

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).

VOL. LXXXIII

LEBANON, MISSOURI • DECEMBER 2011

NO. 12

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

By *BENNIE CRYER*

Nowhere in the scriptures are we advised to use the church at Corinth as we are first introduced to it as an example to pattern churches in the 21st Century after. There were too many divisions in it as we have just seen and this was just one of their problems. Paul closed verse 17 of this first chapter by stating the mission Christ gave to him of preaching the gospel with all that is involved in that task. He was to fulfill his mission without using the wisdom of words. This instruction does not mean he was not to use wisdom nor words. He was to employ “wisdom that is from above,” James 1:17 and not the wisdom that “is earthly, sensual, devilish,” v16. This earthly wisdom is what the Corinthians liked and longed for in anyone that was to be their leader. The gospel of Christ requires both wisdom and words but they must come from above. Otherwise the cross of Christ would be emptied of its meaning and power in the salvation of souls that were lost in sin. There is still a danger of this same effect happening today.

1 Corinthians 1:18, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” The subject matter (the cross) of the preaching was what the Greeks considered foolishness. That is, it is without reason. It did not come about by the proper use of the human mind. Though they were perishing they could not comprehend, or did not want to know about another source of knowledge that had nothing to do with their philosophers, institutions of higher learning, and their so called pagan deities. So Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, enters upon the task of teaching them about the revelations that come from heaven as he did to the Athenians in Acts 17:19-21, “And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? 20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know

therefore what these things mean. 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.)” He had better success in Corinth, though he encountered the same problem. Many of the Corinthians heard him preach the gospel, believed, and were baptized, Acts 18:8-10.. In these verses the Lord also informed Paul that he had “much people in this city.” These many people needed to be converted by hearing these words of wisdom from heaven. The preaching that belongs to the cross is the same as the preaching that which belongs to the gospel. In this type of preaching is contained the power God uses to save those that are perishing. Those who are saved depend on the cross and all things that are involved in it just as they did when they obeyed the gospel and were saved from their past sins. 1:19, “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”

It is written in Isaiah 29:14. “Destroy” does not mean annihilation. The idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well being, (Vine’s). The wisdom of the wise, according to the world, is still all around us. There are many prudent people, men of understanding that still and will abide. Our young people are sometimes lured into the flock of the perishing by their clever and vaunted knowledge. As smart as they are, however, they cannot tell the perishing what to do to be saved from their sins without going to the revelation we have from God. That precious old Bible is the only source for the saving knowledge in God’s great scheme of redemption. This must be successfully ingrained in our children before they go off to our institutions of higher learning. This verse teaches that some 700 years B.C. God knew what he was going to do with those who would become so knowledgeable they would leave him who created the world and all things there in completely out of their trove of human knowledge and wisdom. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked,” Galatians 6:7. 1:20, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the

continued on page five . . .

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXXIII No. 12



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 9

The Church at Corinth 1

Where Two or Three are Gathered..... 2

The Querist Column 3

Building a Christian Home 3

Hiding The Light 7

Jefferson’s Secret Bible 12

FROM THE FIELDS 10,11

PUBLISHER

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

ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

Ronny F. Wade
 P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240

EDITORIAL STAFF

Bennie Cryer	Greg Gay
Billy Dickinson	Carl Johnson
Jerry Dickinson	Barney Owens
Johnny Elmore	Kevin Presley

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE WEBSITE:

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year..... \$13.00
 Also On The Internet

Published Monthly by **Old Paths Advocate**, Lebanon, MO
 A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
 periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
 Send Form 3579 to **Old Paths Advocate**
 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550.

All articles published in **Old Paths Advocate** contain the view of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and publishers. If you have any questions, please direct them to the author listed at the heading of the article.

Editorial

“WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER...”

By: DON L. KING

Now and again, a church member announces plans to go on a vacation where there is no faithful congregation. A mention is made that plans are to be gone about two weeks. Someone may inquire where he or she plans to worship on Lord’s Day and the answer is, “wherever we happen to be at the time.” Then Matthew 18:20 is quoted as proof such behavior is approved by the Lord. That verse reads, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

When I was just a boy I recall hearing of brethren who worshiped while on a fishing trip, hunting trip or vacation, and they simply brought along a loaf of unleavened bread, some fruit of the vine, a cup, song books, etc. and had a service among the few who happened to be there. Many felt Matthew 18:20 provided permission for such a service to take place. Not a great deal of study had been done about the topic at the time so most thought little about it. However, a careful study of the 18th chapter of Matthew will prove that was never the intent behind the Savior’s words.

We notice first in verse 1 it was the disciples who had approached Jesus asking, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” This provides us with the setting, or context. The Master was speaking to His disciples. Of course, the church had not yet come into existence but Jesus is speaking of things of importance when that happened. This is what is often called “preparatory” teaching of Christ.

In verse 15, Jesus shows what is to be done when a brother sins against another brother in the church. In such a case, the offended brother is to go to him who has sinned against him. He is to “...go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” Notice that the brother who has been offended is not to tell the matter to everyone else at this time. He is to keep it between himself and the brother who has offended him. This is sometimes not the case, sadly. Occasionally, nearly everyone learns of the problem before the confrontation between the two brethren takes place. This teaching of Jesus is not intended to be put into use when the problem, or sin, is already widely known because it was committed publicly. That is to be handled differently. However, when the

continued on page six

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By *RONNY F. WADE*

Question: If an individual divorces his/her companion without the cause of fornication and later remarries do they commit adultery? If at some point after that the first spouse of the individual dies, may this person continue in the current marriage without sin?

