a Christian, although experiencing some difficult times. In 1984 she moved to Kansas City, MO. and began working as a caregiver for the elderly, and continued to work in this capacity as long as her health permitted. She moved to Rolla, MO in 1991 and later moved to Willard, MO where she resided until her passing. Nancy had many talents, but creative writing was what she enjoyed most. She had two poems published while she was still in high school. She was also a talented seamstress and made a lot of her own clothing. She enjoyed playing the piano and doing craft projects. Nancy was a loving mother, sister and aunt. She leaves behind one son, Eric Alan Zigler of Glendale, CA; three sisters, JoAnn Norton, Mansfield, TX; Carolyn Franklin, Willard, MO; Peggy Weaver, Rolla, MO; also three brothers, David King, Kenai, AK; Leland King, LaHabra, CA; Steven King, Lebanon, MO. Her remains were laid to rest beside her mother and father in the little New Hope cemetery near Lebanon, MO, next to the farm where her father grew up. Her brother-in-law, Joe Norton, and her uncle, Paul Nichols, were requested by Nancy to officiate at her Memorial Service.

MCDAVITT- Eugene McDavitt, 67, of Pleasant Hill, Missouri was born January 24, 1943 in Edwards, Missouri and passed away March 30, 2010. Eugene was a charter member of the Pleasant Hills congregation. I first met Eugene in 1975 in a meeting at the old 36th and Everett congregation in Kansas City, Kansas. He was always a quiet man who shied away from crowds and public notice. He loved the church and his family and was a rock solid member of the Pleasant Hills congregation. He was always the first person at the building and he loved good preaching. His brother Clayton said that in every one of his prayers at church he always said, "Lord, help us not to add to or take away from your word." Jonathan told David, "Thy seat will be empty." There is an empty seat in the church in Pleasant Hills, but the sweet memory of our good brother will always linger. I know I will miss him when I preach there and I will miss his words of encouragement. Eugene is survived by his wife of 44 years Linda, four sons Paul, Jason, Christopher and his wife Kelli, and Joseph; two granddaughters and an expected grandson; three brothers, Othello, Kenneth, and Clayton and one sister Tessie Henson. We buried Eugene on a beautiful day (just the kind of day he loved so much) with the expectant hope of a glad reunion in that land of fadeless day. -Jerry Dickinson

HICKEY - James A. Hickey, 68, gently passed from this life in his bed on the morning of May 11, 2010 in Mountain Home, AR. Dad was born in Alhambra, CA on February 15, 1942 to Herbert Winfield and Barbara Ann Hickey. He married Nellie Gaye Joy on June 20, 1964 in El Centro, CA. This forty-five year union was blessed with three sons and six grandchildren. Dad was preceded in death by his father and one brother, Stephen. He is survived by his wife, Nellie; his mother, Barbara Hickey (96), of Costa Mesa, CA; three sons, Brett, and his wife, Louise, of Mountain Home, AR, and their two children, Joey and Serena; Bart and his two children, Piper and Parker, of Lee's Summit, MO; Dennis, and his wife, Stephanie, and their two children, Breanna and Barrett, of Odessa, FL; a brother, Arthur, of Sacramento, CA; and a number of nieces and nephews. Dad began preaching in 1963 and preached full-time for twenty-five years working with congregations in TX, CA, OK, GA, MO, KS, WA, OR and Mexicali, Mexico. Dad continued to preach at every opportunity during his twenty-two year career of teaching High School Spanish, Art and English. Bud Hash led Dad to the truth when they worked together at the Southern Pacific railroad when Dad was 18. Dad obeyed the gospel under the preaching of Johnny Elmore at a meeting in Covina, CA. Dad pointed many lost souls to the truth and motivated many to remain faithful to the Lord's church. Dad's greatest work involved the establishment of three congregations in the Mexicali, Mexico area between 1973 and 1978. One of these congregations still exists today. Dad was the first preacher from the United States to preach in Central America. He rejoiced at how that work flourished through the diligent efforts of other preachers. Dad preached for years in English and Spanish on Worldwide Christian Radio out of Nashville. Dad encouraged many to become teachers and preachers in the Lord's church. I was his lengthiest project. He began working with me when I made my first talk at age fifteen and patiently encouraged me to preach when many others saw little to no potential in me. He continued to do so until the last Sunday he worshipped at Mountain Home. Brain damage after quadruple bypass heart surgery in 2007 produced a greatly diminished mental and physical state. We learned a few months ago that he had been misdiagnosed and overmedicated for three years. After spending a month in the hospital to lower some meds and eliminate others, Dad regained his ability to do what he enjoyed most - preach with power the glorious gospel. During this time he taught for us every other week until surgery on a blocked carotid artery stole the progress he had gained. A large crowd from several states, including several preachers, gathered to honor his memory and pay respects to the family. Speaking words of comfort and admonition at Dad's funeral was a great honor. One of Dad's favorite scriptures was Proverbs 28:1, "The righteous are as bold as a lion..." I'm thankful that we told each other how much we loved and appreciated each other. I look forward to that great reunion at the Resurrection. - Brett Hickey

