

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. 10

HOW GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO MAN

By *TERRY STUDDARD*

In the 19th chapter of the book of I Kings there is an interesting event that takes place in the life of Elijah, considered by many to be the greatest of the Old Testament prophets. In the previous chapter, Elijah has finished a work of about three and one half years, the purpose of which was to demonstrate to the erring Israelites who the Great God of the universe is. At the beginning of this work he had prayed that Jehovah withhold rain from the land except upon his request. We have no record or expectation that Elijah had at any time asked for any reprieve for the nation during that time and the result was that the land was parched from the drought. The end of this ordeal came when Elijah summoned the Israelites unto Mount Carmel where God made one of the most dramatic demonstrations of His power ever recorded in the Book. On that day, four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of the groves made a sacrifice and called upon their gods to consume it with fire from morning until well into evening to no avail. Then, Elijah called upon Jehovah to consume the offering he had prepared and drenched with water which He at once did thus showing that He and He alone was God Almighty. In the end, Elijah commanded the Israelites to slay the idolatrous prophets and summoned rain to once again return.

We would expect with God’s undeniable demonstration of His control over the elements of the universe, His confidence in Elijah, and the accomplishment of turning the hearts of the people back to God, this would be one of the greatest days in the life of this noble prophet. However, quite the opposite is true. When Elijah learns that Jezebel

has sworn to have him slain for his actions, we find him under a juniper tree asking God to end his life. I don’t know whether it was because of Elijah’s age, because he was tired, or perhaps because he realized then as now that there is really no time of complete peace when employed in the army of the Lord, but without doubt, he is in a state of spiritual crisis.

Rather than grant Elijah’s request Jehovah sends him on a forty day and night trek to Mount Horeb. According to the account, Elijah fasted during his entire journey. God certainly could have transported him to his destination or sent him somewhere closer, but He then as now required this man to do his part. Mount Horeb was also called the Mount of God and it is the place where long before, God had come as close to showing Himself to man as is ever recorded in the Bible. In that mountain Jehovah allowed Moses to view His “back parts” while shielded in a cleft of a rock. It may be that Elijah thought about that event on his journey and perhaps hoped to be allowed to see something of that nature himself. It may also be that God used this forty days and nights to prepare Elijah physically, emotionally, and spiritually for the lesson He had in store.

When Elijah reached Mount Horeb, he retired to a cave in the mountain. God visited Elijah there and first questioned him and listened to him explain his troubles. Then God did a most amazing thing.

I Kings 19:11-12: 11 And He said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but

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Editorial

HERE & THERE

By: DON L. KING

All of us are aware we live in a very immoral time today. Unspeakable crimes are committed by both men and women. Little innocent children simply disappear and their parents may never know what happened. Acts once accepted as undisputed sin are now becoming more and more common. Sometimes well-intentioned brethren say, "When will it stop?" Paul indicated it would only become worse. In 2 Timothy 3:12, 13 he wrote: "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." This truth is universal. The persecution may take different forms in different ages and countries, but we may expect to have difficulties when we stand up for what is right. It has ever been the same. In addition, we may expect to see sin grow worse as time goes by. There is no Bible indication that sin will grow weaker as long as this old world continues. In Ephesians 6: 12 the apostle said "For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret." In verse 16 Paul said, "Redeeming the time for the days are evil."

IMMORALITY ON THE RISE

A recent newspaper article proclaims: "For women under 30, most births occur outside of marriage." Yes, I know this speaks mainly of women who are not members of the Lord's church. It once was almost never heard of among Christians, but now we do hear of it occasionally. Brethren, this should never be considered as normal behavior. It may indeed be a sign of the times in which we live today, but it is still shameful nonetheless. When this happens it is the result of sinful behavior. The apostle wrote in Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." The Lord has designed marriage so that the sin of fornication or adultery may be avoided. In 1 Corinthians 7:2 the apostle said, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." Brethren, this still

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: In what ways could one be guilty of the sins of “foolish talking” and “jesting” as found in Ephesians 5:4?

Answer: The passage in question reads as follows “Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.” A person of filthy moral character is generally guilty of filthy conversation. Such language involves smutty stories, foolish jesting, and empty nonsense. Dummelow said, the reference to jesting was about such sins as were just mentioned by the Apostle. That is fornication, moral uncleanness, and covetousness. McKnight rendered jesting as “double meanings,” or “artfully turned discourse,” which he declared to be “chaste expressions which convey lewd meanings.” In verse 2 of this chapter Paul declares that the lifestyle of the Christian is to reflect the character of God’s call and purpose for our lives. In Romans 6:20-21 he said “For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.” The affirmation here is that we change the way we live when we become obedient to the truth. We are different not only in the way we live, but in the way we talk as well. Our language as His people should be free from coarseness, silly talk (pointless talk), and sacrilegious or flippant speech. With these definitions in mind, I would suggest that a person is in violation of this passage when his/her language includes that which is obscene, indecent, and morally nasty. Foolish talking is that which fails to take into consideration the real value of spiritual things. Jestings is witty speech that includes sinful insinuations. C.G. Caldwell in his commentary on this verse said “It involves spicy language fitted to the moods and conditions of the listeners. It refers

