

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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## LET MARRIAGE BE HONORED BY EVERYONE

BY JERRY DICKINSON

“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.” (Hebrews 13:4) Paul’s great and universal declaration about marriage is hardly considered great today, and certainly not universally. In fact, it would be more correct today to say that marriage is honorable among some, but fornicators and adulterers are also to be honored and celebrated. Such is the pitiable state of our culture. Really, according to many translations, Paul is making an imperative declaration, regardless of how the culture regards marriage. In other words, we are exhorted and commanded to hold marriage in the highest esteem. Note the following renderings.

“Let marriage be honored by all...” (Twentieth Century New Testament)

“Marriage, in every way, must be held in honor...” (Knox)

“Let marriage be held in honor by all...” (American Standard Version)

“Everybody should think highly of marriage...” (Beck)

“Marriage is honorable; let us all keep it so...” (New English Bible)

We have a sacred obligation to preserve, defend, and protect the honorable estate of marriage, especially in a culture and climate that is desecrating this holy institution which God himself established and sanctified. Jesus forever defined marriage when he declared, “Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father

and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.” (Matthew 19:4-6) Note that according to Jesus marriage is between a man and a woman, God joins them together, and there should be no separation. Marriage is for life - they are no more two but one. If we honor Jesus, we must honor His description of marriage.

We live in times when marriage is under relentless attack. How can we maintain the honor of marriage? How can we sustain our own marriages in this decadent age? The Apostle Paul gives the ingredients for a successful and honorable marriage in Ephesians 5:22-33. “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” Just as a Christian woman submits to Jesus by humbly following the Lord’s leading, she is to follow the lead of her husband. “For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church.” A Christian wife does not want to be the head of the family; she willingly accepts the role God has given to her to follow the lead of her husband. Many women boast about being liberated from men and from God’s divine order, but not Christian women. Godly women honor God, and marriage, by honoring their husbands.

Now, when Paul declares that the husband is the head of his wife, and the wife is to submit, he is certainly not saying that the man is to be a dictator and the woman has no rights whatever. In fact, in verse 21 of Ephesians 5 Paul teaches we all are to “submit to one another in the fear of God.” If a husband fears God he better treat his wife with the greatest respect and honor. Peter echoes the words of Paul in I Peter 3:5,6 by telling wives to be submissive to their husbands, reminding them that Sarah even called Abraham lord. But then Peter adds a word of warning in verse 7. “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel,

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Editorial

“LET NO MAN SEEK HIS OWN.”

By DON L. KING

In 1 Corinthians 10: 24 the apostle wrote: “Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.” Another translation renders this, “Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of another.” This presents an interesting thought. Does Paul actually mean we should not seek to be as good as possible? Of course not, he merely means we should be very concerned about the spiritual welfare of our brethren, rather than thinking of no one but ourselves. A brother once was heard to say that he had certain Christian liberties; and if someone else were bothered by that, referring to another Christian, that was their problem. Is this true? Not at all, the brother was very mistaken. In 1 Corinthians 8:13, Paul said, “Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.” The word “offend” there means to cause him to fall, or sin. In Paul’s day the Gentiles were accustomed to eating whatever they desired while many of the Jews still had a conscience against eating what the old Law had forbidden. Paul realized that Christians could eat what they pleased as long as they did so with thanksgiving, because the Law had been nailed to the cross and was no longer in effect. He knew the Lord did not care any longer. Nonetheless, he was not willing to eat meat that might be offensive to other brethren who still had a conscience against such. This principle still stands today. We need to be very careful about not causing others to be weakened in some way by our behavior. This is what Paul is getting at in 1 Corinthians 10:24.

Over the years we have noticed that brethren seldom have problems regarding specific or plain statements in the Scriptures. Most of us accept what the Bible says as being true and that’s the end of it. However, brethren may disagree and stumble over some things that are very plainly stated. An example is found in Galatians 5:19-21. The passage reads: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, (Thayer says this is “...carnality, lasciviousness ...wanton (acts or) manners, as filthy words, indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females etc.”) Idolatry,

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## QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

**Question:** Can one be called an apostle if he was not one of the original twelve chosen by Jesus? If not how could Paul be considered an apostle? Whose names will be on the foundations mentioned in Rev. 21:14?

**Answer:** In Matthew 10:1-4 we have the account of Jesus selecting twelve disciples and sending them out. Verse two says “Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot who also betrayed him.” Hence only twelve men were originally chosen as apostles. In Acts 1:26 we have the account of Matthias being chosen to fill the position vacated by Judas who “by transgression fell.” There is nothing in the scriptures, however, indicating that after the establishment of the church in Acts 2, there was any attempt to maintain the number of apostles at twelve. In Acts 6:1-5 we have the account of seven men being chosen to take care of the business arising from complaints about the neglect of some widows. Many believe that these seven men were deacons. If indeed that was the case, we certainly would not conclude that when deacons are appointed there must be seven and no more or less. It would seem in the same way that even though there were twelve original apostles there is nothing to indicate that having more than twelve would be a violation of scripture. The word “apostle” means one sent forth. The term can be used in a general sense to refer to any person who is sent, and is so used in (1Cor. 2Cor. 8:3; Acts 14:14; Phil. 2:25 ). Usually the word in scripture is used to refer to those men whom the Lord selected to company with him during his earthly life, and who had seen his risen body

