

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. 5

REJECTION

By *BARNEY OWENS*

“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Mt. 7:21-23)

And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.” (Mt. 24:30, 41, 46).

Whether or not we consider the context of Jesus words all these passages show one thing that none can doubt-some of these people (maybe the majority) were rejected. Rejection is one of quandary of words that a definition eludes us because it is not understanding the meaning that forms our difficulty, it is the emotion attracted to the word that haunts us. Some of those mentioned by the Lord made a profession of seeking His companionship and had a measure of faith but wanted acceptance on their own terms. Others engaged in a variety of works that no doubt were charitable and praiseworthy and in the doing of them they did not wish acclaim for themselves but attached the name of the Lord to them. However, since the one possessing authority to act had not prescribed such actions, they were lacking, as the rejection of the Lord was clear, decisive and direct. The haunting words were “I never knew you.” They were not rejected after these things were practiced and they strayed from the Lord, but they

were rejected in the very doing of them. Rejection? Absolutely-”depart from me!” Rejection by Christ has a destiny that is undesirable. It is a place of total darkness yet burning with fire that issues a pain that does not end. The populace of that place is most despicable containing the Devil himself as well as his messengers. Almost beyond our imagination is a place where there is not even the flicker of anyone with an inkling of good. Therefore we are left with but one fate: to weep and gnash our teeth. Think seriously about such a place and you can see the power of rejection. Is that a place you wish to go? As difficult as it is to live the life of a Christian sometimes, it is a far better choice than to choose the way that means rejection by the one who has provided the way of salvation.

Few people have escaped rejection. How we deal with it often defines who we are. The lives of many young children and adolescents have been ruined by rejection from parents, grandparents, siblings, school officials, friends and Christians. It is not only found among people of the world, it all too often is prevalent in the body of Christ as well. Some who make an extensive effort to attend one of the “area” Gospel Meetings find themselves strangers in an unknown and unanticipated climate, where various “cliques” operate, so leave vowing to never return.

REJECTION CAN BE THE RESULT OF A CHOICE
“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure’s of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” (Heb. 11:24-26). Moses is set before us as an example of a man that intentionally rejected the better things this world had to offer for the worse. Instead of the pleasantries that would had been heaped upon

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PUBLISHER

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

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

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

EDITORIAL STAFF

Billy Dickinson
 Jerry Dickinson
 Johnny Elmore

Greg Gay
 Carl Johnson
 Kevin Presley

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE WEBSITE:

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

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Editorial

WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION

By DON L. KING

In Romans chapter one, verses 28-32, Paul writes of people who are very wicked. He points out that the problem began with them not being able to “retain” God in their knowledge. Other translations use such words as “acknowledge,” etc. In other words, those who refuse to acknowledge God in their minds or obey His Holy Will are surely headed for destruction. Such folks would likely be guilty of the sins he mentions: “unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debater (quarreling or wrangling) deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:...” etc.

With only a casual reading one can see that these sins and attitudes are an incredible description of the world in which we live today. Notice the phrase “Without natural affection,” in verse 31. One commentator says that these nations were without the affections that should exist on account of the ties of nature; there was no proper affection between parents and children. Paul’s charge against them is abundantly proved by the heathen writers of those days. The word Paul used for “affection” in this verse means “hard hearted towards kindred,” etc. according to the Lexicons I checked. Is this a description of our own times? Without a doubt it is.

In the second letter to Timothy, Paul began chapter three by warning that perilous times would come “in the last days.” Note: “For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy.” Then, in verse 3 we read: “Without natural affection...” By the way, the word used in 2 Timothy 3:3 for “affection” is the same as used in Romans 1:31. In other words, brethren, we can expect to see more and more people who are hard hearted towards kindred as judgment

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QUERIST COLUMN

BY CLINT DEFRANCE

Is it right to allow a young, unbaptized boy to lead a song in the assembly?

Response: The assembly of the congregation (sometimes called “the worship service”) is a “holy place” in the New Testament dispensation. Both Paul and Peter inform that the assembly is “the temple of God” (1 Corinthians 3.16), “the house of God” (1 Timothy 3.15), and “a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2.19-22) - a “spiritual house” in which Christians function as priests, offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2.4-5). This description reminds us of the sacredness of the assembly, and the importance of attending to its services with reverence and careful obedience. Making decisions about the assembly based merely on what is convenient, cute, entertaining, or satisfying to our own preferences and wisdom is utterly inappropriate.