Answer: If I understand the situation presented in above question, the querist is saying that two Christians are married. One of them divorces the other without scriptural cause. Later this individual marries someone else. Sometime after this, the original spouse dies. Does this free this person to remain in the second marriage? First of all we need to hear Jesus in Matthew 19:9 “And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.” Hence the answer to the first part of the question is “yes” this person committed adultery when they married after divorcing for an unscriptural reason. They are in an adulterous situation and will remain so as long as they cohabit with this person. Their only right recourse is to dissolve the unscriptural marriage. The second part of the question deals with a situation where the original spouse dies. Does this mean the party is now free to remain in the current marriage? In answer, notice what Paul writes in I Cor. 7:10-11 “Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife.”

First of all in a marriage between two Christians the wife is not to divorce her husband. If, however, she chooses to disobey this command and divorce her husband anyway, she is to remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. The husband is given the same command when the apostle says “and let not the husband divorce his wife.” From these verses we see that the wife has two choices if she obtains an unscriptural divorce from her husband, (1) she may remain unmarried or (2) she can be reconciled to her husband. In the above mentioned case the person did neither, in fact the person did the very thing the scripture forbade “the individual contracted another marriage.” Does the death of the original spouse change any of this? I don’t believe it does. When this person sought and obtained an unscriptural

divorce they forfeited their right to another marriage. When they married anyway their disregard for what the bible taught on the subject landed them in an adulterous situation. Does this mean the person is hopelessly lost? No, of course not. If the individual repents, by getting out of the unscriptural marriage, and lives for the Lord they can and will be forgiven. Many may think that this places an undue burden on the individual in this situation. But may I remind all, of the high price of sin. We sometimes create our own problems. We make our own beds hard to lie on and our consciences hard to live with. Sin comes at a high price. Marriage vows are sacred and must be so regarded by all who fear God. In the view of this writer many have tried to stretch the bible teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage to the point that practically any marriage situation is considered acceptable. To do so is to not only disregard plain bible teaching, but to place the precious souls of many in eternal jeopardy. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net)

Pages From The Past

BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

By *HOMER A. GAY*

Due to several requests, we have agreed to publish once again this series of articles first written in 1946 in Old Paths Advocate. The country wit and wisdom is obvious throughout the twelve articles. Lord willing we will publish one a month. We are sure you will enjoy reading from his able pen. DLK

Dedication To my faithful wife, Susie and our two devoted children Luvila and Sonnyboy, who have stood so loyally by me through the years, this work is affectionately dedicated.

The Author

Foreword: No apology by the author, to the readers, is due, in presenting the subject matter of this booklet to the public, since he enters a much neglected field of thought and much needed service to all home builders. The subject is of paramount importance to every child of God and to all who contemplate the Christian life and the building of an earthly home, having the proper environment to insure the development and sustenance of a habitation here, which will prepare the habitants for a “building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.” Hence, to insure

our happiness here and in the world to come, it is essential that all, who have the responsibility of maintaining a home, endeavor that it be a Christian home.

The subject matter of this booklet was first published in 1946, in twelve issues of the Old Paths Advocate, Homer L. King, publisher and co-editor with Homer A. Gay, the author.

The author, Brother Homer A. Gay, having devoted about three decades to the preaching of the gospel and having reared a family to maturity, all of whom are Christians, should qualify him to write these articles with confidence and consistency. It is, therefore, our desire and prayer that this booklet be read by all who are striving to "build a Christian home," and the future generations who may have the same desire.

We believe, a Christian home is fundamentally the greatest asset to every child in the building of a moral and Christian character. Upon this kind of home, depends the future of the church and the nation to a great extent. Then, may we endeavor to build more of such homes.

I believe that one of the most neglected things in the world today is that of building Christian homes. In the beginning God saw the need of a home and established the first one - as a pattern to be followed down through the ages. In Genesis 2:21-24 we read. "And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh". Thus we note a relationship between husband and wife that is sublime - they are ONE flesh.

God's decree was that this male and female should become one, and thus establish a home here on earth. The choosing of a mate, someone to be one's partner through life, is no small thing. In Old Testament times the parents were very careful to see to it that their sons chose the right kind of companions. In the 24th chapter of Genesis we see quite a lengthy search made for a wife for Isaac. The Jews were not to marry those of another nation (Deut. 7:3-4) "For they will turn away thy

sons from following me, that they may serve other gods." This was many times proven true, that when they would marry outside of the Nation, they would drift away from God. That same principle is true with us today. We are a Nation (1 Pet. 2:9), and I believe that God is just as much interested in us as He was in Israel. This is shown in I Cor. 7:39, where he says, "the woman is bound to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ONLY IN THE LORD."

These, and other like Scriptures, should be carefully considered by every Christian boy and girl, when they contemplate marriage. The only way to have a Christian home is for those in the home to be Christians, and a boy or a girl has a poor chance of converting a sinner husband or wife after they have married them. The sinner knows that the Christian is giving undue ground when they consent to marry them, and that weakens their confidence in them as a Christian, and thus weakens the chances of converting them to the Lord.

I believe that if it is wise (and all agree that it is) to consider the back-ground in selecting a cow, pig, horse, or chickens, then surely some consideration should be given when choosing the one to be the father or mother of our children. Too many young couples today look only at the car the boy drives, or the dress and make-up the girl has on while they are courting, only to find out that the car was borrowed or bought on credit, and the payments not kept up; and the make-up is easily washed off, and that cheaper dresses may not look so appealing.

The Lord intended for young folks to marry, but marriage is for the purpose of building the right kind of homes, and certainly should be considered more seriously than it is by the masses of the people today.

A Christian boy should stop and ask these questions: Will this girl suit me when she is old? Will she help me to bring the children up to be Christians, or will she want them to go with her to the Methodist or some other sectarian Sunday school? Will she be willing to get by on my salary, or is she used to spending far more money than I will have for her? A girl should also ask some questions: Will this young man work? How will he look in overalls? Can I love and adore him when he is old and broken? Is he interested in going to worship, and will he help me to raise the children for the Lord, or will he set before them an example of drinking,

cursing, etc.? These are not just idle questions: they should be pondered well. Many homes have been wrecked all because these questions have not been considered before marriage.