(Acts 1:21-22) and who had received authority to reveal the will of the Lord to others. After the establishment of the church Paul declared in Romans 1:1 “Paul a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God.” Again in 1Corinthians 1:1 “Paul called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother.” Second Corinthians 5:20 declares him to be an ambassador of Christ. Even though Paul was not one of the original twelve, he was, never the less, an apostle in the true sense of the term. In Acts 14:14 we read “But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this...” Barnabas is here considered an apostle, i.e. sent out by Christ on a mission to preach the gospel. According to 1Corinthians 15:8 even though Paul was born “out of due season or time” he was still an apostle, by the direct authority of Christ. Hence the answer to the first question is “yes” one can be an apostle who was not one of the original twelve. The passage in Revelations 21:14 is part of a highly symbolical presentation in which “twelve foundations, twelve tribes, twelve thousand from each tribe,” are mentioned. The “twelve apostles of the Lamb” is an obvious reference to the original twelve. Coffman points out that the “twelve apostles are mentioned in their collective and official, not in their individual character.” It is unlikely that anyone’s name will be written on the foundation stones suggested in this passage since the language must be taken figuratively. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

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## REDEEMING THE TIME

*By RICK MARTIN*

Time is important to us all. Some think that they have lots of time, while for others time is running out. Some have time on their hand, while others don't have time. Some are spending time, others are saving time. Some are wasting it. For some time flies, while for others it drags on. There are people who make time and people who kill time.

What is time? The dictionary says time is, "a moment, hour, day, or year indicated by a clock or calendar." If I were to ask some people to define time that is probably the answer that most would give. The dictionary also says that time is, "the measured or measurable period during which an action, process or condition exists or continues." That could be like, how long is a sermon going to last. It could be like the time-out in a sporting event or the time needed to bake a cake. It could also be what we refer to as a person's lifespan. The third definition of time is a little more philosophical. It says time is, a continuum which lacks spatial dimensions and in which events succeed one another from past through present to future.

Time is a very precious gift. One reason is because of its brevity and how it relates to life Job 7:6-7 My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope. O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good. The Psalmist agrees; Psa. 102:11 My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. In the 90th Psalm he is a bit more specific. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. James says, James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Because time is so brief and frail, we must make the most of our time.

We are told to redeem the time: Colossians 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. A parallel text of this is found in Eph. 5:15-17 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Redeeming the time is involved in walking circumspectly. We are to do so because the days are evil. We must not waste our time. We must use our time wisely.

We have biblical examples of people who did not use their time wisely. Solomon used his time and efforts to depart from God. The Jews stopped their work in rebuilding the temple for 16 years because they did not think it was the right time. The Athenians are the classic example of those who did not redeem the time. Acts 17:21 For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing. Younger widows are given a warning about idleness; 1 Tim. 5:13 And

withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. Felix certainly did not redeem the time, Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He used his time doing other things, rather than obeying the Lord. Those who are lazy will find any excuse to waste time. Pro. 22:13 The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

We also have examples of people who made the most of their time. Caleb made the most of his time. He, along with Joshua, was one of the faithful spies and when it came time he was ready to conquer the land of his inheritance. Nehemiah used his time wisely in preparing to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Think about all the good our Lord did while he lived on earth. His one desire was to please the Father; Jn. 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. He went about healing the sick, raising the dead and doing all kinds of good things.

The apostle Paul was a great examples of a man who redeemed the time; 2 Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

We must use our time wisely to reach the lost. Mk. 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Jn. 4:34-35 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. We must look for every opportunity to spread the Gospel.

God created time and gives it to us as stewards. If we don't redeem our time, we will find that we have no time to do what is important and will barely have the time to do what is pressing. We need to order our time according to God's purposes and values. Time is the most precious resource we have; therefore it is imperative that we redeem the time. Time is brief and frail. Are you using your time wisely? Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189.

## BAPTISM'S SYMBOLISM

*By ANDREW RICHARDSON*

Though the apostle Peter said baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38) and that it "doth also now save us" (1 Pet. 3:21), and though Jesus taught, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark

16:16), the larger part of the denominational culture still chooses to believe that baptism is not a requirement for salvation. Instead, it's taught to be just an "outward sign of an inward grace." In other words, it just (as the modern clichés go) acts as a visible "badge" or "sign" of salvation that has already occurred and thus has no place in the attaining of salvation. Truly the Holy Book does ascribe symbolism to baptism, but it is not after the denominational kind, i.e., past salvation.

#### A "LIKENESS" OF CHRIST'S DEATH

According to the apostle Paul, Christ's burial and resurrection is visualized in baptism: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:3-5).

Here, baptism is called a "likeness" of Christ's Death. Like Jesus was buried in the tomb and then rose to life, so is the man who is buried in the watery grave of baptism, subsequently arising to "new life." Therefore, the death of both Jesus and the sinner is pictured in the act. Christ arose to life after being buried, and the formerly lost sinner emerges from the water to a new life, forgiven of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21) through Jesus' blood.

Yet, what does Paul say here about baptism representing forgiveness that has already been achieved? Nada! Not a word is uttered about it. There is no stated "likeness" of previously attained pardon anywhere in the pages of inspiration. Neither hide nor hair. Yes, baptism is symbolic, but the new life of the lost sinner that it symbolizes is at the same time achieved. In other words, the symbol and the thing symbolized are simultaneous.

