

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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NO. 7

“WHERE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FOUND”

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

1 Cor 1:30-31, But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

The church of Christ in Corinth was divided on many issues. It was made up of a few that considered themselves better educated and smarter than the other members of the body of Christ. Because of this arrogant attitude troubles arose among the church members. Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has begun to tear down these vaunted attitudes that were causing the divisions mentioned earlier in this context. He has shown that God made Christ our “wisdom” and therefore our only source of knowledge that has to do with salvation from our sins. This is the attitude a truly spiritually wise man will have and manifest if he is “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”, Ephesians 4:3. One 21st Century brother was heard to declare, “What we choose to do here in this congregation is our own business.” He would have fit real well in the first century church in Corinth. Some in Corinth would applaud his statement and their actions but not the Holy Spirit and the apostle Paul. One brother and his wife visited another congregation and were surprised to hear a sister say that their membership was better educated than others in the area. What could have been a blessing for the cause of Christ turned out to be a stumbling block akin to the same attitude in the church at Corinth and forgets the apostle Peter’s admonition in 1 Peter 2:17, “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.” It does require at least a little humility to heed the thoughts and obey the instructions found in this verse.

Paul now informs the Corinthians that God not only made Christ Jesus our wisdom but also our

“righteousness.” Of course Jesus was righteous and this is important for us to know, understand, and keep on remembering. In speaking of our redemption Peter wrote that we are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,” 1 Peter 1:19. In 1 Peter 2:22 the Holy Spirit had him write, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:”. Jesus did not die for his own sins but for our sins. This is one of the things that made his death on the cross efficacious. This righteousness of Jesus was his righteousness and his alone. If he had committed a single sin he could not have died in our place and for our sins. Thank God for the righteousness of his son “who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God”, Hebrews 9:14.

Thus God was able to make Christ Jesus our righteousness. But let us be clear about what this means to us today. Some are declaring and preaching that this means his righteousness is “transferred” to us. This is a long way from the truth. When you see or hear someone using the word “transferred” in this sense be especially careful. God has made Christ Jesus to be the source of our righteousness by his having the right and ability to pronounce or declare us to be righteous through our obedience to his plan for us so he could declare us righteous or free from our own personal sins. This is equivalent to our past sins being forgiven. Let us now study how this is taught in Romans 4:1-8 with reference to Abraham and David. Remember, as we study some of these verses that Abraham and David were already children of God, that is, they were already in covenant relationship with God. They both were active believers in all the senses the word “believers” stand for in reference to their God.

Rom 4:3, “For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” In this context a series of different English words are translated from the same Greek

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Editorial

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

By DON L. KING

In our troubled world there are so many matters of great concern to God’s people. Many are concerned that only a few are willing to hear the gospel, attend a meeting, or even accept the Bible as authoritative. Granted, these are matters of concern. We hear of the old days when great crowds came to hear the preaching of the gospel when a protracted meeting was in progress. However, take heart because many will still attend in other lands and places. Even in these United States, preachers often have large audiences and several baptisms still take place. Indeed it is sad when we encounter those who openly question that the scriptures are really the Word of God. Yet, many still accept it as the truth and will obey when they are confronted with the facts. No one denies that our world in many places is a shambles spiritually speaking, but many are still touched by the preaching of the gospel. Preaching in foreign fields is still a great experience, and those who obey the gospel often do so in large numbers.

It is of greater concern when members of long standing fail to attend their own meetings, and the crowds are largely made up of visitors from nearby congregations. Are we being discouraged by the conditions we see all around us? Yes, many are discouraged and one can understand that when such obvious sin is being accepted and even applauded by our government officials. Today our world considers fornication trivial and to be expected. Even adultery is almost “ho-hum” among many of the world. This is in spite of the many passages in God’s Word where such sin is roundly condemned.

As the apostle Paul ventured into the Gentile world to preach and establish congregations, he found this to be a real problem even among members of the church in Corinth. He wrote the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 5:1 “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife.” Yes, this had taken place among members of the church! Paul reminded them that the gentiles (speaking of the gentile world in general) did not sanction such behavior. He pointed out that the church there was “puffed up” (arrogant RSV). They were not even

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Would you please explain what it means to “lord it over God’s heritage” 1 Peter 5:3?