to immoral language or joking which is time-serving. A sly question, a smart answer, a shrewd intimation, a clever retort, or a lustful joke can fill the bill when describing this sin.” In the view of this writer it is wrong to speak lightly or jokingly of spiritual matters. Our speech should convey the pureness of heart and manner of life characteristic of God’s chosen people.

Question: How does a person handle a situation where they forgive an individual, who is not a Christian, but would rather not have that person welcome in their life?

Answer: If I understand the question, the querist has forgiven some unbelieving friend or relative of a matter, but would rather not continue in a relationship with that person. I know of no scripture that makes it mandatory that we have an ongoing relationship with a person, if we feel such a relationship is detrimental to our spirituality, or well being. There are times when some people have an adverse effect upon our desire to live for the Lord. The life of any Christian can be adversely affected when wrongly influenced by those not living the Christian life. Paul wrote in 1Cor. 15:33 “Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners.” Many have been misled because they continued relationships with people whose influence led them in the wrong direction. We all should choose wisely our friends and associates in life. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

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THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

“God hath chosen” is a phrase found in the verses, v27, under consideration in this study. Some in the church in Corinth did not properly consider the implications involved in this statement. Those that thought in this manner have their modern day counterparts. I once read of a church that had a sign posted that said something like, “Come and join the church of your choice and be baptized as you please.” One of the things that is wrong in this advertisement is it did not give them the option of becoming a member of the church that God has chosen and to be baptized according to the way that would please God. The fact is God has chosen a church and, in addition, has chosen the way he wants people to be baptized. He has also chosen the several purposes of obedience to this sacred commandment. What “God hath chosen” proved to be a stumbling block to some in the church in Corinth. They rejected God’s choices and sinned in so doing. They were given a short time to repent but Paul finally wrote to them in 2 Corinthians 13:1-2, This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. 2 I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare. Paul had warned them of their sins and told them to repent. Now he warns them again to repent before his next coming to them. He explains their sins will be established by two or three witnesses and he would not spare them of the proper discipline they had brought on themselves. In 2 Corinthians 13:5 he tells them what they should be doing in order to forego this discipline. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? This is good advice in this 21st Century. No preacher should visit a congregation that is in sin whether the sin be in their worship, permitting false doctrine to be taught in or out of the assembly, or tolerating immorality in the lives of its members and then leave without admonishing them as did Paul. When the Lord comes again they will not have the opportunity to repent. God, Jesus Christ the Lord, and the Holy Spirit must always be first in our lives as is taught in the following verses and chapters.

1 Corinthians 1:25, Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Who were the ones that decreed God’s choices were foolish? They came from among both Jews and Greeks or Gentiles. In v18 they are described as the ones who were perishing, i.e., they were lost and headed for eternal ruin. They thought their description of the things God had chosen and the messengers he had selected were silly and absurd. Their problem seemed to have been that God did not consult them or their wise philosophers when he chose the preaching of the cross for salvations and used none of the men they considered wise, wealthy, and highly esteemed by the world to proclaim a proper message they had chosen. The fact is they wanted to impose their will on God instead of submitting themselves to the will of God. They could not comprehend how educated God was and how strong God was in choosing the things necessary to keep man from perishing. Neither could they understand that the forces God was dealing with in order to save man were spiritual. Later on in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 Paul wrote the words from God, For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. This is the reason why their wise and powerful men who thought and imagined according to fleshly standards could not devise ways to save men’s souls and considered what God had chosen to solve a special problem that they knew nothing about as absurd. Isaiah 55:8-9, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. When a man or men reject God’s ways or plans they fall into the delusions condemned by God in Isaiah 5:20, Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Therefore the only recourse man has is to turn to the testimony of God and find out what God has chosen. Isaiah 8:20, To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. This is another way of saying man must be willing to accept what God has chosen otherwise they will perish. Man must accept what God has chosen. Those who think God should have consulted with them are waiting in vain. Those

who presume on the silence of God and think this is the way God permits us to do what we want to in matters of salvation, worship, and holy lives have fallen prey to strong delusions and have believed a lie.