#### FORGIVENESS AND UNITY

"New life" is spiritual life that the alien sinner previously did not have. Spiritual life is unity with Christ and God. This unity is attained by having the sins, which caused the separation (Deut. 31:17-18; Isa. 59:1-2; Mic. 3:4; Rom. 6:23), forgiven. Therefore, where there is forgiveness, there is new life in unity with Christ. The lost sinner who has believed and has repented achieves all this in baptism. Observe:

##### 1) FORGIVENESS

Paul wrote that the Christians at Rome were baptized "into [Christ's] death." The Son of God's death on the cross paid the due penalty for sins (Matt. 20:28; 26:27; Rom. 5:9), but to benefit from that death, one must be baptized into it. One dies with Christ in immersion and as a result receives the forgiveness that was made available by the Savior's sacrificial death; for Paul says, "He who has died has been justified from sin". Such a clear declaration! A man becomes justified, i.e.,

forgiven from sin when he dies with Christ in baptism. So it is written!

##### 2) UNITY WITH CHRIST

Paul also says the Roman Christians were baptized "into Jesus Christ." Immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ is the point in time God has chosen for the penitent believer to become united with Jesus. To be "in Christ" is to be united with Him in a spiritual relationship wherein one is able to partake of all the "spiritual blessings" offered by Him; for all such blessings reside "in" Him (Eph. 1:3). It is to be identified as belonging to Him.

Therefore, "into Christ" and "into His death" are the same spiritual result- a union with Jesus. Thus one literally rises to new life in Christ when baptized.

#### BURIED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM

Paul also says, "In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses" (Col. 2:11-13).

Again, the symbolism of death and life in baptism is noted. New life is living united with Christ, and the Colossians were "raised" to this life. Yes, they had been "made alive together," but when did this happen? "Buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him"! Without baptism, there is no rising to new life, because God, Who gives the new life, chose this act to be when this spiritual resurrection is accomplished for the lost sinner.

#### UNIFIED IN BAPTISM BY FAITH

With the same thought, Paul told the saints of Galatia they were the "children of God by faith" (3:26), and then says, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Faith in Christ and His redemptive work leads an alien sinner to be baptized, and thus "put on Christ," i.e., become unified with Christ. That is when they became the "children of God by faith." Unmistakably, Paul taught that baptism has a purpose in the receiving of salvation, and not as an act symbolizing already-attained salvation. Lost sinners become identified as the Lord's children by faith when baptized.

In recent ages, a new type of baptismal symbolism has been born from denominationalism such that is understood to be a sign of prior salvation. This is not the baptism authorized by Christ. His Holy Word speaks for itself. For the lost sinner, salvation and the symbolic act of baptism are simultaneous.

## WHY YOU SHOULD “NOT” GET BAPTIZED

By AARON BATTEY

Most of the time when we mention baptism, we talk of its necessity. There are many religious groups that leave out baptism when talking about salvation. To hear a member of the church of Christ talk about “not” being baptized is a little strange, but in this article Aaron Battey gives us some good reasons for “not” being baptized.

### Why You Should “Not” Get Baptized

There are many reasons why an individual would behoove themselves to get baptized. The most pre-eminent reason being, “For the remission of sins,” as Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38). On the flip side of the coin, there are equally good reasons why one should refrain from baptism.

Young people are perhaps most susceptible to making fickle decisions. Sometimes we get caught up in emotions, doing things that we otherwise would have left undone. We must remember that every action has a consequence. The consequence can be good or bad. Here is a list of reasons why an individual should not get baptized, because baptism for the wrong reason has eternally bad consequences.

First, one should not get baptized to satisfy parents. Second, one should not get baptized to date a girl or guy that is a member of the church. Third, one should not get baptized because, “All my friends are doing it!” Last, and most importantly, one should not get baptized if they have no intention of being a faithful Christian afterward. 2 Peter 2:20-21 says, “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.” Hebrews 10:26 speaks to the same idea that sinning willfully after remission is a treacherous mistake.

None of these poor reasons fulfill the commandment of Peter, who said baptism was for the remission of sins. Hence, to be baptized for any other reason is unfulfilling and presents harsher penalties to the offender than if he had stayed dry. May this provoke every reader to think deeply before they make the most important decision in this life.

## WHITED SEPULCHERS

By COLBY COLBERTSON

As the days of our lives tick by, it can be easy to let ourselves slip sometimes without even realizing what is happening. With this being the case, we must be on guard for subtle sins and temptations that can sometimes overtake us without us realizing it.

I can’t think of a better example for myself and every other Christian who still wants to live correctly in God’s eyes to notice than the Pharisees that Jesus called hypocrites in Matthew 23. Verses 27 and 28 say this: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” The Lord uses an interesting simile here when he describes the Pharisees and scribes as whited Sepulchers. He says that they appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. This would be like buying some bananas that appear perfectly ripe at the grocery store, but after peeling, there is a brown mush on the inside. What does this mean? The Pharisees didn’t live what they taught... they were hypocrites!