Answer: The KJV reads “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.” The NKJV says “nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being ensamples to the flock.” It seems evident from this verse that Elders, who guard and guide the flock do not have the right to domineer with an iron hand those whom they lead. Being lords, according to Thayer, means to “to hold in subjection, to be master of, exercise lordship over.” As one commentator put it, they are not to be “autocratic or bossy.” Instead of being “lords” over the church Peter says that they should be “ensamples to the flock.” That is they should set a proper example before the church by their own behavior. They become a pattern, by their conduct and demeanor for the entire church. They lead by a pattern of conduct, and show the congregation how to live, act, and behave. Since there are many churches among us that have no elders, how should those men who actively lead the church behave? Do they have the right be autocratic? Can the leadership of a congregation act in such a way as to transgress the above passage, just because they are not elders? Certainly not. If duly qualified and ordained elders have no right to domineer the church neither do men who lead the church in the absence of elders. A common complaint that I hear all the time is: “we don’t know what is going on here. No one ever tells us what plans the church has, we don’t know how much money is in the treasury, we don’t know how the money is being spent, we don’t know what transpires in business meetings, we are simply told nothing.” Any group of leaders guilty of the things just mentioned are not leaders at all, they

merely pose as such. Lording over the church is an abuse of power. Such abuses lead to mistrust, discouragement, rebellion, and often apostasy. Elders and or leaders need to remember that their position is designed to encourage, lead, and aid the church in being all God planned for it to be. I would encourage the elders or leaders of every church to take seriously their role in assisting the membership to be successful in living the Christian life. Following are a list of suggestions that will help avoid much of the conflict that arises over the disclosure of information between leaders and the church.

1. Make available in some way an accounting, each Lord’s day, of the money placed into the treasury from that days contribution. This could be done by writing it on the board or posting it at some convenient place in the building.
2. Make available to the church the amount of money spent each month and to whom the money was paid, by posting it in a place where members of the church can see and read it. I do not recommend that it be posted where outsiders i.e. non-members can read it.
3. When business meetings are held for the male members, make available the decisions that are reached and adopted so that the membership can be apprised of the work the church is planning and doing.
4. Secret meetings by a few where decisions are reached and then presented to the brethren as a group are counterproductive. It gives the appearance that “a few” are secretly trying to “lord something over the church,” a practice that leads to distrust and eventual trouble.

The Lord’s business is the most important business in the world. Unity in a congregation is essential, therefore, any practice or procedure that leads to mistrust and thereby creates dissension among the members must be avoided. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

AN HONEST CONFESSION

By JOHNNY ELMORE

In the biography of F. B. Srygley, entitled *The Warrior from Rock Creek*, there is an interesting statement and a revealing and honest confession. On page 282, the author, Earl Kimbrough, has this to say on the subject of Communion Cups. "The use of individual communion cups in the Lord's Supper began in the early years of Srygley's ministry. However, it was not until the early part of the twentieth century that the practice became common among churches of Christ. G. C. Brewer is generally credited with introducing it in churches of Christ in Tennessee. In 1910, he persuaded the Central church in Chattanooga to adopt individual cups. This was the first church of Christ in Tennessee to adopt the practice. Michael L. Wilson, writing about the church in Little Rock, Arkansas said: 'One of the most disruptive controversies in the early 1900s surrounded the "scriptural" number of containers to be used in the communion service. The issue was often labeled "the cups question." No problem was experienced among members of the church until the government declared that people drinking after one another from the same container could spread communicable diseases from which one might never recover. Until 1893, it was the common practice of churches to pass the same container to each communicant taking the Lord's Supper. After that time, heated discussions commenced that led to some division."

Continuing, Kimbrough states "Wilson's source was the *Christian Standard*, March 11, 1893. A writer who favored the use of one cup rhetorically called on the government to reveal the location of the graveyard 'where all those people are buried who have died from diseases communicated by the communion cup.' J. W. McGarvey was among those who believed that Jesus used only one container and bound that on the churches. He was not bothered by communicable diseases being passed on to the participants, saying, 'we shall be more likely to please him by doing what he did than by doing what he avoided.'" (Michael L. Wilson, *A History of the Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas*, 108, 109.)

I'd like to thank the authors for such an honest confession. They have admitted that individual cups were not used in churches of Christ until the

twentieth century. They admit that they were not introduced by Jesus or the apostles but by preachers such as G. C. Brewer. They also admit the reason individual cups were accepted is because "the government declared that people drinking after one another from the same container could spread communicable diseases from which one might never recover." The reason for individual cups is not because someone read the New Testament account of the communion and discovered something authorizing individual cups but it was what we have known all along. The sanitation issue is the main reason individual cups are used today--not the Scriptures.

Mark 14:23 still reads: "And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it."

GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR UNITY

By BARNEY OWENS

There are those who seek unity of believers in some superficial manner. This unity, so they contend, is to exist by agreeing to accept others without regard to doctrine, church organization, manner of worship, or type of life engaged in by Christians. The fallacy of this idea is readily apparent. God does nothing superficially, nor does He command His people to be superficial in unity-or anything else. We are not asked to devise or originate some type of unity according to our thinking or conception. He does not ask us to come forth with some "new" doctrine or worship then ask others to accept us in it, but, He wishes us to consult His word for the unity revealed and then to "keep the unity of the Spirit." In this series, we have consulted the fourth chapter of Ephesians as the "blueprint for unity." As with any blueprint, when followed the desired end of the designer of the blueprint is attained. Unity is given emphasis throughout the epistle to the Ephesians, but the blueprint is never stated clearer or more exact than here, therefore may I again point you to another portion of God's blueprint for unity.

