

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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Due to the rising cost of postage, paper, and printing, we are forced to increase the subscription price of Old Paths Advocate to \$15 yearly, effective with the January, 2014 issue. All who subscribe before then may do so at the old price of \$13 and you may subscribe for as many years as you wish. Please, consider subscribing for a friend and encourage others to renew their subscription now at the old price. We apologize for any inconvenience and thank the many readers who have been loyal to the paper for many years. May God bless us all. DLK

THE MAN ON THE OTHER SIDE

By RICK MARTIN

The book of Obadiah is not well known today, yet it contains some powerful lessons for our time. One such lesson is found in vs. 11.

On this occasion Israel was being besieged and overrun by an enemy nation. Edom was rejoicing in the destruction of Israel. Obadiah verse 11 says, In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them.

Although not “one of them,” yet when he “stood on the other side” he became “as one of them.” In becoming as one of them, Edom must perish as the nation that destroyed Jacob.

Jesus Christ clearly declares what the religious position of every man must be. Matt. 12:30 “He that is not with is against me; and he that gathered not with me scattereth abroad”. This leaves no middle ground in the spiritual warfare.

Today, within the Lord’s church we have a liberal element that has no respect for the authority of the Scriptures. They are willing to change and alter anything that suits their fancy-and rest assured they have done exactly that. Their desire is to please man and it is evident they have no real desire to please God. They want to fellowship with those who have brought

in innovations. This is impossible if one will remain true to the Bible. Since these men could not remain true to the book and join in with their friends in error, they are willing to compromise the Bible. They are “as one of them”, a “man on the other side”.

Men must not bow to liberalism and toleration to the point of compromise. It is dangerous to fellowship those whose tendencies are away from New Testament Christianity. There is nothing of lasting worth to be gained by compromise. We do not help the liberal in giving in to him; we only hinder him and jeopardize ourselves. We become “as one of them”.

Paul pleads with the Romans, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” Rom. 16:17. When there is a laxity of “marking” and “avoiding” we must sound forth a warning. It is dangerous to get to the point that we think such is no longer needed. When that happens, we become “as one of them”.

Some have never been content to remain within the standard of the Word of God. During the Old Testament days there were false teachers and Peter says there will always be such 2 Pet. 2:1-2. Jesus instructed us to “beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” Matt. 15:9. Because there will always be false teachers John commands us to put all teachers to the test 1 John 4:1. These false teachers, and their followers, refused to abide within the Scriptures by their teaching and practice. They are “as one of them.”

We have some who claim to be “with us,” who compromise with the innovators. There are congregations, who claim to follow the Biblical pattern for worship, but they will support the innovators and in bidding “these men Godspeed,” they become “partakers of their evil deeds” 2 Jno. 1:9-11. Such a man becomes “as one of them.”

There are some who think that we can just love men out of their error. Some call for love and understanding when individuals and congregations teach and practice

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Editorial

“BLINDED MINDS”

By: *DON L. KING*

In second Corinthians 4: 3, 4 the apostle Paul wrote: “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

Every person who has endeavored to interest non-Christians in the way of righteousness is familiar with the feeling of frustration when there is no interest or perhaps downright scorn shown. We live in a day of blinded minds. We live in a time when the majority of people feel the Bible is outdated and unimportant. We live in a time when Christianity is actually believed to be for those who are uneducated and ignorant. This is the Devil’s work. All one need do to confirm this is to affirm the Bible account of creation in public. Many believe evolution is the answer to creation rather than the Scriptures. Some will actually laugh when a Christian states a belief in Bible truths. Have you wondered why this is increasingly more common than ever before? The Bible is perhaps still a best seller but very seldom followed in everyday life. It is far more likely to be used as an ornament than a guide. Just look around. What do we see? We see men and women living together without benefit of marriage, men marrying men, women marrying women, children brought into the world out of wedlock, abortion commonly used to get rid of unwanted babies, and the list goes on and on. None of these things are permitted by the Bible, and in fact, are often condemned in plain language.