1 Corinthians 1:26, For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. The last two words in the text are italicized in the KJV indicating there are no words in the original Greek to correspond to them. Does this mean that the gospel does not call many of the mighty, or noble, or wise men after the flesh to become true Christians? Is it sent out to just a few of them? No! The gospel invitation is sent out to everyone, Mark 16:15-16, And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Paul wanted the church members at Corinth to look at those in Corinth who had accepted the gospel invitation. There were not many of the philosophers who, while they loved to be considered wise, did not understand their wisdom was after the flesh and not from above. But the church at Corinth was established without them. Not many who were mighty or powerful politically, or as leaders of armies, etc., were found in their midst. But the church was winning battles against Satan and his ministers without them. There were not many who were well born (noble) into wealthy or royal families, yet even in this area the church was doing quiet well economically without them and were actually able to assist brethren in need in far off places. The word "noble" is used in Acts 17:11. Paul suggests that even in being born again some had taken advantage of becoming a new born babe in Christ and manifested their new royal status whereas others were slow in doing this. Paul describes them in this way: 11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. The Bereans recognized that when they entered the kingdom by being born from above that their new king was Christ, In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Colossians 2:3.

They were born again into a new kind of royalty and wealth. They were taking advantage of these new treasures and were determined to make sure they were in the truth. That is how a well born child of God acts. So, if God had the gospel message sent to the wise,

the mighty, the nobility why was it not many became members of the church along with Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, and perhaps Sosthenes, another chief ruler, Acts 18:8, 17; 1 Corinthians 1:1? In 2 Kings 5:1-14 we are given an example of a mighty one who first of all refused to do what a man of God told him to do to heal his leprosy. Naaman was a captain of the army of the king of Syria and considered by the people and the king as a great and honorable man. He was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper. So, here is one of the "mighty." He wants to be healed of his leprosy. How will he respond to God's direction to him as to how to have the leprosy removed? Just like the many at Corinth in the New Testament. Here is what happened. With much riches to pay for his healing he drives up in front of the prophet Elisha's house. Elisha does not even come out to greet him but does send a messenger to him. The messenger told Naaman in 2 Kings 5:10, saying, Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. What was his response to this simple message that did not cost him anything? 2 Kings 5:11-12, But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. 12 Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. He had the message, his wealth, but the problem was he still had his leprosy. Finally, one of his own servants talked him into obeying the simple message. 2 Kings 5:13-14, And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? 14 Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

This is what the rich and the mighty needed to do at Corinth. They needed to accept the simple messengers and message. Some did. Acts 18:8, And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Sinner friend would you do as they did and be saved from your sins? -OPA

BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

By HOMER A. GAY

Encouraging Children

I believe that children should be encouraged to do good things and then they will not have to be corrected and prohibited from doing bad things. A person never climbs so high, nor accomplishes so much in this world, but that a kindly word of encouragement will help him to have a brighter outlook on life. There are many good things that we can see in our children and we should see them, and let the children know that we see the good. I am afraid the parents make the children think that they never do see any good in them because they always correct them for their wrong doings and never mention the good deeds they do.

Moses, who lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and into sight of the Canaan land, said to the people concerning his successor: "But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it" (Deut. 1:38). If Joshua needed to be encouraged, surely we should realize that our children need encouragement. Again we read, "Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord" (2 Chr. 31:4). Again "And he set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the service of the house of the Lord" (2 Chr. 35:2). This comes on down to us today in dealing with our children for we read in Col. 3:21, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

Children are human and not toys and they come into our homes as pure as the driven snow. There is within every child a desire to do many things that are good, upright, and wholesome, and usually, if we will allow and encourage them in these things the evil things will not be so tempting to them.

Children should be allowed to enjoy themselves at home. As a general rule parents who will not allow their children to enjoy themselves at home, soon find that they are enjoying themselves somewhere else - and all too often in the wrong kind of company. Those slamming doors, stamping feet,

whistling, singing, yelling mouths will be missing from that old home too soon, anyway. Encourage your children, young and old alike, to bring all the company, they want, home with them and enjoy themselves. If they are slamming your doors, playing your radio, thumping on an instrument at home, you know where they are, and that they are not molesting the neighbors, nor into anything that is very bad.

Parents often in trying to look after their children, do them an injustice by not allowing them to associate with even good company. Boys and girls will associate with some one at some time and It is far better to encourage them to play with, chum with, and keep company with Christian boys and girls than to selfishly try to make them stick right with you, only to find out later that they are slipping around and going out with questionable characters.

Encourage the Children to go to the services of the church every one of them. If we will make it our business to see that we always go, the children will grow up into the habit. Always have their clothes ready, quit work in plenty of time for them to go. Be sure to never, NEVER, plan any piece of work, visit, nor anything that would hinder the children from going to church. I have known parents to plan a birthday party for their child at exactly the hour of a church service! This is surely not encouraging them to go to church.