THERE IS ONE BAPTISM

"There is one... baptism" (Eph. 4:4-5). When the Apostle wrote, "there is one baptism" the language is understood by all. I do wish to give emphasize to it somewhat especially for the benefit of those who are touchy about the subject. The language is both inclusive and exclusive. It includes but one baptism. Remember the commandment God gave

to Noah about the wood that was to be used in building the Ark? He told him, “make thee an ark of gopher wood.” (Gen. 6:14). Noah was required to use one wood-gopher. To use pine or oak was disobedience. The statement included gopher but at the same time excluded any other wood. There is one Lord and one God, and there is one baptism. To preach “no baptism” is to present a doctrine that is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ. To include “more than one baptism” is to proclaim something in addition to the doctrine of Christ. Keep this in mind because a comparison of other “baptisms” in action and in purpose will be considered later.

Bible students are aware that the New Testament mentions several baptisms. For example: the baptism “unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” (I Cor. 10:2). Then there is “the baptism of John” (Acts 18:25), the baptism “with the Holy Ghost” (Mt. 3:11), and the baptism “with fire” (Mt. 3:11). These fulfilled specific purposes either in time or in design. At the time the Ephesian letter was written these had either passed or pertained to another age. As far as a baptism authorized by Jesus Christ and accepted by God, Paul declares, “there is one baptism.” This “one baptism” applies alike to all and is to be obeyed by all in the same way and for the same purpose. Because men have advocated more than “one baptism” in the past, the unity of God’s people has been destroyed. To restore unity we must accept and teach “one baptism.”

The Christians at Ephesus knew about the baptism of the Holy Ghost which occurred with the Apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and there’s no doubt that they rejoiced upon recalling the wonderful event at the house of Cornelius confirming to Peter that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles as well as the Jew. In addition, they knew about the baptism John preached, since some of them had been immersed by his authority (Acts 19:1-4). Yet, Paul says, “there is one baptism.” The purpose of Holy Ghost baptism was forever done and needs no repetition. The baptism of John (Mt. 3:1-5), had run its course, however, the baptism authorized by Christ (Mt. 28:18-20), was to abide until the end of the world.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ONE BAPTISM

1. It is administered by the authority of Christ. When Jesus commissioned the disciples He had chosen He declared unto them, “All power (authority ASV) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go

ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Mt. 28:18-19). Although, it is apparent these men did not understand the extent of this commission, they did understand that they were to baptize those whom they taught. To the Jews Peter demanded that they submit to baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ” and, when Peter understood the extent of the commission was to include the Gentiles, he “commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” (Acts 2:38 10:48).

2. It is immersion in water. One example should suffice to show the necessity of being immersed in water. “As they went on their way, they came unto certain water: and the eunuch said, what doth hinder me to be baptized? (Acts 8:36). Reading this entire narrative beginning with verse thirty, there is not a single mention of baptism, yet it is the sinner (the man preached to,) that requested baptism. Why so? We are told that Phillip the preacher “preached unto him Jesus” (verse 35). It is impossible to preach Jesus without preaching the demands of Jesus that apply in a specific case. In this case, the great commission applied where Jesus had said, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mk. 16:16). This sinner understood and wished to be saved, therefore sought baptism. We then are informed, “they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. “Following that, “they were come up out of the water.” (Verses 38-39). Clearly water was involved, in addition, there was a going down into the water” by the administer and the one to be baptized. Then there was a “coming out of the water” by the both of them. Baptism took place after they went INTO THE WATER and BEFORE THEY CAME OUT OF THE WATER.

Furthermore, the word baptism itself addresses immersion. Baptism means, to dip, plunge, immerse. A proper translation of baptism is immersion. The word baptize is from the Greek word baptizo which the translators of the King James Version did not translate (it would have condemned King James who had been sprinkled,) so, rather than offend the King, or err in their translation they transliterated the word.

3. It is administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost Referring once more to the commission of Jesus to those whom He chose, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (Mt. 28:19). This is

the only thing that men have ever expressly been told to do in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. There are those who would argue that other things are to be done in the name of the Godhead. That is doubtless true. However, the fact remains that baptism is the only thing that men are expressly commanded to do in the name of these three.