Hypocrisy was the downfall of the Pharisees and it will be the downfall of the church today if we don’t guard against it! It is so important to practice what we preach and believe. As we have said, hypocrisy, although a big thing, can be subtle. In other words, sometimes we get caught up trying to live everybody else’s life and tell everyone else what the Bible teaches while neglecting our own lives and living any ol’ way.

Too many times we’re like the Pharisees, full of hypocrisy and iniquity within. It’s past time we cleaned house on members of the church who break out their “Sunday best” on Sunday morning, but are as corrupt as corrupt can be Monday through Saturday. As long as we have members like this, our hopes to convert lost souls to Christ will be futile, because whatever progress is being made in converting a lost soul is at the same time being undone by hypocritical “Christians”.

Brethren, if the church is going to continue to stand in the future, we must become the type of Christians who are whited sepulchers-both inside and out. -OPA



*LET MARRIAGE BE HONORED.. continued from page one*

and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.” Remember, Peter says, the husband and wife are in this thing called “life” together. It is not all about you, husband.

Be understanding and considerate of your wife - honor her! If the husband does not honor his wife his prayers may be hindered, a terrifying prospect indeed.

We know Paul is not giving the husband license to be a dictator over his wife because right after he declares the husband to be the head of the wife he writes, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for her." Continuing he says, "So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church." He concludes these remarkable exhortations with a grand summary of the marriage relationship as God desires it. "Nevertheless, let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband." I affirm without the possibility of contradiction that if that one statement were adhered to in every marriage there would be no more divorces. Happy husbands, wives, children, and homes would be the result, not to mention a better society and world.

Based upon these wonderful principles in Ephesians 5 let me make some more specific suggestions.

1. Wives, show and verbalize respect for your husbands. Men need and want respect, especially from their wives. Do not demean him in public (or private for that matter) by constantly disagreeing with his decisions or pronouncements. I have heard women talk about how foolish and foolhardy their husbands are in front of others. Not only is that contemptuous and unwise; I is wrong. If you have a problem with a decision of your husband take it up in private in the spirit of love, but do not shame your man in public. As a Christian wife, you are commanded to show respect for your husband.

2. Husbands, do not belittle your wives in public either. Remember, Paul says you are to love your wife as you love yourself. You would never belittle or make fun of yourself before others, would you? You would not embarrass yourself in front of others on purpose, as I have seen some men do to their wives, and then laugh about it. Well, you are commanded to love your wife as you love yourself. Do not do that to her either! When you dishonor her, you dishonor yourself, and more seriously you dishonor the Lord.

3. Fight fairly! Make every fight a fair fight. Now,

I am not talking about a physical fight, or what we used to call in Texas, "a knockdown drag out!" I am talking about an argument, or if someone prefers a more polite term, a discussion. I believe that some marriages would benefit from some healthy fighting, or if you please discussions. What happens too often is one spouse or the other has a grievance but instead of getting it out in the open, holds it in until it festers into an open sore that is all but impossible to heal. A good lancing of the grievance before it festers would help stave off a fatal infection. In other words, get the problem on the table and work it over! Focus your emotions, however, on the grievance and problem, and not on your spouse. That is what I mean by fight fairly. Never, in the middle of an argument, say, "You are just like your mother!" or, "You are just as worthless as your father!" That is not fair, and though it may make you feel better, and cause considerable pain to your spouse, it will not solve the issue. Now you have made matters overwhelmingly worse. Also, if you are not faring too well in the discussion do not resort to out of bounds blows such as, "Just like twenty five years ago!" You promised to forgive and forget. Now you wound your spouse by bringing up the past. That is not fair. Again I say, focus on the problem and not on your spouse. You are commanded to love your husband or your wife, and it is a sin to vent your anger and bitterness on your mate. You dishonor yourself, your marriage vows, and your Lord who joined you together as one. Fight fairly!

4. Forgive. No one is perfect, not even you. When you misspeak, forget an important date, or show a lack of sensitivity and good sense you expect your spouse to be forgiving. Your husband or wife forgave you the last time you messed up so you need to remember and forgive too. Someone has said that love is blind, but marriage is an eye opener. If you go into marriage thinking that you are going to find perfection you are going to get your eyes opened. Again, I say no one is perfect, not even you!

5. Let your husband or wife know you love him or her, in words, as well as actions. Certainly, you should show by your actions that you love your spouse, but I really want to emphasize the importance of saying the words, "I love you!" For some reason men more so than women have a problem with this. Your wife, and your husband too for that matter, will never tire of hearing the words, "I love you!" I was in a meeting one time and made that statement and after services a woman walked up

with her husband at her side. She said, "My husband has never told me he loves me in all the years we have been married." I asked how long they had been married and she replied that they had been married over forty years. I looked at the man and asked why he never told her he loved her and his reply was, "She knows I love her." I answered, "Maybe so, but she wants to hear you say the words." Do you know he would not say it, even after some of the other members of the church came up and joined in the conversation. They urged him, "Go on and tell her you love her." He did not do it. I guess really, for some reason, he could not get the words out. Surely, as he said, after forty years she knew he loved her but she wanted, and needed, to hear the words. Always let your spouse know that you still love them. You need to verbalize it. "Honey, I love you. More than my mother and father. More than my job. More than my car, or my boat, or my motorcycle. I love you more than anything or anybody in this world." Paul avers in I Corinthians 13 that love never fails, and a marriage based upon and sustained by the kind of love he describes there will never fail.