Christian boys and girls should be very careful as to the kind of company they keep. If they keep company frequently with worldly or sectarian boys and girls, the first thing they know they are in love and wanting to marry. So, the proper way to stop that is to never let it start -just seek the proper kind of company.

I am constantly being confronted with this objection: "Brother Gay, there are no Christian boys here for my girl to associate with," or "there are no Christian girls here for my boy to go with." Well, now, that is something to think about, but I have already mentioned where considerable search was made for the right kind of a wife for Isaac. And I believe there should be something done about that now. If I lived off, where my children could not go to school, regardless of how much I liked my work or job, the folks would advise me to move and get somewhere, so those children could have educational advantages. That would be good advice, and I believe that we owe it to our children to see that they have a chance at a fair education, but I believe that it is far more important that we see to it that they have an opportunity to meet other Christian boys and girls to associate with, and from among whom to choose their companions for life.

Boys and girls should consider the back-ground, religion, reputation, health and temperament of those with whom they contemplate marriage.

.....

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH cont. from page one

disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

The Holy Spirit recognized that Paul was writing this epistle to both Jew and Gentile. That these included the Jews who continually plagued Paul and his work with their mixture of Judaism with the gospel may be inferred from Isaiah 29:14; 33:18; and 44:25 from which these terms came from. Their counterpart was found among the Gentile intellectuals. In what place has God's wisdom placed these learned men? The wise refers to their so called spiritual teachers or those who were continually seeking after human reasoning and wisdom of the world. The scribes especially were the lawyers under the Old Testament and considered

experts in interpreting the law of Moses. The disputants of the world were those who loved debating. They were not defenders of the gospel of Christ. They studied to debate on any subject. God has assigned them a place that he calls "foolish." That is where they are. That is where God has left them. They are in the state of foolishness. If this is the way God looked upon certain people then, that is the way he looks on their kinsmen in the 21st century. When a brother or sister claims they are more intellectual than others God would probably place them in with those who held the same attitude at Corinth. Worldly wisdom has no place in God's scheme of redemption. It is a wonderful thing for Christians to have a high education with many degrees so long as they confine their teaching and preaching in the kingdom of God to the doctrines of Christ and magnify his name. In 2 Corinthians 2:17 Paul is led to write: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." "Corrupt" means to adulterate and especially refers, literally, to tavern keepers who would take pure wine and weaken it with water or some other minerals and thus defraud the purchaser. Some at Corinth were doing this with the word of God. That is, they were weakening it with their worldly wisdom so that it no longer had the power to save. "Sincerity" actually means "purity." It describes how the apostles and their fellow laborers handled the word of God. It was the pure word of God they preached and not the diluted word that some are proclaiming today. Such preaching will not save souls. It is deluding those that hear them. In what category does the revelation from heaven place them? Their place is in the "foolish" column. That is where they are.

1:21, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." In the wisdom of the wise (wise according to worldly standards) and in the understanding of the prudent (prudent in agreement with the world) they could not discover the plans of God for the redemption and salvation of man from sin. God did not leave the Jew without testimony nor the heathen without evidence of his existence (Romans 1:19-20; 3:1-4). Since this was the case God's conclusion was: "they are without excuse." "The foolishness of preaching" does not mean the heathens thought just preaching was "foolishness" for they thought what we might call "pulpiterring" was the proper way to broadcast their worldly wisdom. If the apostles had preached the ideas of the heathen philosophers those worldly sophisticates would not consider that foolishness because they were in the habit of doing that very thing. It is the foolishness (foolish in the eyes of men) of the message preached that God had

in mind in this verse. The NIV translates it in this way: "God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believed." The NKJV makes it even more clear: "It pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." The act of preaching itself was not considered foolishness by man nor God. So preaching is put for the subject preached. It seems that many in this 21st Century think or they are beginning to think that there are no patterns in the New Testament and not much in the New Testament that is relative to us today. They of course believe that part of it is airtight but it seems they want to discard a good part of it and cast aside proper methods of interpretation. T.R. Applebury who wrote *Studies In First and Second Corinthians* on page 23 wrote the following words, as quoted by Butler in his commentary on *First Corinthians* published by College Press: "While the basic facts of the gospel are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the gospel is not limited to these facts, for it takes the whole Bible to tell the whole story of the whole counsel of God about salvation through His Son. In the Old Testament it is seen in prophecy, promise, and type. In the New Testament it is seen in the facts of the life of Christ; in the history of conversion to Christ; in the explanation of the essentials of righteousness; in the application of the gospel to daily life; and, finally, in the prophecy of the victory of Christ and of those who accept His gospel." That same gospel message will still save those who are lost in sin today. We must ever keep in mind that we are not to add to this message nor take away from it by our foolish notions. We will not be any more successful than the false teachers that were in the church at Corinth.

.....

WHERE TWO OR THREE continued from page two

matter is private, these are our instructions.

If the offensive brother does not make things right between himself and the brother he has offended, then the circle of brethren grows larger. The offended brother is to take one or two with him and return for another try at reconciliation. Jesus says this is to be done so that "every word may be established." (Verse 16) If this is not successful, Jesus says he is to "tell it to the church." (Verse 17) Notice that though the church has not yet been established, this is given as a preparatory notice. If the fellow also refuses to hear, or heed the church, then the offender is to be treated as "a heathen and a publican." (Verse 17) How are church members to treat a heathen and a publican? Do they continue as though nothing has happened? Not at all. Fellowship is to be withdrawn until the

matter is resolved. Brethren are not to continue as before. This plainly shows we may behave so badly in a private way as to lose fellowship with our brethren; and that in spite of the fact, we may still be worshiping scripturally.