Field Reports

Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, johnnyelmore@att.net, June 8th - Sally and I were at Houston, MO in a meeting May 23-30. Although we have held meetings there through the years, this meeting was like a trip down memory lane. The first work we engaged in as a couple was at Houston in 1955. So many memories flooded our souls as we stayed with Ervin and Mary Baker, our friends of long standing. We were thankful to have a number of visitors from Lebanon, Mountain Grove, Fieldstone, Ben Davis, and Springfield during the meeting. We had one baptism during the meeting. After two days at home, I held a meeting at McAlester, OK June 3-6. It was my good pleasure to stay with Randy and Cynthia Tidmore. I commend Randy for his outreach to several foreign countries where he has established congregations. We look forward to a singing here June 26, and the great meetings at Sulphur and Springfield. I also commend Kevin Presley for his wonderful work on the new songbook, Glory Echoes. It has an excellent collection of songs and is a very well-made book.

Paul O. Nichols, 14217 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com - I was saddened to hear of the passing of Clovis T. Cook, a brother in Christ, and long time fellow Christian and preacher of the Gospel. I regret that I was unable to attend the memorial service. At that time I was in California. If I had been at home, I surely would have made the effort to be there. I first met Clovis when I was just a young teenage Christian and he was in his twenties. It was through his influence and that of other young preachers that I made the decision that I wanted to dedicate my life to the preaching of Christ to the world, which has led to my contending for the faith for nearly 69 years. I am happy to report that I have recently had the opportunity to speak at Lebanon, MO, El Cajon and Bakersfield, Calif. I still work with the church at Stony Point, Kansas City and preach at least twice a month. I have had the privilege of hearing Billy Dickinson at Birmingham, AL, Allen Bailey at Kansas City and Kevin Fox at El Cajon. We are presently in a meeting at Stony Point with Bill Ferguson. He is doing a good job of forcefully declaring the Gospel. Please take note of my correct address. In the directory there is a mistake and many cards and letters have been returned to the senders. My best wishes to the brotherhood for a prosperous 2010 in the Lord's work.

P. Duane Permenter, 1705 Pecan Dr. Cleburne, TX, 76033, June 1-By the time you read this I will be

back in Zambia to finish the final year of my work in that part of our Lord's great vineyard. The Lord has been good to us. We praise Him for His kindness and blessings. It was our privilege to hear Alan Bonifay in a meeting at Frisco, Texas recently. He did a great job in presenting the truth. I have preached at Cleburne, Green Oaks in Arlington, McGregor, all in Texas and I thank the brethren for these opportunities. We were also privileged to spend a few days with Laurie's mother, Dee Boone and preach at Capitol Hill in Oklahoma City. It has been an honor to visit and see several preachers around as we have traveled and we are thankful for this. Melvin Blalock and I have done several things together including some studies and it has been good to be with Melvin and his family. We are currently making our home with our son and his wife at Cleburne, TX where we plan to live when moving back to the USA next year. It was a privilege to hear Brian Burns in a meeting at Mineral Wells, TX. He did a fine job and it was good to see him again. Laurie and I were able to recently visit with Wayne and Jean McKamie in their home and worship with them on a Wed. night. They are doing better and to God be the glory. I also preached at Fossil Creek, TX yesterday and it was a delight to spend the day together at the building. We ask you to pray for us in the Lord's work and God bless the brotherhood! Duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, June 14, email old_paths@juno.com Pat and I have just returned from an enjoyable meeting at LaGrange Ga. Crowds were very good and cooperation from surrounding congregations was excellent. Congregations from near and far came and helped out in the meeting. We also had a few visitors from the community, if I recall correctly. A number of preachers were present one or more nights as well. We appreciate Rick and Jane Martin who picked us up at the airport and took us down to LaGrange. Southern hospitality is alive and well. It was our pleasure to visit with Ronny Wade (who now lives there) until the last weekend when he left for a meeting in AR. We have held a number of meetings there in years gone by and always enjoyed being with those good brethren. Three made confessions of wrong and we give God the praise for that. We will soon be leaving for the 4th of July meeting at Springfield, MO and then on to Kentucky and Ohio for meetings. It is encouraging to see the increase in the number of subscriptions for the paper. Now that an on line edition of the paper is offered (also \$13 per year) several are taking advantage of that. Those who receive the printed version on paper are not affected by this. This is an added benefit for those who prefer

to read the paper on line. Brethren, keep up the good work and we pray much good can be done through our combined efforts. Pray for us in the work.