Children should also be encouraged to think for themselves. I find so many parents jumping in and telling the child what to say every time, giving it the answer to every question. Better let the child think for himself, he will have to learn some time in life.

Encourage the child to always be honest and to tell the truth regardless of the consequences, Let him or her know that they can depend on you staying with them, and helping them undo anything wrong that they have done, if they will just be truthful about it.

Encourage them to sing. Make a special effort for them to learn to sing. That is one thing that will bring them to the front in meetings of the church, and will make them realize that they too, can help worship God.

Encourage them to take some active part in the work of the church. Mothers can take their daughters with them to visit the sick. There are many things that they can do in the church in that way if given a chance. Boys should be encouraged to read a chapter in the worship, lead a song, lead a prayer. They will soon be able to carry on the worship by themselves if they have to do so.

Parents, remember, you can train a plant to lean to the north, south, east, or west by the proper care. But if you turn a tub down over it, it will die. So, give that child some elbow room to do the good that he is capable of doing and wanting to do, and encourage him in everything that is right. "Give them the roses now."

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HOW GOD REVEALS HIMSELF continued from page one

the LORD was not in the earthquake:

12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

He then sent Elijah back to work.

Expositors disagree somewhat on this event, its purpose, and particulars. However, it is obvious and generally agreed that God was showing Elijah that the storms, earthquakes, and fires of life do not prepare a man to know God, but rather, the opposite is true. It is the quiet times of study, contemplation, dedication, and resolve that teach men about God and prepare them for the trials of life and that God will reveal Himself to us proportionately to our degree of seeking Him.

I suppose men have always had a problem in knowing and understanding how God reveals Himself to mankind. In the beginning of His relationship with man, in what is rightfully called the Patriarchal Dispensation, God spoke directly to the heads of the various families that served Him. We can't know everything concerning how God went about this because He told Moses in Exodus 33.20 ... "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" and John writes in John 1:18 "No man hath seen God at any time;..." but in some way He spoke directly to them in a way that was unmistakable to them. In the time

termed the "Mosaical Dispensation" God revealed Himself to men through the Law of Moses and the prophets rather than to the heads of households directly. He spoke to the prophets sometimes in dreams, by angels, through inspiration, and the Bible even says in Exodus 33:11 "And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." As time continued, God spoke more and more through the Law of Moses and less and less through the prophets resulting in the four hundred years between the last writer of the Old Testament, Malachi, and the opening of the New Testament being termed "The silent years." In the "Christian Dispensation" God reveals Himself to mankind through the words of Jesus and the New Testament writers. Some folks are confused by the fact that during the beginning of the "Christian Dispensation" there were miracles, divine inspiration, and gifts of the Holy Spirit whose purpose was and is to confirm the identity of Christ and what is written in the New Testament. Many people do not realize that those wonderful acts of God were temporary in nature. The writer of Hebrews says: Hebrews 1:1-2 1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Paul says concerning this very idea:

I Corinthians 13:9-13 9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

II Timothy 3:16-17: 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

I frequently run into people who claim that God has spoken directly to them, laid something on their heart, or appeared to them in a dream.

I remember the Sunday morning in 1977 when one of the first and best known televangelist based in Tulsa, OK announced that he had been visited by a nine hundred foot tall Jesus and ordered to build a hospital. Later in 1987, he said he had been told by God that if he didn't raise 8 million dollars for that hospital by March of that year, God would call him home. He later convinced many people that he had raised individuals from the dead. This man was either severely deluded or an outright liar. I strongly suspect the later. God just doesn't reveal Himself to mankind in that way during the time in which we live. Paul says: Galatians 1:8-9

8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Peter says: Acts 10:34 - Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: Everyone should have a burning desire to know God and that desire should drive our every effort in this brief life. He can be found in the Bible - His Word in the still, small voice where He communicates with man today. Jesus said: Matthew 7:7-8

7 Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

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applies. A person told me recently, "Times are a lot different now." Yes, times are very different now and getting worse all of the time, but these different times do not change what the Bible says in any way. Intimate behavior between unmarried persons is still sinful just as it has always been. We must not give in to the temptation to look on immorality as just a sign of changing times. We have the responsibility to believe and practice what the Scriptures teach no matter how unpopular or old fashioned it becomes. Our young folks need guidance from parents to help them avoid the sins

of immorality. Part of the fault also lies at the feet of the older folks who have become desensitized to immorality because of things they read in books and magazines or watch either on television or movies. Let's be careful to do our best in living godly lives.