There are those who assert that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are one in the same person. That is, that Jesus is the Father, and Jesus is the Son, and Jesus is the Holy Ghost, therefore when this commission was carried out by the Apostles they obeyed it by “baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38), in the name of the Lord (Acts 10:48), etc. This theory has been treated at other times in these passages, so, suffice it to say, to do a thing in the name of Jesus Christ, as Peter demanded on Pentecost, meant to baptize by Jesus’ authority. And, when we baptize by Jesus’ authority that means we do what He said to do! And, what Jesus said to do is to baptize those taught in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. If we baptize in any other way, we are not recognizing the authority of Jesus Christ the Lord.

4. Those desiring salvation should be baptized immediately. In every case of conversion the subjects of baptism were baptized as soon as possible. The Scriptures either state such expressly or infer it in the context. I shall notice two cases only. First, in the case spoken of above regarding Philip and the eunuch, it is apparent. The chariot they were riding in was stopped immediately and the baptism took place. Philip did not ask the candidate to wait until a congregation of believers voted to see if he was worthy of being received as a member of the church. He had “preached unto him Jesus,” therefore the qualification he was asked to meet was “if thou believest thou with all thine heart thou mayest. “ Upon making the confession by stating, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,” Philip baptized him in the water they came to. (Read Acts 8:35-39). Since baptism is to “wash away sin” (Acts 22:16), no wonder there was no delaying the ordinance.

The second case is found in Acts 16, when the Jailer of Philippi “believed on the Lord Jesus Christ was baptized immediately-the same hour of the night. Many preachers point to this man as an example of conversion to Christ, asserting that he was saved before and without baptism. But, the case proves too much for them. If baptism means

so little, it must be asked, “why give attention to it immediately?” Again, “are preachers authorized to baptize a candidate without taking him before a church and hearing the testimony of his conversion to decide whether he is worthy of becoming a member of the church and is a proper subject to be baptized. The case just does not fit modern practice (particularly of the Baptist Church). He was baptized without delay because baptism is essential to salvation (Mk. 16:16).

5. Baptism puts one into Christ “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” When one is “baptized into Christ” all things become new (II Cor. 5:17). There is freedom from the condemnation of those who walk after the flesh (Rom. 8:1-2). It means that one is added to the one body of Christ, which is the church (I Cor. 12:13, Col. 1:24). One then is in possession of all spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3). Those in Christ have been redeemed and enjoy the forgiveness of their past sins (Eph. 1:7). In Christ equality is enjoyed in the same body through the promises of the Gospel (Eph. 3:6). They who are in Christ are able to “grow up” in Him (Eph. 4:15). Only those who have been baptized are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven and are subjects to the King of kings, Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:5). When Christ returns we who are in Christ will appear in glory with Him (Col. 3:3-4). While these are only a sampling of the wonderful blessings “in Christ,” we must remember it is baptism puts us into Christ.

6. It is “one” baptism meaning it is never to be repeated There are some commandments men have been given that are to be obeyed daily (telling the truth), there are others that are to be observed periodically (eating the Lord’s Supper), and there are others that we comply with one time and that seals it forever (baptism). That being said, since baptism puts one into Christ, is the point at which one is added to the church, and where a new life begins as one comes forth from a burial in water to serve God through Jesus Christ, it seems that all would understand it is an act that never needs repeating. However, in these times there are some making attempts at stretching baptism far beyond the use God has placed upon it. A case in point: I was asked a short time ago, if it is right for a person who had been scripturally baptized to be baptized a second time? Inquiring further of the matter, I was told that a man had been baptized, then left the faithful, divorced his wife, married another, (and if I am not mistaken) divorced her and married a third time, then came and requested to be baptized again

to have his sins washed away. It takes one word to answer that inquiry-NO! Such a baptism serves to get the baptized and the baptizer wet and nothing more. The very idea of such a thing is akin to Moses striking the rock twice in the wilderness to obtain water. He was told to strike the rock once. Jesus Christ was offered once. Men are to be baptized once. There is one baptism.

BAPTISM IS THE ONE ACT OR ACTION THAT SEPARATES FROM THE WORLD

The disciples were told to “teach all nations, baptizing them,” or, “preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mt. 28:19 & Mk. 16:15-16). The same act is to be obeyed to obtain the end result-salvation for any and all. There are not various types or forms of baptism. The same action secures the benefits desire by everyone. One cannot be saved one way and someone else another way. There is no respect of persons with God or with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

PAUL, THE APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST

By MICHAEL BOLTON

He is arguably the greatest New Testament man outside of Jesus Christ. His influence still greatly impacts us today. Paul, or Saul as he is first introduced to us was very close to the same age as our Lord. It was according to most scholars while in his 34th-35th year that Saul was on the road to Damascus with authority to imprison believers that he was converted from Judaism. However, it could not have been more than a few weeks at most after the dispersion mentioned in Acts 8.2 “And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions...”. This man’s work was really just beginning. Paul is known from this point forward for his great travels to spread the gospel. Three times Paul left Jerusalem with the express purpose to preach the good news. During the remainder of his life Paul wrote extensively, a total of fourteen letters to the churches in which he by inspiration recorded the doctrine of the church.