In verse 18 Jesus points out that "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" The original Greek indicates that whatever the disciples would decide to bind on earth would have already been bound in heaven, etc. Since the disciples, or apostles, would be speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they could be sure any teaching given to them by the Spirit would already have been set in order in Heaven. It also follows that whatever the church now binds or looses in accordance with apostolic teaching, or the scriptures, will also be in harmony with what has already been bound or loosed in Heaven.

Notice, please to whom the Lord speaks. In verse 19, the disciples are told that if any two of them should ask anything of God, it would be done for them of the Father, which is in Heaven. We must be careful not to apply this to ourselves as though we are the same as the apostles. It is certainly possible two of us will ask God fervently and it not be granted. Yes, we believe in prayer but we also understand the Lord may answer negatively when He doesn't see it in our best interest to grant our requests. This applied to those disciples hearing Him that day and time. If only two of those men made a decision regarding a disciplinary matter in the church Jesus promised to sanction, or grant it. This whole teaching is in regard to discipline in the church after its establishment. The complete body of apostles would not be required to come together then and agree in such a matter. If only two came together to decide in such matters, God would sanction, and bind or loose, their decision.

Then, in verse 20 Jesus says, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name (or by my authority DLK) there am I in midst of them." As you can see, Jesus did not have under consideration a gathering together of two or three by the riverside, or lakeside, as they "worship" in a convenient setting on vacation. That was never in His mind at all. We completely miss the meaning of the passage when we so misinterpret it. Such an application is an abuse of the Truth. Next month, we may consider more along this line. Think on these things. DLK

HIDING THE LIGHT

By BARNEY OWENS

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. (Mt. 5:14-16).

While assisting the brethren at McAlester, Ok in a Gospel Meeting some years ago, a room was provided for me at the Holiday Inn. Brother Bob Hayes Sr. and his wife Wilma came to visit with me. He said, "one reason the church is not growing (in number) as it did in years past is because we are hiding our light." He went on to explain, "in years gone by we opened the windows of the church building (no air conditioning) and people would sit on their porches and stop their cars to listen to our singing, often getting some of the preaching too. When somebody wished to obey the gospel, we would head out to the creek. People would walk over or stop their cars, get out and witness the baptism. Now, our windows are closed and the walls insulated, we have baptisteries in the buildings, so, all the people see and hear is our going in and coming out of the church building." I thought about what he said then and have meditated upon it many times since. It must be confessed that there is a lot of truth in his observation. There are many ways to hide our light. Although our intentions may be pure, what we think is the best, often proves to be damaging to the Cause we all love. The things promoted as helpful actually hide the light of God's people. How many times have you heard the subject; "let your light shine?" I am dumbfounded as I try to remember the many times I have heard it as an entire lesson in addition to it being a sub-topic on other occasions. This being true there is little if anything that I can mention that has not been said before. However, I implore your patience as a few things are considered. These will have to do with the congregation rather than individual works.

SOME LIGHTS ARE HIDDEN BECAUSE OF INIQUITY

You are not to understand that iniquity abounds in every congregation, however there are some that gloss over some sins and others that openly flaunt-to say nothing of tolerate sin among members. Such was the practice of ancient Corinth. Paul openly brought their attention to the seriousness of their faults. What they were accepting within the church was "such" says he, "as is not so much as named among the Gentiles." Further be declared in order for the guilty "to be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, " they were "to deliver such an one unto Satan. " Admittedly men are not inspired or otherwise personally guided by the Holy Spirit today

as was Paul, yet, when an individual or a congregation outside the church that is filled with sin points out an error, often a rebuff is given to the one wishing to correct the situation rather than those guilty of sin. The Apostle went on to say, "your glorying is not good Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" In other words, although there were some who were not and would not practice the sins to which he called their attention, they still would be marked by the awfulness of the tolerated sin. The least that could be said is the congregation was hiding their light (I Cor. 5:1, 5, 6, 7). It does us well to learn the lesson because the world although filled with iniquity expects better of churches of Christ. Make sure the light is not hidden.

DENOMINATIONALISM HIDES THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

When Jesus began preaching the Kingdom of Heaven division was abroad in the world. The Jews were divided into various sects, all of which claimed to honor and revere God. The Samaritans (lost tribes of Israel) built altars of worship to God in the mountains surrounding their capital. The Gentiles erected altars to gods they did not know nor understand (Acts 17 and 19). Evidently, they thought sincerity was the key to acceptance. Jesus destroyed the walls of division by His cross. All men were given access to God in the one new creation of the Lord (Eph. 2:8-22). Through the one way the infamous prayer of the Savior was answered, "Neither pray for these alone (His disciples), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word (you and me); That they all may be one (all believers); as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that the world (unbelievers) may believe that thou has sent me." (Jn. 17:20-21). Denominationalism has made that prayer ineffective, as the prayers of men toward Heaven cast in the teeth of a loving Savior a desire for division. Hear them pray: "thank God for the many churches so that we can all choose one suitable to our beliefs." As the unbeliever looks for the light, he fails to see it and becomes complacent and comfortable in his unbelief. The light is hidden.

DIGRESSION IN WORSHIP HIDES THE LIGHT

Is there anything worse than denominationalism? If there is, it must be digression in worship. Our brethren who understand and preach the one body of Christ do an about face and propagate division as they want their own way within the church as the denominationalist seeks his desire outside the body of Christ. At the feet of our brethren must be laid the sin of hypocrisy. While members in the churches of men demonstrate that the one Head (Christ Col. 1:18) must be the Head of many bodies (churches Eph. 1:22-23 and 4:4), and that it cannot be wrong to be a part of various churches because the Lord did not say specifically "it is a sin to belong to a modern church." Our brethren who say

that is wrong as we must respect the silence of the scripture introducing into worship things that God said nothing about. In comes the mechanical instrument of music when the Lord said we are to sing. But, say our brethren; the Lord did not specify that it is a sin to use mechanical instruments. With the instrument came division in the Body of Christ, If for no other reason that makes such a practice sinful. Then there are brethren who preach long and loudly about the sin of the instrument and hustle in individual cups and many loaves on the Lord's Table. The picture itself is one of division. Ask one who is breaking bread on one side of an assembly, "what are you eating?" The answer, "the Lord's Body." Repeat the question to another in the middle simultaneously eating and his response is the same. For a third time ask it of a brother on the other side who is eating at the same time, and his answer does not differ. I must ask, "how many bodies does the Lord have The very supper that we are to partake in memory of Jesus thwarts His glorious work upon the earth. The practice is a travesty on His suffering and death. His tears of anguish were nothing compared to His present sorrow as His own people shame him. These who otherwise would be a guiding light have hidden the light.