THE CUP

We recently came across a brief mention of the cup in the communion by a fellow who obviously uses more than one in spite of the fact the communion cup is never spoken of in the plural in the Bible. Always it is singular. This person mentioned what we believe and practice every Lord's Day. We use one loaf and one cup when we observe the Lord's Supper. We believe it must be that way. The Lord's church was divided over the use of more than one cup many years ago and remains divided to this day. This fellow said that some contend the cup is a container. Yes, we insist that the cup as used in passages such as Matthew 26: 26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19, 20; and 1 Corinthians 11: 26-29 is used literally. Greek scholars agree it is used literally. The Bible plainly shows Jesus used a literal cup, one cup, containing literal fruit of the vine as He instituted the communion. In Matthew 26:27 it says, "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying drink ye all of it." Or, all of you drink of it. Did the disciples understand? Yes, indeed! Mark 14:23 says, "And He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them: and they all drank of it." Strange that people today have trouble understanding what the Lord meant when it is obvious none of disciples had any trouble at all. "...They all drank of it." The fellow who wrote the article had trouble seeing that. He asked the question, "How does one drink a cup?" Paul told the Corinthian brethren to drink the cup. (1 Corinthians 11:26, 27) Therefore, it must be possible. Well, of course it is. We drink the cup by drinking what is in the cup and in no other way. That is what the disciples did when Jesus gave the cup to them in Mark 14: 23. "They all drank of it." Did they obey the Lord's command? Jesus told all of them to drink of it (Matthew 26:27) Mark says they all drank of it, Mark 14:23. Yes, indeed they obeyed His command. It is really pretty simple. Jesus took a cup in His hand, gave thanks for it, and then handed that same cup to the disciples commanding them to drink it. They obeyed by

drinking of it as Mark tells us in Mark 14:23. If that was not what Jesus intended for them to do, we may be sure He would have set them straight then and there.

If we say the baby drank the bottle, does anyone have trouble understanding what the baby did? The child drank the bottle by drinking the contents and everyone understands that. We are pretty sure the fellow who wrote the brief piece also understands how we can drink the cup.

May God bless all of His people with an honest desire to follow His Word. Think on these things.
-DLK

Announcements

CAN YOU HELP?

We at the Michigan Ave. Church of Christ are in dire need of a newer communion set. If anyone knows of a congregation with one they are not using that would be willing to either-donate or sell at a cheaper rate please let us know. We could be able to purchase one, but our funding is very low at this time. Please call or write to Darrell Crawford 208 E Baldwin rd Unit S Panama City, Florida. 32405 cell phone is 405-473-6407 Thank you very much. Darrell Crawford Evangelist Church of Christ

ANNOUNCEMENT:

**We at the Arizona City Church of Christ
Arizona City AZ, have relocated to:
Delaware Drive Church of Christ
105 S. Delaware Drive
Apache Junction, AZ 85120**

Service Times:

Sunday Morn 10:30 A.M. Afternoon at 2:00 P.M.

Contact person: Bob Orear, PO Box 13912,

Mesa AZ. 85216 (H) 480-659-3353 (C) 520-431-9553

E-Mail: bgo2@juno.com

Our Departed

BRUMLEY- Wayne Lee Brumely was born December 15, 1945 in Ada, Oklahoma, to Horace Lee Moss and Pauline Brumley. He graduated from Vanoss High School, and served in the U.S. Air Force. He died September 3, 2012 at his home in Ada. He is survived by one son, John Wayne Brumley, Dallas, TX an aunt, Margaret Nelson, MA; Two uncles, Kenneth Brumley, MA, and Buddy Brumley of Exeter, CA and two half-brothers, Douglas Wadley, Henryetta, OK, and Rusty

Wadley, Okmulgee, OK. Lee, my brothers, and I all grew up and attended church services together in Ada. He was a likable guy, we became fast friends, and remained friends until his death. I remember vividly the night he was baptized as a teenager. He and my brother Raymond were baptized the same night by Paul Nichols. As we grew up, married, and had families, we didn't see each other much. I know Lee experienced a lot of problems in his life and he had his ups and downs. He was diagnosed with lung cancer about 18 months ago, living 6 months longer than the doctors expected. Several years ago he called me and asked me to conduct his funeral if I survived him. I was honored by his request and I am thankful the Lord permitted it. He and his aunt Margaret lived next door to each other for years and I know she will miss him greatly. Our prayers are for her and all the family and friends who survive him.
--Carl M. Johnson