We live in a time where modern inventions make it possible for a person to see, or experience, every form of wicked behavior known to man. The Internet, movies, and every form of the media are full of such things. The media while useful in preaching the gospel and many other good things may also be prostituted to evil purposes. This is true with every form of the media.

The minds of men are blinded today by the god of this world. This is what the apostle Paul said. The Devil is working hard! Somehow, the human family has become accustomed to sin of every description and many of us barely notice. It is on our televisions, many movies, radio; the music played in movies, etc., and is commonly seen on the street as well. The language of many Americans is beyond terrible now. God’s name is commonly taken in vain even by young school children and few notice or care. It is that common. Modesty with men and women is a thing of the past in

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Why was Jesus baptized?

Answer: The baptism of Jesus is recorded in Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 5:21-22 and John 1:29-34. Since Jesus was without sin, we know that his baptism was not for the remission of sins. All people, accountable to God, are commanded to be baptized in order for their sins to be forgiven Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, 1Peter 3:21, Romans 6:3-4. When our Lord came to John requesting baptism, John was reluctant to comply with the request saying "I need to be baptized of you, and are you coming to me?" Jesus answered "permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." The short answer to the above question is: Jesus was baptized to fulfill the righteousness of God. But, what does that mean? Righteousness comes from the word dikaiosune, and is defined as "the character or quality of being right or just...right action." (Vine) This word is often used "in the sense of fulfilling the divine statutes." (Arndt and Gingrich) Hence Jesus was baptized in order to fulfill God's will. His obedience to God provides for us an example. Peter declared that Christ left us an example, "that ye should follow in his steps." (1Peter 2:21) In order for us to be forgiven of our sins, we must comply with God's statutes that require baptism in water Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, and 8:37-38. Following the baptism of Jesus, he entered into His ministry. His baptism served as the occasion of validating John's message and gave proof of His being the "Lamb of God" as John had preached (John 1:29-34). Some denominational organizations practice baptism in order to emulate the actions of Jesus. However, they teach that such baptism is not necessary in order to be saved. Since Jesus was baptized in order to fulfill a divine statute, if we follow his example, we will be baptized for the same reason, in which case baptism is not an option, but a command of God. Those in Acts 2:38 were not given an option, but were commanded to be baptized in order for their sins to be forgiven. All sinners today must do the same thing.

Question: Would you please address the topic of "behavior during church services"?

Answer: When we gather for worship, we are in the presence of God, and our conduct should indicate the seriousness of the occasion. We are to worship

in spirit and truth John 4:23-24. In 1 Corinthians 14:26-40 Paul gives principles designed to regulate order in church meetings. His concluding statement "Let all things be done decently and in order" reminds us of the seriousness and importance of our gathering together. Distracting situations should be kept to a minimum. People who talk out loud, children who are not quiet and respectful are often guilty of interfering with others as they seek to listen and learn. In fact parents who do not teach their children the seriousness of the worship assembly do them a great disservice. Cell phones that go off and people who text others during the service show a lack of respect for God and others who are present. In a recent meeting I was conducting some young people on the second seat from the front were texting their friends who were in the rest room. These were teen-age boys and girls. In years gone by we were taught to pay attention, be quiet and show respect to the one doing the teaching during services. Unfortunately things have changed dramatically in some places. Services often have a circus atmosphere rather than one of respect and reverence. I remember times when some speakers would stop preaching and call for quiet and attention on the part of some in the audience. Doing that today would raise the ire of some parents and bring criticism on the speaker rather than the ones guilty of disturbing the service. God is not pleased with us when fail to honor and reverence Him in our assemblies. I am aware that infants and very young children can be difficult to handle in such situations. Most of us understand this and appreciate mothers who take their children out when difficult problems arise. Our goal should be to provide an atmosphere where all can worship in spirit and truth.

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WHY I HAVE ADOPTED THE COMMON CUP

By TOM ATKINSON

I was “raised” in the church of Christ, but did not obey the Gospel until I was 21 years old. In May 1976 I was immersed into Christ for the forgiveness of sins and in August that same year I started school to study for the ministry. Since that time I have spent the vast majority of my adult life in full time local work and/or “part time,” “pulpit” work among “mainline” congregations. However, in 2011 I made a major change in the way I worship; a change that has brought many blessings and challenges at the same time. As of October 2011 I no longer worship in the Lord’s Supper using multiple cups or “little crackers.”