SIDESTEPPING THE GOSPEL TO GAIN PEOPLE IS HIDING THE LIGHT

Since "light" is to show the way to those who are in darkness, Paul reminded the Corinthians that the "god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"-them referring to the "lost. "(II Cor. 4:4). The Gospel of Christ is the means used by God to enlighten the lost and show to them the way of salvation. Many are not satisfied with God's plan and means, therefore, adopt things that to their mind will bring the lost into the fold. Gimmicks, schemes, along with their meandering amount to perverting the Gospel, and in fact become "another Gospel" (Gal. 1:6). Looking to the "god of this world" and his followers, some brethren are employing coffee clutches, various clubs and appendages in addition to the Gospel to enlarge their number. Prayer groups (even led by women in some cases), preachers advertising to council in marriage, along with seeking out the homeless, amount to a social gospel, while the spirits of the lost languish for lack of Divine food. Not only do these things make the church a secular organization it so obscures the light that it cannot be seen. "Look how we have grown and are growing," say they. My question, what is growing? I assure you that I can contract a "Rock Group" to play what is called "gospel songs" and our building would not begin to hold the number. In keeping with our theme, by these activities, the light is hidden.

SOME HIDE THEIR LIGHT BY PROMOTING THOSE WHO EMBRACE ERROR

Apparently, some think of fellowship as a giant rubber band that can be stretched to accommodate any practice desired. Admittedly, I have difficulty understanding some of my brethren who make this endeavor. They openly admit, "I do not like the practice and furthermore, if it were brought up in the congregation that I call home, I would oppose it." In addition, the uncertain sounds are ringing bells in the ears of stalwart and faithful men to the point that division has resulted, yet these feel compelled to stand with such brethren who will have their way or burst. And that is exactly what is taking place-the church the Savior died to set in the world is broken asunder. How can something be scriptural if it is not in scripture? "Oh! but, I have a right to preach anywhere a group gathers, and any group has the right to hear the truth." Ah! yes, but does a man have the right to preach sweet sentiments when the very things a congregation is advocating and practicing is never-NOT ONE TIME-preached and the fruit thereof condemned? We know that "God's speed is not to be given to those who contend for and practice error, but what of those who will not engage with them but support them in their practice? May we be less stringent? When it is clear that a preacher's "God is his belly" and that their "glory is their shame," when they bring tears to the eyes of brethren across the land because "they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." When it is clear that they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly" it is time (past time,) "to mark them which ...ye have learned and avoid them. " (Phil.3: 18-19; Rom. 16:17-18). These are worse, if indeed one can be worse, than those actually practicing "divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine ye have learned." (Rom. 16:17). Talking about "letting our light shine" embracing those who swim in error is definitely hiding the light.

SOME HIDE THEIR LIGHT BY FAILING TO PROCLAIM THE PLAN OF SALVATION WITH EMPHASIS

Paul's charge to Timothy ought to be read daily by those stepping forth with a Bible tucked under their arm claiming to preach it. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they shall not endure sound doctrine; but will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (II Tim. 4:1-4). The truth is either "in season," is "out of season," in any case, or under either circumstance, the truth is to be set forth. The reason: the quick (living) and the dead are going to be judged thereby. It will

be a sad occasion for men to be judged for failing to comply with the wishes of God because they did not know what He requires of them. Yet, it remains a fact that sinners attend assembles of Christians and leave without knowing what God demands that they do to be saved from their sins. While preachers tell stories of doom that remind us “no man knows if he will live another day,” that same audience is left wondering what should be done now. A sister told me of attending a series of Gospel Meetings where the invitation was never clearly set forth. Personally, I have heard human-interest stories, humorous talks, psychological speeches, and even political statements from pulpits while failing to preach soberly the truth that saves the soul. It is reckless, shameful and discourteous for a preacher to occupy the time of an audience of people without telling them WHAT TO DO TO BE SAVED. If that is not “hiding the light,” I wish for the day when someone will explain to me how the light can be hidden.

**CONGREGATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS
MUST TAKE NOTICE OF WHAT
IS GOING ON AROUND US**

Restoring the church of the New Testament has made an “about face” and many are looking to the ways of the religious people around us for a guide rather than to the Apostles of our Lord. The lines are being drawn and the pressure is on. Truth is shattered and no tears are falling. Barney Owens

Announcements

THE HAWAII WORK

Dear Brethren: We come to you once again with a request for the work in Hawaii. As you have noticed, we have placed a plea for the mortgage payment several times. Some of you have responded and we thank the Lord for that. However, time is growing short now. Unless the mortgage is paid, we risk losing the property, to the bank. Is there a congregation who could comfortably take this over for even one year? The payments are now \$1500 per month and the check should be made out to INDY MAC. You can send it either to me (1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550), we will send it in at the proper time or to Eric Stone in Hawaii at 94-371 Ikepono St. Waipahu, HI 96797, and he can mail it to INDY MAC from there. Please let us hear from you right away. Lord bless. DLK



NEW SERVICE TIME

The congregation in Mountain Home AR will begin having Wednesday night services at 6:30 p.m.