Though he was “one born out of due time”(1 Cor. 15.8) Paul was clearly an apostle. He referred to himself at least 17 times as an apostle. And in 1 Cor. 9.1 says, “Am I not an apostle?” He makes no pretence to hide the fact of his apostleship. This idea conveys that he was an envoy, or messenger of God. But Paul, claims that he is more than just a “message-bearer”. Paul’s constant and particular use of the Greek term which has been often translated as “Apostle” indicates that he was a legal representative of God. In other words, Paul had the authority because of his office as - Apostle to set forth law for the church. Many today call the Apostle names that are unfavorable at best and really just wrong. Paul’s writings should not be scoffed and ridiculed. He wrote law for the church in this New Testament time.

Paul has often been unfairly charged with teaching some strange doctrines. For instance, Paul did not teach that there is a second class gender! In fact Paul taught very clearly the opposite! He said, Gal 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” There are at least twenty other specific references to equality of men and women of all races and social standing before Christ. He taught clearly that all who believed on Jesus as the Son of God had the power, or privilege to obey the gospel and be saved. He too has often been unfairly charged with teaching that there is nothing a man has to do to be saved, but believe. Yet Paul teaches baptism frequently. While immersion is a work of righteousness, it is nevertheless a work that man must do to become a Christian. Beginning with his own life Paul preached and practiced baptism everywhere.

He also taught other doctrines. He taught men how to behave in the house of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3.15) His teaching on the church is unparalleled. He masterfully combined doctrines on church government and practice and Christian living often in the same chapter see 1 Cor. 11. His parting charge to Timothy to “keep this commandment” (1 Tim 6.14) should be ever in our mind as a solemn responsibility.

“DO I HAVE TO?”

BY JOEY HICKEY

I am sure if you are a parent you have heard the words “do I have to.” We are all aware that certain tasks have to be done and they have to be done in certain ways. There are rules that have to be followed.

When it comes to religion some people think they do not have to follow the rules. They believe grace covers all. In this article Joey Hickey shows us that grace does not give one an excuse to not follow the rules.

Do I Have To?

“You’re free! Free from the law. Jesus died so you wouldn’t have to worry about rules. Love is important... Law is not... therefore you don’t have to worry about it.”

This is the message the religious world regurgitates to its followers. After all, “his yoke is easy and his burden is light,” right? But there are requirements that even Jesus asked of those who would follow them. The statement implies, though they may not be heavy or difficult, there is a yoke and there is a burden, there are obligations. Yet there’s still a pull towards a shallow freedom that states, “You don’t have to.” They go to Galatians and sum up their interpretation by quoting Galatians 5:4, “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” Another verse I’ve heard in defense of this viewpoint is Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Both of these scriptures, when taken out of context, pose a serious threat to the idea that there are “rules” that need to be followed. However, when put under scrutiny, they don’t stand. What is Galatians 5, or Galatians as a whole, talking about, and what is the “bondage” that Paul is saying they are free from? If we read the context, binding circumcision, Jewish holy days, and animal sacrifices, from which they had been freed.

Let’s go back to Galatians 5:1, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” ... What yoke of bondage? The Old Law, which could not give remission of sins.

Galatians 5:2-4, “Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”

It’s abundantly clear that the law mentioned above is the Old Testament Law. Jesus certainly isn’t condoning discipleship without “rules.” How do I know that?

John 14:15- “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

John 15:14 - You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

Matthew 7:13-14 “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Matthew 7:22-23 “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Matthew 5:20- For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

I’m no scholar, but I think these verses are sufficient enough to prove there are expectations Jesus has of his disciples. We show our love for God and our faith in God by doing what he said with overwhelming gratitude to the one who gave us the chance to obey him instead of watching us suffer the eternal punishment... that, frankly, we deserve.

Why would he say we are bound to obey him or imply that the way to Heaven is difficult and that few find it?

How could Paul dedicate his letters to young evangelists, Timothy and Titus, primarily to the importance of obedience, sound morals, and “sound doctrine?”

Paul had to write two letters to Corinth, correcting their spiritual problems, and those two letters take up a huge chunk of the New Testament... Why all of

this if we don't "have to" worry about every detail of every command? It seems like a waste of breath for Paul to spend that much time correcting things that would not matter.

The fundamental problem in this mindset is the attitude behind the statement, "you don't have to." Since when did obeying God become such a burden? I have to take out the trash and do laundry... but serving the God who sent his Son to die for my sins? I get to do that! I don't have to honor him or obey him, because he gave me the choice of making him my master (Matthew 6:24, Romans 6:16).