Darrell Crawford, 208 E Baldwin Rd unit S Panama City, Fl. 32405. bugz1955hotmail.com. June 3, 2010. Greetings to all the faithful in Christ Jesus. We have just returned from the annual Memorial bay meeting in Jacksonville, Fl. Jerry Dickinson conducted the meeting and did a wonderful job preaching. It had been a long time since we had heard him preach. I also had the opportunity to speak while there and am thankful to the brethren there for allowing me the privilege to speak. Phillip Prince labors with the Jacksonville cong. and is doing a great job there. We also had the chance to go to Dothan, Al. to hear Doug Hawkins preach. We have known him since he was just a boy. Dothan is doing a great job there as well, being a light in the community. The work here in Panama City is moving along, we are getting stronger as we continue to study with the brethren here. We are starting a newspaper article in June, Lord willing. We hope this will stir outside interest, leading to more studies and some new converts. With this and some door knocking, we pray that the church will grow numerically as well as spiritually. We are planning a meeting in August. The 12th-15th. A kind of a get acquainted meeting, some of the digressive brethren have said they will attend. Please pray for the work here, as well as everywhere. May we always hold steadfast to the faith and may the Lord bless His church everywhere. -Darrell Crawford Evangelist Church of Christ.

Brett Hickey, 8373 Highway 5 South, Mountain Home, AR, 72653, unityseeker@hotmail.com, LetTheBibleSpeak.com, (870)736-0774, June 10 - It is difficult to become accustomed to my father's passing, but the love and concern extended from so many across the country has helped ease the pain and see the positive amidst our loss. Mom is lonely, but realizes the Lord still has work for her to do. What a blessing to have a Christian father! Cullen Smith held an excellent weekend meeting for us at the end of April. A number of brethren helped with promoting the meeting door to door and the congregation reached out to friends and family. Twelve people from the community responded to our collective efforts. We're gearing up now for our meeting here with Ronny Wade. It's been a joy to witness some of the brethren growing spiritually and developing as leaders. We enjoyed the Ozark Memorial Day meeting. The young men did a commendable job and the generosity and hospitality of the Ozark brothers and sisters was unsurpassed. We anticipate another great Fourth of July meeting in Springfield. We look forward to being with the brethren at Allen, TX, June 18-27 and the brethren at Aurora, MO, July 18-25. We will hold meetings at Cleburne, TX, August 4-8, Chestnut Ridge, KY, August 11-15 and Lone Rock, AR, August 27-29. The Mission Hills brethren in Springfield, MO,

have graciously agreed to record more congregational singing for the TV program. Thanks to the willingness of the Mission Hills brethren to circulate tapes of the program airing out of Springfield, Let the Bible Speak is now airing in the following new markets since October: Dallas-Ft. Worth; Birmingham, AL; Little Rock, AR; Joplin, MO; Shreveport, LA/Texarkana; Paducah, KY; Cedar Rapids, IA and starting July 4th Sacramento, CA. With all the false doctrine flooding the media, it is gratifying to know that the truth and the Lord's church now has a greater presence in a dark world full of religious error. May the Lord bless the truth and may it find its way into good and honest hearts, here and abroad!

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, June 8- I was privileged to conduct the annual Spring meeting in Birmingham, AL, as brethren from near and far came to be with us. Several preachers were in attendance and the following states were represented: Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, Kansas, Missouri, Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Colorado. Paul Nichols probably traveled the greatest distance of any preacher who was with us, and his presence added a lot to the meeting. May I say right here that we all miss Wilma, who passed away back in January, and she was certainly a wonderful example of what a preacher's wife ought to be. She stood by Paul's side for some sixty years as he devoted himself to preaching the gospel here in the States and abroad. I enjoyed staying in the home of Steve and Angie Wallace, dear friends that Judy and I have known for many years. My next meeting took place over the Memorial Day weekend in Turlock, CA. This is also an annual meeting and their large building was filled to its capacity. There were several preachers in attendance, probably close to ten in number, including Kevin Presley and Clint DeFrance (who drove all the way from Missouri to attend). The singing was wonderful, as we utilized Kevin's newest song book, "Glory Echoes," and I was impressed with the numerous young people that showed such an interest in spiritual things. It was a delight to stay in the gracious home of Richard and Glenda DeGough. They have been friends for a long time and Richard has always been one of my favorite people to visit with. We are now getting ready for the big 4th of July meeting that will take place here in Springfield. Also, the rest of my schedule is as follows: July 14-18 at Mountain Grove, MO, Aug. 7-15 at Hoyte, TX, Sept. 17-19 at Frisco, TX, and Oct. 13-17 at Indianapolis, IN. I would like to end by saying that I was saddened by the recent deaths of Clovis Cook and Jim Hickey. Both men dedicated themselves to preaching the gospel for many years and, as Rev. 14:13 declares, "their works do follow them."