6. Marry a Christian! The person you marry is going to have more of an influence on your life than anyone else so marry the right person. I had a brother tell me one time, "Jerry, the number one reason for divorce is marriage!" I told him he was going to have to explain that statement to me. He did and his explanation was very astute. "Too many get married," he explained, "For the wrong reason at the wrong time to the wrong person, things inevitably do not work out, and a divorce is the result." I agreed he had described the number one reason for divorce. Marry the right person, for the right reason, at the right time. Above all, marry a Christian. You are a Christian who loves the Lord so marry someone who shares the same values. Let me go a step further and urge you to marry a "good" Christian. By my use of the word "good" I mean, of course, be sure the person is really a Christian, not just nominally but in practice. Surely you know that just because someone claims to be a Christian does not mean they really practice what they proclaim. Investigate and find out if this person you are contemplating marrying really loves the Lord as you do. You love to go to church and attend gospel meetings. Does this person? You love to sing praises to God. Does he or she have any interest in singing? You love to read and study the Bible. Does this person? Is this person going to help you rear the children you expect to have in the way of the Lord, or will you be on your own in that arduous task? These questions are more important than whether he is handsome and makes

a lot of money or whether she is beautiful. If you do not investigate the spiritual matters before you are married you will regret it later, and perhaps for the rest of your life. Sometimes, people ignore the good advice just offered and go ahead and marry hoping these matters will just work themselves out. If you go ahead and marry someone who is not a Christian then do not get mad at him or her when they refuse to go to church with you. Do not get angry when they will not help you teach your children about the Lord. Do not be resentful when they do everything they can to hinder you from attending gospel meetings, singings, and get-togethers with other Christians. Do not get mad. Remember, your spouse is not a Christian. You knew that when you married him or her. You are a Christian, but your spouse is not. You knew that, I repeat, when you married! My point is, of course, do not marry that person in the first place and you will save yourself a lot of heartache and anxiety. Marry a Christian. You may have to wait if you are going to be that discriminating, but it will be worth the wait. Wait for the right person, at the right time, and for the right reason. You will be glad you did.

Let marriage be honored by all!" declared the Apostle Paul. Marriage was ordained by God to be the basis and backbone of society. When marriage is dishonored in any society the foundation crumbles. One of the reasons the mighty Roman Empire collapsed is because the institution of marriage collapsed. Our nation's foundations are collapsing at an alarming rate for the same reason. As Christians, in a corrupt and decadent world, we stand on the solid foundation of Jesus and His word. May our marriages be Christian marriages. misterjld@msn.com



*LET NO MAN SEEK HIS OWN . . . continued from page two*

witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Let's notice some of these terms: We all know what adultery is as well as fornication and uncleanness. However, folks sometimes argue about what lasciviousness means. Anyone can look up the meaning so there should not be any misunderstanding, but there is! Thayer all but called the word "dancing" didn't he? Notice:

“indecent bodily movements, unchaste handling of males and females.” How can anyone who has ever witnessed the modern dances of today argue that it is not lasciviousness? The word “variance” simply means “a quarrel or wrangling such as a contentious attitude.” We sometimes see that do we not? “Emulations” refer to jealousy. “Seditions” refer to dissension and division. Have you ever noticed anyone who is divisive and often in some sort of quarrel? Well, Paul says it is wrong and those who do that will not inherit the kingdom of God. “Heresies” refer to those who create factions in the church. That is also wrong and must be avoided. “Revellings” have to do with drinking and dancing parties.

Then, in verse 21 Paul mentions “such like.” Some might seek to argue here, but it would seem that a person seeking the truth would agree that “such like” includes any sin, or act, that in any way resembles any of the sins just mentioned. For example: Adultery is specifically forbidden. However, any practice that might lead to that, or resembles it in some way such as heavy petting or improper behavior with one of the opposite sex would be condemned under “such like.” If not, why not? Drunkenness is specifically condemned. It is wrong to be intoxicated. Why then, would not the use of alcohol in any form be condemned under “such like?” To get drunk involves the use of alcohol so how can one argue that one can use it as long as they don’t get drunk? Why is that not “such like?” If this is an incorrect position what does “such like” mean with respect to drunkenness? Listen brethren, this is serious business. Paul said, “...They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:21) “Such like” means something we may be sure of that. Think on these things. DLK

## Announcements

The church of Christ at Leawood Village in Joplin, MO has many of the song books previously published by Lynwood Smith. We would be pleased to send them to any congregation that would like to have them. We will pay the shipping costs. For details as to published dates and quantities, please contact Wallace Lea as follows: [wllcleac@gmail.com](mailto:wllcleac@gmail.com) or 417-206-8349.