The role of leading congregational action in the assembly (singing, prayer, officiating at the Lord’s table, helping pass the emblems, etc.) is a concept derived from necessary inference. For example, Paul instructs: “let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Corinthians 14.40). This is a fundamental rule for the Christian assembly, and while there is some liberty within it, it demands some kind of organization and structure. In congregations where song leaders are selected for the worship, those leaders are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that all things are “done decently and in order” regarding that action. In the opinion of this writer, many congregations are far too flippant and lax in their selection of leaders in the worship. Often ability is ignored and these functions are used politically or for some other less than spiritual reason. Most congregations could use a serious and thoughtful reform on this matter. We should give diligent care to ensure that in all things - including the arrangement of our services - we are respecting the demands of God and doing our best to ensure that His arrangement is followed.

Regarding using a non-member or a little child to lead in the assembly: this demonstrates a gross irreverence

or misunderstanding of the assembly’s purpose and nature. Noting the above scriptures which describe the assembly of the Church as the temple - only priests were permitted to serve in the temple, and only those who have been “washed in the blood” of Christ are priests today (Revelation 1.5-6). It would not likely be a sin on the part of the little one or the nonmember, but it would certainly be a case of grave irreverence on the part of the one who permitted or facilitated the arrangement.

Send all questions to Clint DeFrance, 2121 S. Columbia Ave, Suite LL2, Tulsa, OK 74114

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

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David Griffin

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

THE SUPERIOR NEW COVENANT

By MELVIN BLALOCK

Why would anyone want to live under the old covenant which has become obsolete? We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "In that He says, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away," Heb. 8:13. There is ample evidence that the old covenant, which entailed the Law of Moses, ended at the cross. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," Col. 2:14. It was no doubt called the handwriting of ordinances, because it was written on two tables of stone by the finger of God. Burton Coffman in his commentary wrote, "The moral precepts of the Law of Moses are called the Chirograph, or handwriting of ordinances, because the most essential of these precepts were written by the hand of God on two tables of stone; and the rest Moses was directed to write in a book." This law, figuratively speaking was nailed to the cross with Christ, bringing it to an end.

The law could declare a man guilty, but it was insufficient to bring forgiveness of sins and justification before God. The inspired Apostle Paul wrote, "Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. 3:20. Animal sacrifices were offered under the law, over and over again to atone for man's sins, but they were insufficient within themselves to procure lasting forgiveness and justification. They instead, pointed forward to the perfect sacrifice which was Jesus. It was the duty of the high priest to enter the holy place once a year to offer a blood atonement for his own sins and the sins of the people, and this was to be kept up until the time of reformation which would come through Jesus and his sacrifice at the cross, Heb. 9:7-10. Under the new covenant, Jesus offered His own blood to procure our forgiveness. "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. The blood of Jesus not only brought eternal redemption for us under the new covenant, but it flowed back from the cross to cover the faithful men and women who lived under the old covenant. We read in Heb. 9:15, "And for this reason He is the Mediator of

the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." Simply put, His blood covered them, bringing the promise of an eternal inheritance. We read further in Heb. 11:39-40, "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." For those who lived under the old covenant, the Messiah was yet to come. He would bring perfection to them by accomplishing what the animal sacrifices could not accomplish. It is noteworthy that we read in the Hebrew Epistle concerning Jesus, "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises," Heb. 8:6. We should be very thankful to be God's new covenant people. Those who look to the former dispensation and the Mosaic Law for their justification today are in religious error. The Apostle Paul wrote the Galatian Christians, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace," Gal. 5:4.

GIVING THANKS AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

It is apparent to many throughout the brotherhood that something needs to be said, and teaching needs to be done with regards to appropriate thanksgiving at the table when we observe the Lord's Supper. After all, Jesus our Lord set the example, and He said, "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

New converts are bound to be confused when they hear thanksgiving offered in so many different and inconsistent ways, and often inappropriately. And most of the time the mistakes go uncorrected, and so the same mistakes are made over and over again. Most new converts receive no instruction, either from the pulpit or in private, concerning this matter before they are called on to wait on the table. So it is no wonder mistakes are made and the thanksgiving is sometimes not worded scripturally correct.

Until the elements in the Communion are sanctified by the Lord, they are just unleavened bread and grape juice and a drinking vessel. Even our daily food is "sanctified

by the word of God and prayer” (1 Tim. 4:4, 5). When Jesus instituted the Communion, the scriptures tell us He blessed the elements. Then He declared. “This is my body”, “this is my blood” and “this cup is the New Testament in (ratified by) my blood” (Luke 22:20). Jesus was not telling His disciples that the bread literally became His body, or that the fruit of the vine was His literal blood, or that the cup literally became the New Testament. They were symbolic. The word “is” is a “copula of symbolic representation”. These elements became symbols of what they represented. (Yes, they are symbols of what they represent, not literally the body and blood of Christ.) They became significant by divine arrangement and purpose. They are sanctified by the the Lord. If we fail to observe the communion with this understanding, we eat and drink damnation to ourselves, “not discerning the Lord’s body” and are “guilty of the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:27,29). This is serious business, and every new convert needs to be properly taught so that he understands how to commune correctly.