SMITH- Smith-Iva Jo Smith was born April 19, 1931, in Clemscot, OK to Dow and Ethel Byrd. She departed this life for the next on June 8, 2012, in Odessa, Texas, at the age of 81. She and her six siblings grew up around the Healdton, OK area and attended worship at the East Healdton Church of Christ. She obeyed the gospel at the age of 14 and lived faithfully for her Lord. On Feb. 14, 1953, she was united in marriage to C. A. Smith. To this union three children were born. Connie CuIp, (Dyke, deceased), Dale (Sabrina), and Randall (Tammy). They have nine grandchildren; Kyndall (Drew Baze), Landon, Katlyn, Kallie Jo, April, Ashly, Colten, Layten, and Carlee. Iva Jo was an example to all of us in so many ways. She was faithful in long relationships. She was a wife to the same man for 59 years. She assisted C. A. in his roles as a gospel preacher and church leader. They served the Lord and His church wherever they lived. For so many of those years they were in Andrews, Texas. She always pulled her part of the load. Their life was never easy. But working together they were successful in their labors. They laid their treasures upward. She was a New Testament christian for 67 years. She was never one who was in a relationship, and then out, but always faithful. She constantly "pressed toward the mark". She was a virtuous woman. Solomon asked, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" We did. We found her in an humble life in southern Oklahoma and in west Texas. She left her footprints there in the sands--in her home, in the church, in her community, and in our lives. The winds of time and change shall never erase them. The God of Heaven created two institutions--the family and the church. They are so important to Him. They were all that was important to Iva Jo Smith. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" Rev. 2:10. Brother Kevin Fox and I spoke words of hope and comfort to the redeemed and words of warning to those who are not. - Don Pruitt

Field Reports

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, cmjthebackpage@gmail.net Sept. 9--We enjoyed the Texas Labor Day Meeting very much. It has been several years since I participated in the meeting and I found it well-organized and well-conducted by the Fossil Creek Congregation and Ronny Wade. The crowds were large and the preaching and singing were exceptionally good. Phyllis and I were uplifted by the meeting. Our uplifted spirits were saddened quickly, however, when we received news of the death of Wayne Lee Brumley, a childhood friend of mine in Ada. We came home from the meeting and had his funeral on Wednesday, September 3rd. We are now looking forward to a gospel meeting here at home with Jerry Dickinson, September 23-30. My next meeting is scheduled for McAlester, OK, October 3-7. May God bless us all as we continue to glorify Him.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com Aug. 27- In a few days I will be leaving for the Texas Labor Day Meeting which is hosted by the Fossil Creek congregation in Fort Worth. Lord willing, I will be one of the speakers on the opening night (Aug. 31). Also, I will be preaching that Sunday morning at Cleburne where Melvin Blalock lives and labors, so I'm looking forward to visiting with my dear friend and fellow-gospel preacher. I have held meetings at the following places: Oakdale, CA Allen, TX and Deer Park, TX The meeting at Deer Park was advertised as a "homecoming," and Jerry and I were invited to conduct it together. Besides brethren attending from the surrounding area, Royce and Mary Jane Garman came from Louisiana and Juan Rodriguez; Jr. was with us from San Antonio. Jerry, Juan, and I started out as young preachers together, so we go back a long way and share many precious memories of those earlier days. It was sort of a reunion for the Dickinson family, although everyone was not able to make it, and it was great to spend time with our parents. The brethren at Deer Park stated that in some ways it was the best meeting they ever had. We certainly thank them for their hospitality and the opportunity to preach in our hometown! In the near future I am scheduled to be at Ratliff City, OK (Sept 14-16) and West Plains, MO at the AB Highway congregation (Oct. 19-21). Randy Tidmore will hold us a meeting here at Jamesville on the dates of Dec. 7-9.

Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189 - mmartin@bellsouth.net Since my last report I have preached at Pleasant View, Mo, Napoleon, AL, LaGrange, GA and Earlytown, AL. I had a very enjoyable meeting at Earlytown, where Larry and June

Broxon served as our hosts and treated us royally. Over the years their family has become like our own. We had good crowds throughout the meeting with good support from surrounding congregations and outside interest. It was good to have fellow preachers, Don Jackson and Kevin Presley attend. The congregation at Earlytown has had a special place in my heart for many years. I preached there as 15 year-old, while traveling with Barney Owens. We had a great meeting here at Marietta with Don King. Don did a wonderful job preaching the gospel and we enjoyed having him and Patsy. We just concluded our annual singing with Kevin Presley and were able to sing out of the new book, Abiding Hope. We had one of the largest crowds we have ever had. We were happy to have Brian Elliott and his wife, Lianne and Clint DeFrance and his new bride, Leanne from Texas attend, as well as people from surrounding congregations. I am looking forward to my next meeting at Jacksonville, FL September 19-23. Please continue to pray for the Lord's work everywhere.