## Our Departed

**PARKER-** Lavelle Prince Parker, 88 of Bremen, Georgia passed away on June 15, 2014. She was born on January 25, 1926 in Randolph County, Alabama. Her parents were the late James Foster Prince and Fannie Elizabeth Scott Prince. In addition to her parents, she was also preceded in death by her husband, Albert M. “Pete” Parker, Jr.; sisters, Lura Wilson and Alice Ann Thompson; a brother, Floyd Prince. She is survived by her daughter, Elaine Parker Graves of Rock Hill, S.C.; two sisters, Ruth Maharry and her husband John, and Betty Scott all of LaGrange; three grandchildren and one great grandchild. Lavelle was a long-standing member of Temple Church of Christ. She will be missed by the congregation. She retired from Sewell Manufacturing Company. She was a talented seamstress, and later performed alterations for Dillard’s. She was the definition of the word “go-getter.” She only knew one speed and that was fast. She was an excellent cook and housekeeper. Probably the one thing, most people will remember about her, is her quick-wit and wonderful sense of humor. She saw humor in almost every situation and usually kept the crowd laughing. It was my honor to assist Brother Ronny Wade in conducting her funeral service. The beautiful singing was by the Prince family. Brother Larry Thompson conducted the service at the grave side and Brother Don Jackson lead the closing prayer.-Rick Martin

**CAYSON** -Bonnie Bryson Cayson of Lakeland (Memphis), TN was born April 28, 1921 and passed away February 21, 2014 at St. Francis Bartlet Hospital at the age of 92 years. He was born at Ratcliffe, MS. His parents were William Dennes and Sarah Leigh Cayson. Brother Cayson was known by many as B.B. Cayson. He was a preacher of the Gospel and a business man, and was a hard worker all his life, his first wife, Annie Lou passed away in 2002. He then married Georgia Clymer Cayson. B. B. and Annie Lou had three children: one daughter, Judy Dunn of Lakeland, TN; Bobby Cayson of Pullington, TN, and Windell Cayson, who preceded his father in death. Bonnie leaves to mourn his passing his second wife, Georgia; his daughter, Judy and her husband, Richard; his son, Bobby, eight grandchildren; thirteen great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, four brothers and three sisters. It was my honor to officiate for this friend of many years, fellow preacher and brother in Christ. The singing was furnished by the congregation where Bonnie and Georgia worshipped. His spirit has returned to God who gave it and his mortal body awaits the resurrection in the Memorial Park Cemetery. -Paul Nichols

**OFFILL-** Sandra Kaye Offill was born March 11, 1947 to Louis and the late Melba Vanlandingham in McAllister, OK. She lost her 7 year battle with Alzhiemers on Thursday, July 10, 2014. She is also

survived by one brother, Mike of Ovilla, Texas and his wife Debbie. The Vanlandingham's moved to California in 1958. While growing up in Porterville Sandra met Weldon B. Offill and the rest is history. The childhood sweethearts married on May 7, 1965, and to this union were born four children. Janet Stein and husband Niles of Tucson, AZ, Brian Offill and wife Michele; Kelly Offill and wife Sandy, all of Livermore, and Keith Offill and Kim who presently live in Tracy. Sandra was blessed with 8 grandchildren who were the pride of her life. Sandra was baptized into Christ in 1971 and was a devout member of the church of Christ throughout the rest of her life. She raised her children to love the Lord and instilled great values into them. Sandra was a wonderful homemaker. Her home was always clean, neat, pleasant, and to sit at her table was a rare treat indeed. She was an expert cook. Sandra loved to laugh and make others happy and she will be missed. A large crowd gathered at the Fry Funeral home in Tracy, CA on July 15 for her funeral service. She is to be transported to OK and laid to rest next to her mother to await the resurrection. Sandra was the very first person we baptized when we began the mission work in Fremont, CA in 1971. Sadly, she was also the first of those we baptized to pass away. She was always faithful to attend the services as long as health permitted. It was my sad duty to speak words of comfort and warning to those gathered at her service. Don L. King

**LAY** - Beatrice Lay was born in Granite, OK Aug. 19, 1920 and passed away June 2, 2014 in San Diego, CA. She is survived by her husband of 73 1/2 years Fred Lay and 5 children; Freddie, Del, Larry, Dan and Tanya Romaya and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was a charter member of the Pepper Drive Church of Christ in El Cajon, CA which was established about 1959. Numerous preachers, other Christians and people in need enjoyed the warmth and hospitality of the home she shared with her husband who also served as an Elder of the El Cajon church for many years. An avid student of the Bible she was very well versed in Scripture and is the only person I personally know of who read the entire set of Clarke's commentaries. She had a remarkable capacity for giving. Growing up in the depression, as many of her generation, left her with great compassion for the poor and struggling. She knew hard work and sacrifice. From humble beginnings she grew into a strong and godly woman who gave of herself in every way. She along with my father truly embraced the Biblical principle of contentment and guided their lives by the Lord's Words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." She truly had the heart and hands of a servant. A standing room crowd honored the life and example of her Christian faith. Her faith in God's promises were absolutely rock solid. She had no fear of death and repeatedly expressed her willingness and readiness to meet the Lord. Though other songs were sung, the one song she insisted that we sing at her service was, "I Will Arise and Go To Jesus." It expressed the humility that characterized her life.