When our Lord gave His apostles the Communion, He set the example for them and for us, and He said “This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:20). Jesus “took bread and gave thanks” (Luke 22:19). I have actually witnessed occasions when brethren serving at the table failed to offer thanks. And others whose thanks were inappropriate. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians and said, “the cup of blessing which we bless” (1 Cor. 10:16). This is fundamental. To follow the example of Jesus we give thanks. For what? For the elements that comprise the Lord’s Supper. The next thing in order is to ask the Lord to “bless or sanctify” the bread; to “bless or sanctify” the “cup of blessing” (1 Cor. 10:16). When we do this, the bread symbolically becomes the body of Christ and the cup and its contents become “the cup of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:27).

Our thanksgiving is directed to God in the name of Jesus (Col. 1 :3). But I have heard more than once, a brother waiting on the table thank God for shedding His blood for us. God did not die for us -- Jesus did. It was Jesus who died on the cross and that is where He shed His blood for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:27).

When waiting on the table of the Lord it is appropriate to thank God (1) “for the bread which to us is the communion of the body of Christ” (2) ask the Lord to “bless (or sanctify) it for its intended purpose”. There is

no reason to try to embellish the prayer nor to lengthen it unnecessarily. It is not a time for a long prayer or a flowery speech, or the exercise of a large vocabulary. When one offers thanks for the cup, he may say, for example, (1) “We thank Thee for this cup of blessing which is to us the communion of blood of Christ” and (2) ask the Lord “to sanctify it for its intended purpose” (language which is scriptural and covers both the container and its contents). The word “sanctify” means “to consecrate, make holy”. And once it is consecrated or made holy, that is sufficient. We then must partake in remembrance of the supreme sacrifice of Jesus. We must be sure to follow the example of Jesus and to use language that is scriptural, and we must have the right attitude when partaking of the Lord’s Supper, or we eat and drink damnation to our souls.

Think about it!

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10).

“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 15:6).

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him he selected the suffering with its accompanying affections in order to walk in the faith of God’s word. Did he not know that the result of his choice would bring these things upon him? Had all his affection for the daughter of Pharaoh dissipated? Was the lavish life style he had come to know have no meaning at all to him? The choice Moses made surely was not as simple and easy as we often make it out to be. As a pilgrim in Midian did his heart never recall all that he had given up? Remember he “chose to be rejected” by Pharaoh his adopted grandfather, his daughter, and all those of Pharaoh’s house. The Egyptian who had once bowed in his presence now despised him. The only consolation he had was that he pleased God in his choice. But, even then he had little way of knowing whether God would deliver His people or him! He surely had no conception of the blessings that would come his way. **THE CHOICE HAD BEEN MADE** and as it turned out it was by far

the better choice. Rejection brought redemption from Egypt, Rejection brought rejoicing, and rejection brought the hope of a better land.

THE SAME CHOICE IS BEFORE ALL OF US
TODAY— WE MUST MAKE IT WITH ITS
ACCOMPANING REJECTION

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” (MT. 10:34-39). While we sing the praises of Moses and those like him who forsook all to obey God, we often fail to realize that the same principle is to be found in us. Rejecting our family is perhaps the most severe task that the Lord lays before anyone. It is difficult to reject the one who brought us into the world, the one who cared for us when we could not care for ourselves. Far be it for any of us to be called upon to reject the one who brought us up in life and taught us the principles of living. Yet it is these very ones that must be rejected for Christ. The taking of our cross in this context does not refer to helping the Lord with the burden of broadcasting the gospel. It is His reference to a personal cross, a cross that is peculiar to the circumstance. A cross bespeaks of determining the path, road, or way that one is to travel. Standing at the cross (cross-way) means that a decision is to be made—must be made. A decision so necessary that once made there can be no turning back. The decision to reject family and follow Christ or to reject Christ and enjoy the bosom attraction of family is a decision (cross) that some will not grapple with, yet it cannot be avoided. A failure to reject family for Jesus is a demonstration that one is unworthy of Christ. We do not have to wait for the judgment day to know this.

When Jesus said “he that taketh not his cross” He is giving emphasis to the burden of one bearing his cross. It is not a matter to be lightly taken, it is not something that goes away quickly, it is not a decision that is to be made in haste because the burden of one’s peculiar cross spoken of in this context is there throughout life. Every time a family occurrence arises the cross is apparent.