Roger Owens Freeman Road Neosho Missouri. What a great Summer it has been for the Lord. The congregation has grown this year in number and in spiritual understanding. We recently were blessed with a wonderful meeting with Joe Hisle. This meeting was a very special one. We had visitors most every service from the community. The other congregations in the area supported us every service, even on Sunday. Joe was at his peak. Sermons well chosen and very well presented. The brethren are still talking about the meeting. We had one sister who made her confession of fault and prayer was made in her behalf. She is still with us doing better I am glad to say. The work is going great here in Neosho. We have had to deal with lots of sickness among members and 1 sister who moved out of state. The fourth meeting was absolutely great. Our work in Casper Wyoming is moving into its second year with lots of good things to report. We have run our newspaper article now for 1 full year. I have received a number of inquires. I visited Casper last month and worked with the local congregation for a few days. They are very small. We are looking for a building to rent or purchase in the Casper area. We have a new P.O. Box for mail there, [Church of Christ P.O. Box 51722 Casper Wy. 82605-1722] We have some new leads which include a small group of Christian Church folks who seem to want to study with us. We will begin new TV Program the first of October "Let the Bible Speak" with Brett Hickey on FOX & ABC. I plan to spend some time in Casper in late October and early November. I have been told there are families that might move into the area. Casper and surrounding area is about 70,000 in population. There is lots of work it seems in the area especially in gas and oil. The city is growing very fast

and many are moving into the region from all across the U.S.. If you have any interest in this effort please contact us by my email {rowens700@yahoo.com}. I attended the 2012 Labor Day Meeting in Ozark which was a great joy to me. The brethren in Ozark did a great job in preparing and conducting the meeting. I deeply appreciate their efforts and concerns for the Lord's work in Missouri. The Fall is coming and much to prepare for. Please pray for our efforts in the Lord. -Roger L. Owens

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953: It was a pleasure to attend the Tennessee Labor Day Meeting. The meeting was hosted by the Chapel Grove congregation and Doug Hawkins was in charge of the arrangements. This year was the 30th year celebration of this Labor Day meeting. Joann was raised and baptized in the Chapel Grove congregation and we delighted in going back for this meeting and share in this celebration. In addition, it was the first time the meeting was held in their new tabernacle. Before this they had to rent a tent that was large enough for the meeting at considerable expense. The tabernacle was certainly more comfortable than the tent and contributed greatly to the comfort of the many people who came from several states. Duane Permenter was there working for the church that month so it was a pleasure to hear him preach 3 times while we were in that area. I spoke twice in the meeting and two more times at the Springer Rd. church in Lawrenceburg. It was also good to hear Doug preach several times in the Labor Day Meeting as well as a number of preachers and teachers from different congregations and states. We did miss seeing and visiting with some of the old timers who were servants of the Lord in that area and have now passed on to a better place. We are back home now and continue our work with the Olivehurst congregation. The work here is slowly growing and we enjoy working with this church.

Don L. King 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old_paths@juno.com September 13- As of last report we had just closed at New Salem (near Brookhaven, MS) and had a very good meeting. From there we travelled to Liberty, KY for a Wednesday through Sunday meeting. We had been there a few years back and so looked forward to an enjoyable meeting, which it was. The Brethren were ready and during the meeting there were visitors from the area congregations as well as one or two non-members. I was afflicted with a cold which affected my voice somewhat but they were patient and we made it just fine. It was wonderful to be back there again and to see several we had not seen in some time. Next we were with the church at West Chester, Ohio. Pat and I lived and worked with that congregation during 1969-1971 before coming to California to do a mission effort at Fremont which

proved to be successful. We had good crowds with visitors from several congregations and some from the community as well, if I recall correctly. We were happy to have preaching brethren Barney and Stan Owens for several nights. This meeting was, in my opinion, one of the better meetings we have held at West Chester in several years. There was a fine spirit manifested by all and it was so good to be with so many we have known and loved for over 40 years. We made friends in West Chester when we lived there that have continued as great friends all of these years. We pray the Lord's blessings for all we were with this past summer. We also thank the congregations for their invitations to come and work with them in meetings again. God be thanked for brethren who insist on a "thus saith the Lord."

Richard DeGough June 12, 2012- 1809 Flora Vista Dr., Hughson, California, 95326 Our Memorial Day meeting with Bruce Roebuck was a good one, and well attended as it usually is. We had crowds in excess of 300 for several services. The singing was beautiful, well led, and if I might judge with the "spirit and understanding". Our young men that led the singing were prepared and capable. We had preachers Don King, Clint DeFrance, Nathan Battey, and perhaps more. They really were an asset to the meeting. I cannot say enough about Bruce's preaching. He preached without fear or favor on several issues that will certainly strengthen the Church and warn the lost. We were edified, and reminded of the "Faith once delivered" and to never give it up. The preaching had the old time ring and power that I remember as a boy when ALL THE PREACHERS preached that way! Our young men taught and led the singing on the Saturday morning service. All the young men were dressed so neat, becoming a good example for all that enter the pulpit. They had their thoughts well arranged and scriptural in content. We had good cooperation from many congregations near and far. I was impressed and proud of the young men that taught. Our young people were respectful and conducted themselves as Christians men and women. We were happy to have in our home Nathan and Savannah Battey during the meeting. We look forward to Ronnie Wade preaching the Lord's day of the 24th • Our young men in Turlock congregation teach on Wednesday night service, improving every service. How we are blessed to have them. They back up their teaching with scripture. Our future meetings on Memorial day will be brother Clint DeFrance, Nathan Battey, and Stan Owens the Lord willing. May God bless the brotherhood all over the world. Brethren, when you put up a sign on the building where you worship, let the sign say: CHURCH OF CHRIST. Never be ashamed of it nor follow the denominations with unsound, unproven, and unscriptural designations so prevalent.