Life-long friend and church member Walt Fisher shared the honor with this writer of speaking at mom's service. Grand children Lance Lay and Leahora Romaya shared poignant memories of their grandmother. We take great comfort and joy from a promise made to Daniel in the very last verse of that book: "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of days." (Dan. 12:13) The family expresses deep gratitude for the cards, calls, prayers and out pouring of love and support. -Larry Lay

## Bonds of Matrimony

In the afternoon of June 13 at the beautiful Thorncrown Chapel in Eureka Springs, AR Taylor William Smith and Rachel Lynn Newberry exchanged wedding vows in the presence of a large crowd of friends and relatives. Taylor is the son of Bill and Karen Smith of Columbia, MO and Rachel is the daughter of Alfred and Dianna Newberry, of Harrison, AR. This fine young Christian couple will reside in College Station, Texas and worship with the Hoyte church near Cameron. May their love for each other and the Lord be a constant source of encouragement as they travel life's road together. The writer officiated.- Ronny Wade

## Field Reports

The Memorial Day Meeting in Turlock was a good one from the preaching of Nathan Battey, cooperation from congregations far and near. We had brethren from as far away as Georgia, Louisiana, Oregon, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri and perhaps others I cannot remember. Preachers came and assisted in the meeting by their presence and prayers, song leading and encouragement. The congregations in Manteca and Oakdale especially helped us in many ways as they have in the past. We thanked them and appreciated the sacrifice they made along with the personal expense they were out. It is good to know there are such loving brethren that worked so hard to make the meeting a good one. The young Christians conducted themselves admirably as they always have in our yearly meeting. They are such a great encouragement to us and came in great numbers. What a blessing. Many said they would come back next year, and we look forward to them coming. Nathan preached sermons that were timely for the church. We were blessed with him and Savannah his wife including her entire family from Louisiana. The crowds filled the house almost every service. Don King will hold the meeting next year the Lord willing. May God bless the brotherhood everywhere. Richard DeGough 1809 Flora Vista Dr. Hughson, Calif. E-mail: rdegough@gmail.com

Greg Gay, June 25, 2014. I was in Weatherford, TX June 11 - 15 and enjoyed being with the brethren

there. I enjoyed the hospitality of Percy and Zoe Hill, who treated me very well, and all the great visits and meals with others in the congregation. The members were active in inviting their friends to the meeting and several outsiders attended. There was good support from surrounding congregations including preaching brethren Joe Norton and Melvin Blalock. The meeting closed with one baptism, the result of ongoing studies by the brethren and Melvin who works with the congregation. I preached at Edmond, OK in May the Sunday after my Aunt Luvilla Spradley's funeral that was lovingly conducted by Ronny Wade and Joe Norton. Locally, I have recently enjoyed hearing Nathan Battey at the Memorial Day meeting at Turlock, Frankie Brancato at Auburn, and Jimmy Cating at Placerville. Our work continues at home with the 64th• St. congregation in Sacramento. 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747

Steven Bowen, 105 N. Lenard, Red Oak, Texas 75154, 972-824-5197 mail to: steven.bowen@redoakjsd.org  
It has been since January, I gave our last field report; so we are glad to give an update and perhaps offer some encouragement, as the great apostle does for us in the epistles. Despite a few difficulties in 2013- dealing with Rheumatoid arthritis early, then our July 5 surgery later - the Lord continued to bless our work and seemed to push the devil aside as if he were not there, reminding us of the Spirit's promise in Ephesians, that God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (3:20). The arthritis, by the way, could put a man down for good; but we're blessed to have little more inconvenience than sore hands and shoulders and having to take a couple of shots a month. Thanks for your prayers on that regard. With some of those difficulties held at bay, the Lord accelerated our responsibilities in 2014. In January, we began working a full week a month with the congregation in Little Rock, a work where the Lord gave immediate "increase" and has allowed for such increase steadily these first six months, including both inward and outward growth. The brethren there have joined in with us in the many studies that we are able to conduct. Terry Hays, Kevin Huneutt, Doug Edwards, and Maurice Chandler have all assisted with studies. Appropriately, at least one day a trip Maurice takes us around in his work van. Kevin has spearheaded much of the work with the TV leads and went with us several days a month until he recently got a new job. He continues to text us every day of the month, however, to keep us in line. Doug and Debbie have a little "chamber" fixed up for us, and we spend several nights with them, including studying each month together with a family from Jacksonville as well as having a study in their home for several of the members. Terry and Leah Hays (our kin-folks) usually share their home a few days each trip and give us a chance to enjoy being with and study with our niece and nephew Sam and Emma. We thought our schedule was full with adding Little Rock, plus our usual 11 days in Oklahoma, but at the death of

our good friend George Sears in January George's son Chuck asked us if we could come a few days and help the Deer Park, Texas congregation with some studies. We did not know how it would work time-wise, but starting in March we have given them about 4 days a month, covering the 1st Sunday. Chuck has been an amazing support and worker for the Lord, becoming our study-partner, encourager, and taxi driver, among other helps. The work there has shown great progress, too. Several people have opened their homes for studies with both members and those searching for the truth, including Zach and Amanda Weiberg, Chuck and Heidi Sears, Kelmer and Jackie Smith, Gary and Linda Odom, and Iwona Sears. Of course, I must mention, too, that Marilyn, my wife; not only keeps the home running smoothly when we are away but helps us so much in the work, especially in the Oklahoma efforts. One more thing: We have reprinted our 3000 Words That Can Lead You To Heaven tract. Please consider ordering some of these for your congregation. E-mail me, and/or send \$35/100 to Guy McAlister, 2800 Jills Trial, Edmond, OK 73012. Guy's work in designing the tracts and handling the orders has been remarkable. We need your help now to re-print The Blood of the Lamb tract. We need to print 4000 to make it affordable. If you will, please order some now. We are having to raise the price to \$75/100 for this tract, but I know every congregation will be blessed to share this discussion among the members and in your evangelistic work. God bless you, and--as Paul writes - please Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thessalonians 5:25).