At funerals, at birthday parties and other occasions that would be joyous bring in its place tears and anguish. It seeps through our thoughts with the rising of the sun and the appearance of the moon. The man who does not reject his family for Christ may “save his life” alright enough, that is to say he will enjoy the companionship and joy of family relationships, but in so doing he will at the same time “lose his life,” meaning the eternal possession of eternal life will be severed as the Lord will not say, “well done thou good and faithful servant” rather His words will be “depart from me you worker of iniquity, I never knew you. That is a rejection no human being wants.

SOMETIMES A CONGREGATION MUST
REJECT A MEMBER

In First Corinthians chapter five the Apostle Paul chides the brethren for their failure to take action toward two of the members within that congregation who engaged in a type of fornication that was not “even named among the Gentiles” (V. 1-2). He surely does not mean that such was unbeknown among the Gentiles, but that they would not tolerate such. And he points out that he does not need to see this fornication (know every gory detail.) to pass judgment (V3). They must be rejected! His implication is that those present should not find themselves in any difficulty making a proper judgement. By the authority of Christ action was demanded meaning rejection (V 4). Because of the deeds prompted by the desire of the flesh, the fornication was to be stopped and a consideration of salvation of the spirit must be brought to the forefront (V 5). Without delay the sinners were to be rejected removing them from fellowship of the church that the church would be purified like was practiced at the Passover once observed by the children of Israel. When leaven was removed from their houses it was a symbolic gesture that sin would not be accepted and tolerated by the church of the Lord Jesus Christ as Christ Himself is our purifying agent. The toleration of sin within the church is a rejection of the sacrifice of Christ—it nullifies His sacrifice for sin (V 7). Some might think we do a lot of good, so we can tolerate some evil—not so. Others contend we worship correctly therefore the action of some of the members is of little consequence—wrong. But the elders or leaders have decided that this sin is all right—no way. Oh, the private lives of the members is just that, private—a sad mistake. Paul would say to these and other ideas to suggest we don’t have to obey the Lord in such things, “Your glorying is not good. Know

ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (V 6). If the Lord commands us to reject sin personal or collective the choice is removed. The problem is such that some members of certain congregation have the mind-set that the application of the commandment of Christ will do more harm than good, Faulty thinking brought to a church. Rejection is required. Fact is if the evil within a church is not rejected the Lord will reject the entire congregation. When the Lord walked among the churches of Asia He demanded that the evil in a congregation be rejected. For example, in Ephesus, which had done a lot of good but left their first love and had fallen they needed to repent and do the first works else their candlestick would be removed-rejected. In Pergamos they worked under the most difficult of situations but had some that held the doctrine of Balaam and others who caused some to sacrifice unto idols and to commit fornication. In addition some of them held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans a thing the Lord hates. They too were called upon to repent lest Jesus come upon them with the sword of His mouth-rejected. At Thyatira they housed a place for that evil prophetess Jezebel who caused His servant to commit fornication and sacrifice unto idols, whose children He would kill with death unless they repent-rejected. The Lord does not take lightly a congregation that trifles with His word.

A HERETICK IS TO BE REJECTED

"A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (Titus 3: 10-11). There is nothing foremost in the desire of our Lord than unity of believers actuated by following His word. Yet there are (and always have been) some who are given to destroying that union by promoting themselves or some particular ideas they may have which exalts them among the people. Such are called hereticks. They are intent on creating schism or a party spirit in the church. These are not always open splits or divisions in the body, however they often lead to that condition. "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. " (I Cor. 11:19). Heresies are brought about by someone and that someone although at first may not be obvious is a heretick. Paul says this man is "condemned of himself which does not mean that the man's own conscience condemns him, as such a person has more often than not a "seared conscience." It means that viewing his action it is clear that he "condemns himself." Before rejection justice is tempered with

mercy and he is to be admonished. More than that he is to be provided the courtesy of a second admonition after which there is nothing left but rejection. Why are we so slow to learn and practice this? Personally I know of a brother who was in the lead (to say the least,) in a schism in a congregation that led, to division. Going to another church he was readily received, where trouble again began to brew. He left that church went elsewhere and was received (we cannot judge you know). This was repeated again, again, again, again and again and he presently is enjoying discord in a church. Souls as a result have been scattered along the way. If Paul's admonition had been followed these precious one's might have been saved. A lesson taught plainly in scripture is rejection of a sinner. —OPA

Life Lines

"The fool hath SAID IN HIS HEART "there in no God."

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draws nearer. More and more we can expect to hear of harsh and brutal treatment of family members in the news.