If you chose to submit to Jesus and have your sins washed away in baptism, to wear the name "Christian," you signed a contract-signed with the blood he shed to save us. We owe Him our lives; shouldn't we want to obey him?



WHERE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS . . . continued from page one

words. They are: impute; reckoned; counted; and in Galatians 3:6, accounted. All these from the same Greek word, except the case or tense of the verb might be different. It means God accepted Abraham's faith as a child of God, and put down to his account that Abraham's sins were forgiven and now he was righteous in his relationship with God. The same could be said of David in vv 6-8. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Since Christ Jesus is the source of our righteousness when, through grace, we accept his plan for forgiveness and obey the gospel we then stand guiltless before God, free from sin. Righteousness is ours because Christ Jesus is our source of righteousness and, therefore, when he declared us righteous, he was simply exercising his right to do this. His righteousness was not transferred to us. All he had to do, upon our obedience, was to speak the word and we became a new creation when we first obeyed the gospel, and remain in good relationship with him by confessing our sins properly as a child of God. 1 John 1:9 declares, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In this way we retain our right standing with God.

Some at Corinth did not understand the difference between an alien sinner obeying the gospel plan of salvation and an erring child of God again having righteousness imputed to him. Brethren do not err in your teaching on this subject. I have heard of some who have begun to believe and teach that God forgives the alien sinner of his past sins when he believes. Thus they have joined themselves to denominationalism and are endangering the souls of those who hear and obey such teaching. Brethren do not follow after those who err from the truth. -OPA



WHERE ARE WE NOWcontinued from page two

saddened at such egregious behavior. There are many more places we could cite but this will suffice to show how bad the gentile nations were. Paul went on to tell them in verses 9-11 that while they might not be able to control what happened in the world around them, they were not to "company" with those of the church who were guilty of fornication. It is also going on all around us today, brethren. If it is not preached against, warned of, it will certainly invade the saints today. What about where you worship? Do you hear about such sins? You might because it is a pervasive problem among the world and rears its ugly head among our own from time to time. What our young people see on television and certainly the movies, absolutely glorifies this sin. Women wear as little as they can legally get by with in our world and sexual wrong doing of every kind is pretty common now.

Homosexuality has exploded in this world as something to be accepted and tolerated as normal behavior. Not long ago a celebrated sports figure came out in the open with his lover and affectionately hugged and kissed on television before millions of "moral" people, many of which then congratulated them for their behavior. Think of all the young people, some of whom are members of the church, who saw this portrayed as a wonderful thing. Frankly, we were amazed that the event was the lead story on many news programs, newspapers, and was mentioned several days in a row. It was about as shocking an event as most of us will ever witness. This behavior is called, "uncleanness" (Romans 1:24) "vile affections," Romans 1:26, and in the same verse as an act "against nature." The apostle went on to say that those who engage in such things have a "reprobate mind." (Romans 1:28)

What are we to learn from all of the things mentioned above? Simply that we live in a wicked world, just as the apostle Paul and others did in New Testament times. Did those men of old fold their tents and quit preaching? Not at all, they hit it with all they had. We must do the same, not only with sexual immorality but sin in general. The Lord's church must be protected and prepared to battle against all forms of wrong. We must not be ashamed to stand up against sin, and it has to be called what it is and exposed for the danger it presents to the church. No, it won't be popular and even some members may complain but the job must be done. We must keep in mind that this behavior is not likely to go away now that it has been accepted by so many, and the words of Paul to Timothy ring in our ears just now: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. (2 Timothy 3:12, 13) - Think on these things. DLK

Our Departed

BARRETT - Lenard Doyle Barrett was the eldest of seven children, born to JW Barrett and Mae McDaniel Barrett at Lenna, Oklahoma on September 9th, 1922 and passed from this life at Klamath Falls, Oregon on May 7th, 2014 at the age of 91 years, and approximately 8 months. Doyle went to grade school at Lenna, and attended high school at Stidham Oklahoma. He also attended one year of mechanic school at Okmulgee, OK. At the age of 18 he worked in the CC camp in Grand Junction, Colorado. In his early years he worked as a farm worker and a mechanic, but most of his professional life was spent as a trapper for the US Fish and Wildlife Service/Animal Damage Control. He retired on February 7th, 1982 after 30 years of trapping. Doyle was 21 years old when he married Mildred Smith on Sept. 20th, 1943 and they lived as one in Christ for 70+ years. Doyle is survived by his wife Mildred, and all six of his children - Jeanne Lee, Gary Barrett, Anita Thall, Dona Nelson, Kate Kenton, and Stanley Barrett, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren. When Doyle was 17 He confessed Jesus and was baptized into Christ. Doyle was a kind and gentle man, dedicated to the Lord. He and Mildred have been a blessing to the congregations they have been members of: chiefly