Our Departed

Dame - On Monday, October 17th, in the beautiful Ozark mountain foothills at New Hope Cemetery out by the Lee’s Summit church building, we laid to rest the body of Sister Ila Juanita Dame who departed this life on October 13, 2011, in her home in Springfield, Missouri, at the age of 78 years, 9

months. Juanita was born January 3, 1933, in Chatham Hill, Virginia, to Worley and Anna Shupe Tibbs and was raised in the Commonwealth of Virginia. After completing her high school education in 1951, she moved to Missouri where she met and married Darrell T. Dame on July 29, 1952, and to this union two daughters were born. In the spring of that same year, Juanita obeyed the gospel by being baptized in a farm pond in Kansas City and remained a faithful member of the Lord’s Church for the remainder of her life. She was strong in faith, a lover of hospitality, and well reported of for her good works. In addition to being a devoted homemaker to Darrell and her family, after her own children were grown, she went back to school and became a LPN; relieving those who were sick, caring for young and old alike, and followed after every good work. Darrell and Juanita made their home in the Kansas City, Missouri, area, worshipping at the 85th & Euclid street and Hamsonville congregations. Upon their retirement, they then moved to Alabama and Tennessee for a time before making their home in Springfield, Missouri, this last spring. She was preceded in death by her parents and five brothers, William, Elbert, Robert, E. Lee, and Warren Tibbs. Juanita is survived by her husband of 59 years, Darrell, of the home; daughters Terri Hunter and husband John, of St. Louis, Mo., and Becky Barnes and husband Kent, of Nashville, Tennessee; four grandchildren, Amanda, Katherine, Morgan and Brice; three sisters, Ruth Triplett of Springfield, Mo., Shirley Durham, of Orlando, Florida, and Connie Ferley of Marion, Virginia; as well as a number of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends. Prior to her death, Juanita requested that I conduct her funeral service; asking that I advise all in attendance to read their Bibles and do what it says. In addition, to warn that whatever was wrong in their life; to get it corrected! Good admonition for all. Kent Barnes, son-in-law, led in prayer and Mark Triplett, nephew, led the beautiful singing. I counted it an honor to be asked to speak words of comfort and warning to the family and friends gathered at the funeral home in Lebanon, Missouri. What a blessing to have known her in this life and to share in the promises of an everlasting life over there! - John Pruitt

Joe Dan Morgan on behalf of Whispering Hills Church of Christ. My prayer is that this letter finds each of you at peace and diligent in the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am saddened to notify the brotherhood of the passing of Bro. Rafael Bienvenido Custodio (Ralph Welcome Guardian). Brother Rafael was the original member converted from digression approximately 15 years ago in Dominican Republic. Raphael was in trouble with them often because he questioned their practice of using multiple cups and Sunday School. He came into contact with a copy of a monthly publication, El Pregonero Latino, translated The Latin Questioner, and edited by Brother Murl Helwig. He was delighted to find a group that believed as he did. After a visit from Bro. Helwig he made humble confession and severed his ties with them. Rafael converted his family and established congregations all over the Dominican Republic. There are now nine faithful congregations despite harsh opposition from those that have left the old paths. Consequently, the harder they fought against him the more people he was able to convert to the truth. They were

downright mean and underhanded to him at times. Verbally attacking him on radio and in the newspaper, as well as, on the street. He was never moved nor discouraged by these attacks. Although at a disadvantage by back pain and the effects of a stroke he was a tireless worker. He was very effective wherever he went. His smile was infectious, and earned him conversation rights often. He was not critical, harsh or judgmental, he just simply spoke the truth in love right from his open Bible. He presented the truth in such a way as anyone who disagreed with him had to contradict the Word of God. He was a loving husband, father and brother in Christ. To know him was to love him. He will not only be greatly missed, but the Lord's Work is apt to suffer in his absence. I expect there is more that I could say, but it will suffice to say, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? 2 Samuel 3:38. Please remember his good family in prayer: Luz, faithful wife; Children, Osuelo, Belki, Roberto, Betania, and Raquel. His son Roberto is a faithful gospel preacher and beneficial to the church in the Dominican Republic.

Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA, 94550, November 11, 2011. E-mail old_paths@juno.com We recently closed a good meeting with Brother Bruce Roebuck of the Paris, Texas congregation. He did a superb job and all enjoyed and benefited from his preaching and being with us. If you have not had him for a meeting, you will not be sorry to do so. Pat and I enjoyed having him stay in our home and we look forward to his return sometime. It was my privilege to preach here both services last Lord's Day to good crowds. It will soon be time for the annual trip to the Philippines and we look forward to a profitable time with brethren there. Winter is in the air in California and frost is seen nearly every morning now. This just reminds us of how swiftly time passes by. Life is so short brethren, let us work while we can before life's little day is done.

Douglas T. Hawkins 409 Worthington Pl., Richmond, KY 40475 (606) 271-0529 douglast69@bellsouth.net November 2, 2011 - Just closed a 5 day meeting with the congregation at Flemington, PA. I enjoyed my time with the brethren there, especially Malon and Judy Garrison. I appreciate their hospitality and generosity. This congregation has a rich history and I'm sad to see their membership aging. I'm finishing my degree in December and will be returning to a fuller schedule of meetings, Lord willing this next year. Brother Bob Johnson and Brother Zach Evans have settled into the Lexington area. We are anticipating a great year in 2012. We plan to begin our 'young men's' study in January online. Be sure to let me know if you would like to be a part of it. May the Lord bless us in his service.