Several years ago, the nation was shocked when a mother in South Carolina drove her car off into a lake with her two precious little boys strapped into their car seats in the back seat. She watched as the car flipped over and sank, knowing her babies were struggling and drowning. How could she have done this? The story was that she and her husband were divorcing and her new boyfriend didn't want the children around! Her solution was to simply kill them. Is this an isolated case? Not really. Records show that children are being killed in increasing numbers by mothers and fathers now. Several accounts could be given, but we all know this is going on. Of course, millions of unborn infants are being killed legally by a medical society gone awry from their pledge to save lives. Now, it is also in the news that some doctors are willing to allow a child who has survived an abortion somehow to be killed after a live birth. Yes, Paul's teaching was spot on.

In view of these sad, but true stories it is astonishing to see brethren who seem to be unconcerned about their souls. Are we living in the last days? Of course, we don't know when the Lord will come again, but we ought to know that now is certainly not the time to be weak and

worldly. Now is not the time to be more like the world than we have ever been. ~ the time to be strong, faithful and more spiritually minded than ever before. It is a worrisome thing to see church members unconcerned about their attendance at services. Some are even unconcerned during a gospel meeting. Think about it. The local congregation spends a great deal of the Lord's money to have a meeting and then some contentedly sit at home or take their vacations away from home and the preaching of the gospel. Are we concerned? We should be. Think on these things. DLK

GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

By RICK MARTIN

Imagine if you will that all progress in the United States stopped in 1875. There would be no automobiles, no skyscrapers, no antibiotics, no computers, no refrigerators, no electricity, as well as a host of other things.

Now, ask yourself: What if all my spiritual progress stopped years ago? That would be a very sad thing. We must realize and know that God requires growth and progress in our life for Christ.

The growing Christian seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, Matt 6:33. His chief interest is expressing the reality of the Gospel in every circumstance.

The growing Christian takes his faith to everwidening circles. Salvation is not just for him, but for all men. His circle of interest involves his family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances. He is concerned about them and looks for opportunities to share his faith with them.

In this article, I want to give three guidelines for living the Christian life.

The first guideline is involvement. As Christians there are at least three areas of involvement that we need to maintain:

1) The first area, of course, is with God and Jesus Christ. Our first involvement resulted in our salvation. If we are to maintain a close relationship with our Lord, we must think about Him when we make our plans and we

must pray for His strength and guidance. This is the most important area of involvement in our lives.

The relationship of Christians to Jesus Christ is described in a variety of ways in the Bible: Christians are described as members in Christ body; Rom.12:5. Everyone knows that each member of the human body has a function that is peculiar to itself. All are essential, so you can't say one is superior to the other. Christians are described as citizens of the kingdom; Col. 1:13-14. Christians have been translated by God out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. They have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

2) Another area of involvement is with other Christians. Involvement with each other is known as fellowship. We are to have fellowship with our brethren; Acts 2:42-45.

The word fellowship denotes having things in common, participation, friendship. Christians have the same hope of heaven, the same joy, the same hatred of sin and the same enemies to deal with.

The early Christians shared their burdens and sorrows with each other. This helped hold them together in times of great need. It was always sincere and from the heart. It added to their sense of unity and harmony. Early Christian fellowship was a beautiful and wonderful thing. We need to be involved with fellow Christians because God commands it and the church needs it; Rom. 12:9. We are not just to pretend we love one another. We are to love each other with brotherly affection and take delight in honoring each other.

The devil's strategy for our time is really working. He has fooled us into believing that we really should not be concerned with each other.

There is no doubt that we need each other. If the church is going to do what it is supposed to be doing, we must be working together. To get rid of division we are to be involved with one another. We must assist each other as servants and friends just like the human body comes to the aid of injured parts. In God's family there is no such thing as completely independent members.

We live in a world that is preoccupied, indifferent, and isolated. This is not so with the church. We must care about each other and be interested in each other.

3) Our third area of involvement is with non-Christians. As followers of Jesus Christ we must be involved in telling others about Jesus Christ. Jesus did not just seek out the religious people of His day. We should not let opportunities to tell others about Jesus pass us by. We must be interested in the salvation of others.

So we see that one of the guidelines of Christian living is involvement; involvement with God, Jesus, fellow Christians, and non-Christians.

Our second guideline for Christian living is prayer. Although Jesus' disciples saw Him work many miracles during His time on earth, the Bible only records one instance in which they asked the Lord to explain His power. LK. 11:1 "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." These disciples must have seen that somehow prayer was the invisible source of Jesus' ministry.

The core of genuine prayer is seeking and submitting to the will of God in every circumstance. As we see that was the primary concern of Jesus...not as I will, but as thou wilt. Often time prayer is seen as a last resort; an escape hatch if all else fails. There are times when we turn to everything else but prayer. We need to realize that prayer is not a spiritual crutch. Prayer is the most effective problem solver we can use. God wants us to lean on Him. Prayer is His divine provision. How foolish to ignore God's helping hand.