- Arvin CA, Sonora, CA and Houston MO. A grave-side service was held at Mt. Laki Cemetery, just outside of Klamath Falls, Oregon, with the wind howling around us, and pushing the cold into us. Because of our confidence in the resurrection, we sorrowed not as others, who have no hope. -Delmer Lee

WILSON, - Charlene Wilson was born December 13, 1935 at Fox, OK to W.H. and Opal Smith Ogletree, and departed this life May 7, 2014 at the Wilson Nursing Center. She was baptized into Christ at the age of twelve and was a faithful member of the East Lincoln Street Church of Christ in Healdton, OK. She was married to Billy Gene Wilson October 8, 1955, and was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and friend. Charlene was preceded in death by her son Roger Dale Wilson; parents Henry and Opal Ogletree; brother Gerald Ogletree. Charlene is survived by her devoted husband Bill Wilson of Healdton, Ok.; son Billy Wilson Jr. and wife Pam of Lorena, Texas; daughter Donna Sue Householder of Farmerville, Louisiana; daughter in law Judy Wilson of Healdton; grandchildren Lana Nissen and husband Jonathan; Cassie Hykel and husband Jeremy; Grant, Lexi, Austin and Candice Wilson; Olivia Post and husband Luke; Audrey Smith and husband Deron; Lara Medlock, Cole Householder; Jared Wilson and wife Janene; Wade Wilson and wife Kourtney; great grandchildren Sydney and Abree Post, Alexis and Madilyn Wilson; sisters Bobbie Sue Kilcrease and Paulene Hawkins; nieces, nephews and beloved friends. I count it an honor to be asked to speak at her funeral May 10, 2014 at Healdton, where a great and sorrowing crowd paid their last respects. May God bless the family in their loss. -- Johnny Elmore

Field Reports

Darrell Crawford 208 E Baldwin Rd. Unit S. Panama City, Fl 32405 Bugz1955@hotmail.com 405-473-6407. June 10, 2014- We are feeling so blessed by the Father here in Panama City these days. The love and support shown to us by our brethren both near and far is overwhelming. We have been here now four and a half years; we have had some setbacks and some growth as well. We are seeing more and more growth each day and we thank God for it all, because without His blessings

this would never have happened. Recently, in the last eight months, we have had 5 from digression take their stand with the truth, two men and three women. We are studying with more and have the possibility of at least two more very soon. We are also studying with a woman from the Church of God in Christ taking the Bible correspondence course. This woman seems very interested in studying the Bible with us. We have been studying with several from other digressive congregations as well as one or two preachers. We just finished a five day meeting with Brother Clint DeFrance, of Wichita Falls, Texas. He did an outstanding job of preaching the gospel message in its simplicity. He brought along our nephew, Kyle Hammonds from the Dallas, Tx. Area. We had anywhere from twenty-two to fifty in attendance each night. Several came night after night from southern Alabama. We are indebted to these brethren for their support. In all, over twenty different congregations were represented. We certainly appreciate all the support we received in this meeting. We are considering another Tent meeting next fall if the Lord wills. We have been blessed recently as well by donations from several sister congregations so that we can do some long needed maintenance on the building. Word can never express our thanks to these congregations. We are also continuing with the Friday fest booth the first Friday of each month. We are giving away bibles, tracts, DVD's and correspondence courses each month. We continue to make contact with those from the community here. Please continue to pray for the work here that our Lord will bless it and us with wisdom in doing His work here. May we all stand for the Old Paths and may the Lord bless His church everywhere.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, June 15, e-mail old_paths@juno.com We closed a good meeting this evening at Planz Rd, Bakersfield. Crowds were very good with several visitors from the community as well as from other groups not of our fellowship. Also, several from other congregations out of the area attended. There were no visible results but from all appearances good was accomplished. Pat and I really enjoyed being there and their hospitality was outstanding. We stayed with Darrell and Gail Brewer, old friends, and were treated royally. Brother Frank Brancato works with Planz Road and has done some good work. About 250 doors were knocked by Frank and

Ryan Terwilliger and that speaks of their energy for the Lord's work. The church there is at peace and works well together. If the Lord wills, we are to preach at the Yuba City congregation this next Lord's Day and then it will soon be time to attend the 4th of July meeting at Springfield, MO. May the Lord bless the work everywhere.