Gregory S. Robbins. 3016 Garden View Terr. Danville, IN 46122 #(317) 386-3423: Since last report, we have moved from Duncanville TX, to the Indianapolis area to work with the Church. The brethren in Indy are some of the best you will ever meet. The brethren throughout the state of Indiana have a hunger for a "Thus saith the Lord." Recently, we have had

growth in the congregation. A man from Austin TX, who has been living in Indy for sometime, made a confession for being out of duty. He now makes his stand with us. A family from Florida moved to the town of Avon and has made Rockville Road Church of Christ their home congregation. In working with the Church in Indy, I also travel on the first Sunday of every month to Bloomington to preach as well as Bedford on the third Wednesday. I enjoy being with the brethren at these places. The state of Indiana is as "fields white and ready for harvest" and a rock in the brotherhood, because the New Testament Church has had a lasting landmark since the days of the Restoration Movement. This is evident with the Church in Harrodsburg being 142 years old. Many in Indiana started their Christian race from there. Brethren, "contend for the ancient faith once delivered to the saints," and on that last day the Lord will grant us "an abundant entrance" into Heaven.

P. Duane Permenter, 1705 Pecan Dr. Cleburne, TX 76033, (817) 240-1944, Nov 1- During the course of Oct. it was my pleasure to preach at Lexington, KY where Doug Hawkins, Bob Johnson, Zach Evans all live and labor in the Gospel. It was a delight to preach the gospel in this area and it was our pleasure to stay with Doug and Lori during our work. We had a good meeting in Liberty, KY and we made our base at Les and Mary Russell's house. We had some visitors at the meeting and we praise God for this. It was also an honor to preach at Blue Springs, KY the last Sunday evening after the meeting finished at Liberty. It was nice to see Mark and Debbie Purcell up from Chapel Grove, TN for a couple of days during the meeting at Liberty. Our meeting at Ceres, CA was also enjoyable. We had good crowds the last weekend. We were privileged to hear 8 young men give talks the last Saturday of the meeting. God bless all the brotherhood! Duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com

Bob Johnson 4248 Reserve Rd. #102 Lexington, KY 40514 bobusi@gmail.com Please note new address above. After nearly 18 years with the Lord's church in Frisco, Texas, I have taken on a new challenge to work with the brethren in the Lexington, KY area. It is good to be with preaching brethren Doug Hawkins and Zach Evans. Zach is a young brother that recently decided to dedicate his life to the cause of Christ. He is a good teacher and is zealous in his efforts to reach the lost. He has been assisting me in door to door evangelism, and we currently have several studies with those in and outside the Lord's church. One lady we study with is a lead from watching the television program "Let The Bible Speak" with Brett Hickey. When I spoke to her over the phone she agreed to study and has been very receptive to the truth of God's word. She is a prime candidate for obedience to the gospel in the very near future. Brother Hickey is to be commended for his excellent teaching skills resulting in many inquiries from folks in this area and other areas as well where the program is aired. Several have taken and others desire to take the Bible Correspondence Course. Our hope and prayer is to gain new studies as contacts continue to be made that precious souls may be saved. The Word of God encourages us all to press on in the Lord's work, as we note

from such passages as 1 Cor. 15:58 "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Roger L. Owens Freeman Road Neosho Missouri How swiftly the year has flown by. The work here is going very well. We have finished our study on personal evangelism. The brethren are busy and always seeking to bring new folks to worship services. Our numbers have increased a bit. Sickness has troubled our crowds at every service. But we are not discouraged and we move forward with greater hope than ever. I rejoiced to listen as Kevin Presley spoke good words at Joplin not long ago. Jimmy Cating will have come and gone by the reading of this report. Our brotherhood is changing in many ways it seems. I find the use of new tools of communication employed. Computer Power Point seems to be the new blackboard of our day. We have come a long way in the efforts to reach lost souls and encourage the brethren. I recall my own youthful years when plain hard old fashion pulpit preaching was what got the job done. I am not saying the new tools are bad, no never. But I have learned in my senior position of life that nothing takes the place of face to face conversion. Nothing converts faster than plain spoken gospel sermons. Power Point is a good tool that many seem to know how to operate, but sometimes brethren haven't been trained on how to properly use it. Years back in Michigan I heard Clovis Cook preach his sermon, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." Brethren that sermon motivated me and has never left my mind to this day. I learned from him that nothing in this world is more powerful than just plain speech from God's word, nothing. I strongly suggest our teachers try putting down new tools and simply use the tool of God's choice. For the tongue of truth marked the Old Paths. Preach the word and God will be glorified, we shall be edified, and the world will be warned. God Bless

Keith Thomson, kmcdthomson@yahoo.com.au, Report from Tanzania: The work continues. I am very pleased with how the work is progressing. We are having many studies - with new people and those who have been attending, but not obeyed the gospel yet. The Leadership studies have been progressing on a weekly basis with a good numbers of brothers coming each week, some from quite a distance away. We have also had a number of baptisms in the different congregations. Two Fridays ago I had the privilege of being up in Nkoaranga when Mama Willy, the wife of one of the members there, made the decision to obey the gospel. I was particularly pleased with this for a whole number of reasons. Strangely enough, even though there has been good growth in that congregation, up until this baptism all the members were men! Mama Willy is the first sister in the church in Nkoaranga. She is a quiet, serious lady that, I think, will encourage the other wives of members and other women to follow her example and obey the gospel. We also had another baptism at Sombetini last week. I went to assist Dominic Owaga with his work on Thursday afternoon. The first study had been arranged the previous week to be at a little school room where one

of the members, Asiri, works. When we got there it looked like school was still in. The children had heard that we were coming and were so excited that they didn't want to go home, so there they stayed (very well behaved) throughout the study. The study went well, two people had come to the study, a young man named Evans and an older lady who owned the building where the school was based. We were studying the authority of the scriptures, they listen well and we arranged to meet the next week. Goodbyes were said to the children and we started on our way. A little down the road, Dominic remembered that he needed to discuss something with Asin about the next Lord's day, so we went back and Dominic went looking for him. After a while they returned, Dominic, Asri and Evans. They told me that Evans wanted to be baptised, but he wanted to study first. So, it was back to the school building again and we studied about sin, redemption, obedience and salvation. I was very impressed about the seriousness with which Evans studied. He read the scriptures carefully and answered any questions I had thoughtfully. By the end of the study he said he was ready for baptism and wanted to be immersed right then! Asin said he knew of a place near by, so stopping at his house for some fresh clothes for Evans to use, we headed off. I have found that "cencar bya" is a relative term here in Tanzania, but after a while we headed off the road and into a old disused coffee field. There was a stream that ran through it and here, said Asiri, we would find a place suitable for baptism. The place selected was near to where cattle were watered and we had a audience of herders for the baptism. There was not much water and Asiri was called upon to assist in keeping his feet down, but Evans was immersed in that little stream into Christ - a new son of God was born. We were all very happy and Evans accompanied us for the rest of the day as we continued studying with people.