We all have problems in our lives and prayer is capable of helping us solve those problems. God possesses inexhaustible wisdom. We must realize that whatever difficulty we may face, God is able. Prayer is a guideline to Christian living and, without it; our lives will not be what they ought to be.

The third guideline to Christian living is surrender. In our society the word surrender has a negative connotation. We respect and cheer champions who never surrender.

What if we were asked to surrender to someone who longed to bless and reward us? What if that person desired our welfare and was interested in our highest and best good? What if our submission brought us to someone who would lavish all His riches and provisions upon us? In such a case surrender would be very

practical and appealing and to resist would be foolish.

This is the way it is when Jesus asks for the surrendered wills and hearts of men. He is our rescuer, not our captor. Our bended knees and souls are acts of trust and liberation, not weakness.

Is there a point at which you have refused to surrender to the Lordship of Christ? If you are rebelling, you are fighting His love and that is foolish. To surrender everything to Christ is victory and power. When a person gives in to Christ they will never regret it.

We must remember that Jesus Christ is no figurehead and surrender to Him is a necessity. He is a monarch in full sense of the term. He is "King of all the earth" Psa. 47:4. He is the head of the body which forms His church. He has complete and absolute control. He is seated at the right hand of God and has all authority and power. His will must be submitted to and obeyed. Everyone must surrender to Him. Matt. 16:24 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." This means that a person must surrender his will, his affections, his body, and his soul. A person who surrenders to Jesus does not seek his own happiness as his supreme object.

The apostle Paul was an encouraging example of what surrender is all about. Surrender was the only thing that was important to the apostle Paul and that is the way it must be with us. Surrender is one of the guidelines to Christian living. We must be willing to give up everything for Jesus.

In this article I have given you three guidelines for Christian living. They are involvement, prayer, and surrender. There are surely many other things I could mention, but if we will follow through on these three we will be much better followers of Christ.

Rick Martin
teachermartin@gmail.com



The story is told of a man who rushed into a suburban railway station one morning and breathlessly asked the ticket agent: "When does the 8:01 train leave?" "At 8:01," was the answer. "Well," the man replied, "it's 7:59 by my watch, 7:57 by the town clock, and 8:04 by the station clock. Which am I to go by?" "You can go by any clock you wish," said the ticket agent, "but you can't go on the 8:01 train, for it has already left!"

God's time is moving forward hour by hour, minute by minute. There are multitudes who think they can live by any schedule they choose and that, in their own time, they can turn to God. BUT HIS TIME IS THE RIGHT TIME! It may be later than our schedules show. Soon it will be too late for all who are unsaved!

The apostle Paul would remind us, "Behold now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).

Our Departed

WALDEN - Billy H. Walden was born July 4, 1936 in Many, LA to Coda and Leola Walden. He passed away January 25, 2019 at the age of 82. Billy was a faithful member of Midway Church of Christ in Shreveport, LA. He became a Christian more than 60 years ago and never faltered in his faithfulness. He was preceded in death by his parents and two brothers. He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved wife of 62 years, Jean Walden; one son, Keith Walden (Linda); two daughters, Tammy Prince (Phillip) and Debbie Baker; one brother, Jerry Walden (Mary); six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. Billy Walden was my closest friend for 60 years. He was closer to me than my own brother in the flesh. Life is not the same without him. Billy was a quiet man but a very influential man. He never missed an opportunity to speak up for his Lord. His son-in-law Phillip Prince and I conducted the funeral. The house was full of his friends and fellow Christians. Even the Mayor of Bossier City took time to honor him with his presence. Oh, how we miss him! — Wayne Fussell

Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old_paths@juno.com, April 11. Carl Johnson is in Livermore holding our Spring meeting at this time.

Crowds are good and he is doing a fine job. We are always happy to have Carl and his good wife among us. We have been friends for many years and it is good to be with him again. The church here is doing well and peace continues for which we give the Lord our thanks. We are happy to report that we are hearing good things from brethren about the paper and they enjoy the field reports. Brethren, let's keep it up. Lord bless the work everywhere.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, April 11. Phyllis and I are in Livermore, California at the moment. We have known these brethren for many years and it is a pleasure to get to spend some time with Don and Patsy King and the good folks here. We recently conducted a short meeting in Midland, Texas. We stayed with longtime friends Art and Nan Oestmann and enjoyed the stay immensely. We had a large number of visitors from the community and other congregations. On Lord's Day a group of about a dozen women from a drug rehab facility attended services. They were an excellent audience and heard the Gospel preached. We had several preachers in attendance, including longtime friend C.A. Smith, Kevin Fox, Juan Rodriguez III, and Bryan Morrison. Our next meeting is in Mountain Home, Arkansas (April 24-28). We then go to Hillcrest, MS (June 2-9), Pleasant View [Springfield], MO (June 16-23), San Angelo, TX (July 14-21), Napoleon, AL (Aug. 4-11), Shawnee, KS (Sept. 6-8), Blue Springs, KY (Sept. 18-22), Kansas City, MO (Oct. 9-13), and Weatherford, TX (Oct. 25-27). Frank Brancato is scheduled to conduct our spring meeting in Ada (May 5-12). May God continue to bless us all as we strive to glorify Him.