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THE BACK PAGE...

BACK TO THE BASICS

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

The key to success in any endeavor is to be able to master the basic fundamentals. The late Vince Lombardi, legendary football coach of the Green Bay Packers, began each season by assembling his players and reminding them of the fundamentals of the game. He believed that only after his players had mastered the fundamentals were they equipped to be victorious. If he saw his players developing poor techniques and missing assignments during a game, he would begin the next week's practice by reemphasizing fundamentals and he took nothing for granted. At one such meeting he scolded his players for their sloppy play and dramatized their need to get back to basics by holding up a ball and saying, "Gentlemen, this is a football." At that point wide receiver Max McGee spoke from the back of the locker room and said mockingly, "Slow down coach, you are going too fast." The unparalleled success of Lombardi's teams, however, proved he was correct about the importance of fundamentals.

What is true about the importance of fundamentals in athletics is true in any endeavor, including Christianity. We must master the fundamentals first if we expect to grow and mature properly as children of God (2 Pet. 1:5-7). If for any reason we get knocked off-course in our spiritual journey and abandon our roots, the first order of business is to revisit and reestablish the first principles (Heb. 5:12; Rev. 2:5).

The Civil War is the greatest crisis this country has ever faced and it dealt a staggering blow to the Lord's church. Men everywhere were affected by it. Churches in some places divided; others became discouraged and ceased to meet. The condition of the churches may be best seen in an 1862 report by J.W. McGarvey: "But a storm of human passion, seldom equaled in the history of our sinful world, is raging around us, and we have caught the infection. Many brethren have been swept into hopeless apostasy; the zeal of many has been chilled; distrust prevails among many who were once bosom friends; the evangelical labors of nearly all have been much reduced; churches languish; congregations dwindle..." (Earl West, **Search for the Ancient Order** Vol. 1, 328-329).

Moses Lard gives a similar report: "Predictions of ruin and of dissolution of churches were loud and common... General distrust seized upon the public heart, and even the warmest friends grew cold and shy. Many had no courage to meet (assemble); and where any met at all, it was rather to mourn over and discuss other matters than to worship God with a whole, single heart."

Lard warned that Satan would take advantage of the upheaval caused by the war to hatch heresies and introduce illicit practices into the church. Therefore, he concluded that their first response to the crisis should be to reemphasize the fundamentals of the gospel. He said, "The kind of preaching demanded at this time... should be preeminently and emphatically rudimental. The very seeds of truth and first lessons of the gospel are what we now need. Fill both mind and heart with these. If they salt not the soul and save it nothing else will" (**Lard's Quarterly** Vol. 1, 223-224).

The conditions described by McGarvey and Lard are reminiscent of the conditions described in the letter to the Hebrews. The letter was written at a time when the ages were colliding and when everything in society seemed to be shaking. It was written to Christians in the first Century, who because of persecution and their own spiritual immaturity, were contemplating abandoning Christianity and returning to Judaism. The apostle describes their pitiful, spiritually stunted condition and tells them what they must do in order to get back on track: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (5:12).

The expression "first principles" could mean the "letters of the alphabet." You learn your ABC's so that you might read words, sentences, books-in fact, anything in literature. You do not keep learning the basics, however. You use the basics to go on to better things. The Hebrews, however, had neglected God's Word to the extent that it was necessary for them to learn the ABC's of Christianity again.

There will always be immature Christians in the Lord's church. Some are immature because they are young in age. Others are immature because they have been newly converted, even though they may be mature in age. Still others are immature because, while they have been Christians for years, they have neglected the laws of spiritual growth and have become spiritual invalids.

These immature Christians are the ones most likely to abandon the faith when the church faces a crisis. When we see signs of immaturity in the church, therefore, we should get back to the basics quickly and establish the proper foundation from which these Christians can grow toward maturity successfully. carlmj@cableone.net