Visitors

We had some more visitors here this month. Khleber Branch from Oklahoma and Norma Curtis from Oregon worshipped with us on the last two Sundays in October. They had arranged a safari to Tanzania, South Africa and Zimbabwe with Khleber's brother and his wife. This is the second time Khleber and Norma have visited us. They came to Australia in 2010 on a similar trip.

The brethren here were very impressed that these faithful sisters arranged their whole trip so that they would not forsake the assembly - a wonderful example for us all! The Christians here fell in love with these wonderful sisters and when they left last Sunday there were hugs, tears and gifts.

It was very nice spending time with our dear friends, we were able to take them to a nice lodge for lunch the first Sunday and then last Saturday we had a very nice dinner with them. They left Sunday afternoon to continue their safari in South Africa and then onto Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. -Keith Thomson

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE (USPS 407-560)

If the date near your name and address reads 12-11 your subscription expires with this issue. Please renew promptly. DLK
Send all subscriptions to:
1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550

THE BACK PAGE...

JEFFERSON'S SECRET BIBLE

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

As the English-speaking world is celebrating the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible, I am reminded by Geary Trent of Clovis, California, that the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., is preparing to unveil another version of the Bible—Thomas Jefferson's "secret" Bible. Geary and I are collectors and we have had copies of the Jefferson Bible for several years. Jefferson's original version will be exhibited beginning next week (November 11, 2011), and concludes May 28, 2012.

Jefferson's views on religion were complex to say the least and he was very reluctant to express them publicly. "I not only write nothing on religion," Jefferson once told a friend, "but rarely permit myself to speak on it" (Smithsonian, Oct. 2011, p. 38). However, during his time as John Adam's vice president (1798-1799), Jefferson's close friend Benjamin Rush, a doctor from Philadelphia, well-respected scientist, and an outspoken member of the Universalist Church, asked Jefferson to write down his views of religion, and Jefferson agreed to do it. Thus, he began a project that would occupy his mind intermittently for two decades.

Jefferson's interest in the Bible was restricted entirely to the life and teachings of Jesus in the Gospels. Although he rejected the divinity of Jesus, Jefferson believed Jesus to be a reformer, philosopher, and teacher who created "the most sublime and benevolent code of morals which has ever been offered to man" (F. F. Church, *The Jefferson Bible*, p. 13).

Jefferson also rejected the Bible as being a divinely-revealed product, and harbored much contempt for the men who chronicled Jesus' life in the gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He believed they were ignorant and unlettered men who wrote from memory and often forgot, or did not understand, what Jesus said. He concluded in a letter to Francis Adrian Van der Kemp, that the gospels were a collection of the "true sayings" of Jesus intermingled with a great deal of ignorance, misconceptions, absurdity, untruth, and charlatanism added by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John's own imaginations.

Jefferson was supremely confident, however, that he could "separate the gold from the dross," and at the age of 77, after two terms as president, he audaciously began cutting what he believed to be the true sayings of Jesus from editions of the New Testament in English, French, Greek, and Latin and pasting them onto loose blank pages. He then had them bound to make a book, and entitled the volume *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth*. It subsequently became known as the *Jefferson Bible*. Because Jefferson found this project intensely personal and private, he acknowledged the book's existence only to a few friends, saying that he read it before retiring at night.

Cyrus Adler, librarian of the Smithsonian Institution from 1892 to 1909, discovered the existence of Jefferson's Bible, however, and in 1895 the Smithsonian purchased it from Jefferson's great granddaughter Carolina Randolph. Congress requested a copy of the book in 1904, and that request began a nearly 50-year tradition of giving copies of it to new senators.

Consequently, Jefferson's secret project has become well-known and it offers much insight into his ever enigmatic mind. He is not the first person to conclude that only certain parts of Scripture are fit for our reading and guidance. The Jews observe only the Old Testament, while some professed-Christians believe the four gospel accounts are actually a part of the Old Testament, and that Christians are to be subject to that part of the New Testament that begins with the book of Acts.

There is also the group that calls itself "Red-Letter Christians." This group rejects the epistles and confines itself to the teachings of Jesus only (the words in red letters).

Add to this mix the notorious "Jesus Seminar." This modern-day group of self-styled scholars are following the lead of Jefferson and the other "rationalists" of his day. They too have concluded that the Bible is not inspired, and that Jesus actually spoke only a fraction of the things attributed to Him by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The list of such heretics is endless. The fact remains, however, that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:9-13), and Jesus warns that if we reject the inspired teachings of His apostles we are rejecting Him too (Jn. (13:20; 14:26; 16:12-13).

Jefferson was a brilliant man, undoubtedly the most erudite president in the history of our country. The knowledge he gained through a lifetime of incredibly extensive reading, however, is foolishness when compared to God (1 Cor. 1:18-31). Because the project he had hoped to keep secret will be revealed in judgment (Rom. 2:16), it appears he will fall sadly under the same curse as all the others who have had the arrogance to add to or subtract from God's Word (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19). cmjthebackpage@gmail.com