Wayne Fussell, 6126 Land O' Trees, Shreveport, LA, wfussell1@comcast.net. All is well in Shreveport. We are gearing up for a great meeting with Bob Loudermilk this month. Bob's theme is "When Heaven Invades Earth" (Six Transformative Lessons from the Book of Acts). My next meetings are Texarkana (May 3-5), Lewisville, TX (May 24-26), and Red Oak, TX (July 17-21). I thank God that He allows me the privilege to preach His Word. God bless you all.

Herman Cola, Palawan, Philippines, April 10. Greetings in the Name of Jesus. We pray all are well in the USA. The work of the Lord on Palawan is still going on by the help of Almighty God. On March 16 we had a one day study with several other congregations in Bonobono, Bataraza. It was an enjoyable day. The preachers all attended with their families. Last Lord's Day my Wife and I went to Puerto Princessa just to meet and be with

the brethren there. If it is the Lord's will, we will also go to Roxas to visit brethren there. We have received our support and are grateful. God bless us all.

Kevin Presley, 108 Mulberry Court, Dothan, AL 36303, April 4, 2019. The year is off to a busy and encouraging start with fruitful meetings in Lodi, CA; Blue Springs, KY; Huntington, WV; Wichita Falls, TX; West Monroe, LA; and Montreal, MO. It seems the meetings thus far have been well attended with interest and enthusiasm. In Wichita Falls, a young man obeyed the gospel and a young husband and father was restored to the Lord in West Monroe. I have enjoyed each congregation immensely. The television work has reached a new level of interest since the first of the year. Numerous studies have been initiated through the program and some have either been baptized or left unscriptural worship behind. There is a strong possibility a new work could begin in a country where there are presently no churches that worship scripturally. I will report more if this continues to develop as we believe it will. Lord willing, I am scheduled to be in Paris, TX and Hillcrest, MS this month and then the annual Homecoming Meeting in Napoleon, AL held, as usual, the first two Sundays of May. It is always a highlight of the year for me. Pray for us as we travel and as we labor to spread the gospel via mass media. God bless the brotherhood in all good things.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, March 25. At this writing my meeting at Neosho, MO is about a week away. Scheduled for April 3-7, I am looking forward to being with them, especially since it has been a while that I've held a meeting for them. This is a strong area for the church where several congregations are nearby, so I'm excited about the prospect of preaching to large crowds each service. Also, it will be great to visit with old friends and family while there. My next meeting is at Harrodsburg, IN on the dates of June 5-9, the first congregation I worked with back in 1971 (at the age of 19), and this meeting coincides with their 150th year as an established congregation. Built in 1869, with the brick for the building fired on the spot, their stately church house still stands today. What a walk down memory lane this meeting will be for me! I plan to stay in the "little house" that is right behind their place of worship, the same house that many of us young preachers once called home, and I know that some "precious memories" will flood my soul (as the old hymn puts it). It's impressive to think of how many of our preachers, all of them while young and just getting started, lived in the little community of Harrodsburg. Consider the following list

I've compiled: Clovis Cook, Wayne McKamie, Jerry Cutter, Roy Lee Criswell, Richard Nichols, Miles King, Joe Norton, Dennis Smith, Jerry Harris, Johnny Fisher, Brian Burns, Daniel Smith, Billy Dickinson and perhaps others I've overlooked. Just by reading the names of these men, some who are now deceased, it brings up happy memories of days gone by. Everyone is invited, both near and far, to attend this meeting which should be a nostalgic experience for many of us. We hope to see you! On a personal note, I was saddened to hear of Barney Owens' death. He was a great preacher and will be missed throughout the brotherhood. We send our love and condolences to the family.

Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189. Greetings to all. The church in Marietta continues to have good response, across the Atlanta viewing area, from the Let the Bible Speak TV program, hosted by Kevin Presley. We hope and pray that through this effort people will be able to hear the Gospel and respond to it. We have good crowds at our Sunday service, however as is the case with most congregations, mid-week service is a different story. There are several causes for this; some live a long distance, some must work, and some don't want to come. The 2019-2020 directory, Where the Saints Assemble, is now ready. If you would like to order some, you can send your order to my email address teachermartin@gmail.com. or my home address. The price is \$5.00 plus shipping. I will send an invoice in the package and include the shipping price. I recently preached at Napoleon, AL and here at home. I have meetings in the summer, but I will save the dates on those for a later report.