Bob Johnson 431 W. Wintergreen Rd. Apt.31104 DeSoto, TX 75115 (972) 741-1163 bobusj@gmail.com Please note my new address above, effective July 5th. Though I am ending my labors with the church here in Lexington, KY, the few brethren remaining have remained most faithful and I am confident will continue to do so after I am gone. They hope to eventually find a better location for the church to meet. My first year of labor here began with working with a young brother who has dedicated his life to the preaching of the gospel. Brother Zac Evans is an aspiring young preacher in the Lord's kingdom and I enjoyed working with him during his first year of labors here. He is currently working with the Walnut Grove congregation outside of Somerset, KY. My new location will be within short driving distance of the Lord's church in Duncanville, I look forward to meeting with the brethren there. I hope to be of assistance in the Lord's work as needed whether locally or otherwise. Though the Lord's kingdom is not growing by leaps and bounds, we know that our labors are "not in vain in the Lord." (Cor. 15:58)



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THE BACK PAGE...

NOT A HOOF LEFT BEHIND

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Mark Twain says that early in his life he moved to a mining town in Colorado. The town was wide open with brothels and bars on every corner. Twain says, "I immediately recognized it was no place for a Christian-so I decided not to be one." Many people have imitated Twain's response. When they find it hard to be a Christian, they either quit trying to be one or they compromise their convictions.

Jesus directs some of His harshest words toward the sin of compromise embodied in the doctrines of Balaam and the Nicolaitans in the church at Pergamos (Rev. 2:12-17). Both doctrines were efforts to adjust Christianity to the level of the world rather than lift the world to the level of Christianity. They taught the people to go along in order to get along, in short, to compromise. However, Jesus says he "hates" the doctrine (2:15), and the Scriptures warn us repeatedly against it (2 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:2; 2 Tim. 2:19).

Pharaoh's dealing with Moses is a classic example of how the devil uses compromise to thwart God's children from reaching the Promised Land (Ex. 8:25-10:26). At God's orders, Moses and Aaron demand that Pharaoh release every family and tribe of Israel out of Egypt. Pharaoh does not wish to grant any part of their request, but sees he is going to have to yield to some extent. He feels, however, that he can save his dignity and protect his own interests by yielding less than what is demanded. On four occasions, he offers to compromise.

First, God specifically requires all of the Israelites to be separated from Egypt by a 3-day journey. Pharaoh counters by saying the Israelites may worship Jehovah, but they must stay within the confines of Egypt to do it (8:25). The spirit of this offer reminds me of a compromise offered by a large cups-and-classes congregation to a small one-cup church in the same city a few years ago. The preacher from the large church said, "If you will come and join us in our building and be a part of our congregation, we'll put one loaf and one cup on the end of the communion table just for you."

In Pharaoh's second attempt at compromise he tells Moses they can leave Egypt, but they cannot go too far (8:28). He will let them go as the cat lets the mouse go, just so far but no farther-not out of his reach. The offer may have sounded good to Moses. They would at least be separate from the Egyptians. Moses rejects the offer, however, because it is not what God commands.

After Moses rejects the first and second offers, Pharaoh sees he has no alternative but to release the Israelites beyond his reach. He devises a third compromise, however, by which he thinks he can draw them back. He tells Moses the people can leave Egypt, but they must leave the women and children behind (10:8-11). Pharaoh knows that if the men go into the wilderness for 3 full days they will soon return to their wives, children, and slavery in Egypt. Moses refuses the compromise and demands everyone must go. Male, female, old, and young must be set free.

The fourth offer by Pharaoh is the craftiest of all. He says the people of Israel may leave Egypt, but they must leave their flocks and herds of cattle behind. God has not made specific mention of the animals to Moses and they are not descendants of Israel, but a nomadic people cannot subsist for many weeks scarcely for many days without its flocks and herds. The Israelites would have been starved into surrender. Furthermore, they cannot leave Egypt empty-handed; without the means for worship. The flocks and herds will be needed to make sacrifices to Jehovah. Even though God does not mention them specifically, Moses necessarily infers the livestock must be kept as part of God's plan. He rejects Pharaoh's offer by declaring, "Our livestock also shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind" (10:26).

Pharaoh is enraged by Moses' refusal to compromise even "one hoof" (10:27-28). Pharaoh's response is typical of evil men when they are unable to overcome the convictions of good men by compromise. They usually throw off the mask of friendliness and show their true colors.

May God give us the wisdom to learn from Moses' example! He teaches us to suspect, to doubt, and to examine carefully every proposed compromise in religion. Obviously, compromise is permissible in matters of liberty or indifference (Rom. 14). In matters of faith, however, compromise is absolutely unacceptable. We cannot surrender anything divinely ordered or instituted for the sake of some supposed convenience or expedience. It can never really be right to give up willingly the smallest fragment of revealed truth, or to allow the infraction of the least of God's commandments (Lk. 16:10). Therefore, as Satan pressures us relentlessly to compromise, remember the spirit of Moses that says, "Not a hoof shall be left behind." cmjthebackpage@gmail.com