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THE BACK PAGE...

THE JESUS AND ME GOSPEL

By *CARL M. JOHNSON*

Andrew Sullivan has written a cover story for Newsweek magazine that expresses perfectly the religious spirit of our times. As the title inside puts it: "Christianity in Crisis: Christianity has been destroyed by politics, priests, and get-rich evangelists." When I first read the title I thought, "Amen!" Who would argue that the church has not suffered in the eyes of the world because of such shameful shenanigans by people claiming to be Christians? Sullivan goes on to say, however, that the remedy for such situations is to quit the church and follow Jesus individually. In other words, "From now on it is just going to be Jesus and me, and I'm forgetting about the church."

Sullivan's piece is an angry rant, full of overstatement, misstatement, and misunderstanding. He has pretty much given up on organized Christianity. He believes in the divinity of Jesus and His resurrection from the dead, and he wants to follow the ethics of Jesus and deepen his love for God and neighbor. He believes, however, that those things cannot be found in the church.

I recently saw an Internet video that went viral a few months ago (over 15 million views at last count) called, "Why I Hate Religion but Love Jesus." The quality of the production is excellent and the performer, Jeff Bethke, is a good-looking, articulate young man. I can see why the video has appealed to so many viewers.

The message in the video is virtually the same as that of Sullivan's in Newsweek. Bethke says that Jesus came to abolish religion, and that the church came along and re-instituted it. He adds that now we need to be liberated from the shackles of religion in order to be able to worship Jesus "freely."

These guys represent a growing sentiment in religion today, which includes some of our own brethren. Several years ago a brother in Christ told me that the remedy for brotherhood problems is to abandon the brotherhood. He said many folks have tried the church and found it wanting, and they are just not going to take it anymore. They are either meeting in small groups in homes and apartments for prayer and Bible study, sometimes calling themselves "house churches," or they are going it alone to pursue spirituality and Jesus without the church.

The basic problem with all of the above, however, is God ordains that His people are to function within "the group," (i.e. the church) and functioning within a group is never an easy process. The Israelites praise, squabble, fail, and repent together in a seemingly endless cycle. Christians in Paul's day alternately thrill and break his heart over and over again. However, they keep at it, and with every try Paul grows more passionate about the ragtag crew of notoriously fallible humans who so thoroughly are the church. Striving to convey the profound connection between Jesus and the people who gather in His name, Paul employs only the most intimate metaphors—we are Christ's bride (Eph. 5:23-24), or His very body (Col. 1:18), and yet some people want to separate the groom from His bride, or decapitate the Head (Eph. 5:23) from His body!

God knows we cannot develop into the kind of spiritual people He wants us to be if we isolate ourselves from others who are moving toward the same goal. Therefore, HE adds every saved person to a community of believers, the church (Acts 2:47). "Community" requires meeting together with flesh and blood folks that I cannot "block" or "unfriend" should they become annoying. It means getting close enough to hug and to arm wrestle, to build and sometimes hold each other up, even as we risk letting each other down (Rom. 12:10; 13:8; 14:13; Gal. 5:15, 17, 26; 6:1-2; Eph. 4:2, 32; Heb. 10:24-25; etc.).

If you give up on the church, you are giving up on humanity, because the church is the redeemed of humanity. If you cannot get along with people in the church, you will never be able to get along with anyone anywhere. If you want to learn to understand mercy, forgiveness, and how to love other human beings, there is no better place than the church (in. 15:34-35).

On the other hand, those who preach the "Jesus and me" gospel reveal a profound lack of understanding about who Jesus really is. A Jesus who demands such shockingly drastic, difficult, selfsacrificing discipleship as He describes in Luke 14:25-35, is not their kind of Jesus. They seem to want a Jesus who is all about "me." They want a Jesus they can shape in their own image and serve in their own ways. Such a relationship is nothing short of idolatry. They are not bowing down to golden calves, but they have a Jesus looking and acting suspiciously like them. Furthermore, they have learned that the only way they can have such a Jesus is to separate Him from the oversight, edification, scriptural checks and balances, and potential discipline of a local congregation of His church. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com