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 14352, Springfield, MO. 65814. We just closed a good meeting at Pleasant Grove church near Brazil, IN. Crowds were large with visitors from the community and brethren attending from several surrounding congregations. Three were baptized. It was good to see brother Walter Hunter who was recovering from knee surgery and also brother Nathan Battey from Indianapolis and brother Brian Burns who drove over from Goshen, OH for a couple of days. The Lord willing we go next to Houston, MO April 17-21, Joplin, MO May 1-5 and Fossil Creek in Ft. Worth, Texas May 15-19. Blessings to all the brethren.

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WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE...

JUDAS (NOT ISCARIOT)

By JERRY DICKINSON

“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words, and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me. (John 14:19-24).

There were two Apostles with the name Judas. One, of course, was the infamous traitor, Judas Iscariot. However, there was another man named Judas who was also an Apostle. In some of the gospels he is called by his other name Thaddeus, which was probably a nickname, but John refers to him by his given name, Judas. The problem is that by the time John wrote his gospel (most scholars believe John’s gospel was written long after the other three) everyone knew the sordid story of Judas Iscariot and so John is careful to note that this Judas was a different man. John declares it was Judas (not Iscariot) who asked Jesus a question during our Lord’s final discourse with His Apostles on the night of His betrayal. I wonder how many times Judas had introduced himself to people, saw the look of dismay on their faces, and then quickly added, “I am the Apostle Judas, but not Judas Iscariot!

Have you ever met anyone today named Judas? Neither have I! Have you ever met a woman named Jezebel? I doubt you ever will. Some names have been forever ruined because of a man or woman who disgraced themselves and the name they wore. My parents always told me, “Remember, you are a Dickinson. Don’t ruin that name by doing something shameful and disgraceful.” How awful it would be to have to tell someone, “Yes, I am a Dickinson, but not that Dickinson you have heard of!” Let us strive to live so that we do not besmirch our good name.

We know virtually nothing about this Judas except that he was an Apostle and he had a brother named James who was also an Apostle. So there were two Apostles named James and two named Judas. Thankfully, John in his gospel at least mentions some of the lesser known Apostles. John gives us a few vignettes about Thomas, Philip, and Andrew which the other gospel writers omit. In this instance he informs us that Judas asked Jesus a very important question. Jesus tells the Apostles that after His resurrection they are going to know Him better than ever before. He is going to reveal himself to them, but not to the world. “Why are you going to manifest yourself to us and not the world?” is the question of Judas. Jesus answers that only those who love Him can truly know Him. He further explains that those who love Him keep his commandments and honor His word. Jesus is manifest to those who keep his commandments, John writes in his Epistle, “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep his commandments. He who says I know Him and does not keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” (I John 2:3,4)

A few years ago I was in a meeting and a man showed up who was at one time a faithful preacher, but has left the faith and attends a megachurch of some sort today. I had not seen him in many years and inquired where he was going to church. He handed me a card with a website on it and told me that the website would prove helpful to me. “I used to believe like you Jerry,” he told me, “That there is a pattern and only one way to worship, but I have been set free. I know Jesus better than I have ever known Him!” I stepped closer and put my hand on his shoulder and said, “You don’t know Jesus! You know who Jesus is, but to know Jesus means to keep His commandments. John declared that we know we know Him because we keep His commandments.” My retort shook him up and I could see he was taken aback. “I know Him better than ever,” he repeated. “No,” I continued, “You don’t know Jesus and you don’t love Him! Jesus said if you love me keep my commandments. You are not following the Lord’s commandments in doctrine or worship. The proof is in obedience. You can say you love Him and know Him, but Jesus said if you do not keep His word you do not really know Him!” I could tell he was shaken and he made a hasty exit. John bluntly declared that if I say I know Him and do not keep his word I am a liar. There is no wiggle room! To know Him is to obey him.

I wish we had more information about the life and ministry of this Judas, as well as many of the other Apostles. According to tradition Judas preached in Persia and Armenia and eventually was martyred along with all the Apostles with the exception of John. How awesome it will be to meet and talk with the more prominent Apostles Peter, John, and Paul someday in heaven, but I think I want to meet the other Apostles too and hear their stories and adventures in carrying the gospel to the whole world. I think I especially want to sit down for a while and talk to the Apostle Judas. His story will be one worth hearing no doubt. In John’s vision in Revelation he saw the names of the twelve Apostles written on the wall of city. (Revelation 21:14) How marvelous indeed! I want to see that wall and read those names someday. Don’t you? One of the names that will appear there will be the name - Judas (not Iscariot)!