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com July 15- Our meeting in Dardanelle, AR was well attended with visitors from surrounding congregations. It was good to have brother Doug Edwards with us. He has been a great help to this church and is esteemed highly by all. Our next meeting was with the church in Lebanon, MO where we once lived. Crowds were good and the association with these brethren was uplifting. They continue to work together for the good of the cause of Christ in that area. At Greenville, SC we found the church working and united. Their outreach to the community is seeking to share the gospel with thousands of non-members. We had visitors from the community as well as brethren who drove many miles to encourage us in this gospel effort. The annual fourth of July meeting in Springfield was a great success. Over nine hundred brethren gathered from churches all over this nation to study and sing praises to God. It was truly an encouraging time. We go next, Lord willing, to Sentinel, OK, July 13-20, Cleburne, TX July 23-27, Moore, OK Aug. 16-17 and Fossil Creek for the annual Texas Labor Day Meeting Aug. 29-31. May the Lord bless us all with His favor and continued presence in our lives.

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## THE BACK PAGE...

### REMEMBER ME FOR GOOD

By *CARL M. JOHNSON*

Nehemiah is one of the really outstanding men in OT history. While facing intense criticism and opposition, he resolutely led the small Israelite community in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem for its physical protection. He also demanded the Israelites obey God's law and, therefore, provided for their spiritual as well as their physical welfare. Without his magnificent contributions you wonder if this struggling and discouraged colony of Jews could have survived. His unselfish and generous nature is shown by the fact that he gave all these years of devoted service to his people without any monetary compensation whatsoever. He did, however, ardently long to be remembered and ultimately rewarded by God. In his last recorded words he pleads, "Remember me, O my God, for good" (Neh. 13:31).

Asking God to remember our good works is just as appropriate as asking Him to "blot out and remember no more" our confessed sins. Understanding that appropriateness Nehemiah asks God to "spare him according to the greatness of his mercy" (22), and then adds the plea for God to remember the good things he has accomplished.

It is crucial that God remembers our good works because there will be degrees of reward in heaven based upon those works, just as there will be degrees of punishment in hell (Mt. 16:24-27).

Our own society recognizes degrees of guilt and punishment. In the wrongful taking of human life one may be convicted of involuntary manslaughter, voluntary manslaughter, murder in the third degree, second degree, or first degree. The guilt increases with each of these categories and so does the severity of the corresponding punishment.

God also recognizes degrees of guilt and intends to punish the lost in proportion to the severity of their guilt. Jesus says it will be "more tolerable" for some in the day of judgment than for others (Mt. 11:21-24). Hebrews 10:24-29 says some will receive a much "sorer punishment" than others. If there is a "sorer" punishment there must be one of lesser intensity called a "sore" punishment.

Jesus says the servant who knows the master's will and does not do it shall be beaten with many stripes. However, the servant who does not know the master's will and does things worthy of stripes will be beaten with few stripes (Lk. 12:41-48). This parable applies only to the lost because the righteous will receive no stripes. It continues the thread of teaching that says the greater the opportunity, the greater the guilt, and the greater the guilt, the greater the punishment.

The converse principle applies to rewards in heaven. Jesus says He will "reward every man according to his works" (Mt. 16:24-27). If you have a dozen people working for you and you pay them "according to their work," it is unlikely you will pay each of them the same amount. The word "reward" means to "render a due; to pay a debt" (Analytical Greek Lexicon 41), and the word is not to be confused with "salvation."

Salvation is not the payment of a debt owed to us by God, but rather it is a "gift" God gives us when we obey the gospel of Christ and abide in Him (Rom. 6:23).

God's general acceptance or condemnation of us will depend upon our acceptance or rejection of the gospel of Christ in this life, but the character of His approval and the measure of our reward will depend upon the kind of life we have lived (Mt. 25:21).

Undoubtedly, there will be some in heaven, such as little infants, that have done no works at all. Suppose also an aged man living in a distant mission field, and never having heard the gospel, attends a mission meeting, learns the truth and obeys it, but dies shortly after being baptized. Will he eventually enter the eternal city? Absolutely! His reward in heaven, however, will not be the same as that of the devout Christian who has fought the good fight, finished the course, kept the faith, and abounded in works of benevolence over a long lifetime.

Jesus assures us that good deeds and sacrifices made for Him become treasures in heaven (Mt. 6: 19-21; 19:21; 25:31-46; Lk. 12:33). Paul also says being generous and rich in good works builds treasures in heaven (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

Receiving the reward of such treasures is not the only reason for rendering spiritual service. Love for Christ, appreciation of forgiveness, and gratitude for salvation are powerful reasons for serving. However, expectation of reward is an essential ingredient of faith and an important source of motivation (Heb. 11:6).

Nehemiah's last words would serve well as the last words of any person of faith. We must never be dismayed or deterred by the absence of man's appreciation, but we must continue to abound in good works. Then, like Nehemiah, we may confidently appeal to God for remembrance and reward. "Remember me, O my God, for good." [cmjthebackpage@embarqmail.com](mailto:cmjthebackpage@embarqmail.com)