One of the questions I get asked the most (by those I have known and worked among all my life) is “why?” The second question comes from brethren who have family and friends who are in the mainline congregations wanting to know what I would say to others in a similar situation. This article will attempt to answer these questions as best I can in the amount of space I have in this forum.

The Hope that is Within Me

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:15). One key expression in this verse is “give the reason” translated from the Greek word *apologia*! Here we have the root of the English word “apologetic.”

The Greek word, *apologia* is translated in various ways in the New Testament: “a defense” (Acts 22:1; Phil 1:7, 16) “answer” (Acts 25:16; 1 Cor. 9:3) the verb form is, as a general rule, translated “to answer” (Luke 12:11, 21:14). Concerning our text in 1 Peter 3:15, Charles Biggs, in his *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude*, p. 158) says:

Apologia (followed by a dative, as in 1 Cor. IX.3) means any kind of answer or self justification, whether formal before a judge, or informal. Here *panti* (every man) fixes the word to the latter sense. *Logon attetin* (to ask a reason) is a classical phrase. Every cultivated sensible man was expected by the Greeks to be prepared . . . to discuss questions of opinion or conduct intelligently and temperately to give and receive a reason.

In other words, faith and practices of faith must be based on a reasoned/logical evaluation and not something one simply takes a “leap” believing and/or feeling in one’s heart that it is correct! Thus, it comes down to the simple question of “is it true?” Is it “reasoned” and not simply an emotional reaction?

Given the short amount of space we have in this format, I will offer a summary of the reasons for the “hope that is within” me on the subject of this article. Why have I chosen to adopt the use of one cup and one loaf in the practice of the Lord’s Supper?

My Journey

My change in thinking did not happen overnight, in fact it was a process that took place over a several months in the context of research I was doing for a history I was writing in honor of the 100th anniversary of my home congregation.

During my research I learned of a debate that took place at my home congregation 1951 over the issue of divided classes. Brother Cecil Abercrombie represented the Union City church (Union City, GA). The Union City congregation was a non-class congregation. I wanted to expand my material on the debate and give more general information on non-class congregations in the Atlanta area. However, to my surprise, I could find very little information at all about these groups (even though I knew of several that once existed and still exist).

All the research material I consulted (both my original source files and additional church history material) contained little, if anything at all, about the congregations of the non-divided class persuasion in Atlanta.

I also discovered something else as well. I learned that there were various groups of “non class” churches, some of which used only one cup in partaking of the Lord’s Supper. I knew that such congregations did exist, but in all my years of ministry work, I had never lived near any of them, no one had ever asked me my view of the subject, thus, I had never really given the issue much thought. In fact, I always assumed that some congregations preferred one cup, probably for any number of reasons, but beyond that the matter never crossed my mind. In addition, the vast majority of conversations I had with people concerning the Lord’s Supper centered on why we should partake of it every first day of the week. Therefore, I made a decision to research why some congregations adopted multiple communion cups and why others did not. I was amazed at what I learned and it opened a whole new area of study and practice for me.

Since I can only share the hope that is within me, and can speak for no one else, I will share the evidence that impresses me the most in looking at this subject.

The evidence that is the strongest with me is that of the historical data. I realize that the textual argument, using what some call the “law of silence” also comes into consideration. I prefer to call this the “principle” or “law” of “specificity.” In other words, whatever God specifics, excludes anything else. Silence, as the

word suggest is silent! Silence is the absence of noise, arguments, sound, etc., one cannot argue from that which says nothing. One must reason from specific propositions which are stated. "He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests" (Hebrews 7:13-14). God specified Levi as the priestly tribe, therefore, only Levites were priest. The "law" of specificity!

For example, in the New Testament we read of only "singing" in the Worship (cf. Ephesians 5:19) we also read of only "a cup" (singular) being used in the institution and practice of the Lord's Supper (cf. Matthew 15:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:17; 1 Cor. 11:26-27). In addition, singular nouns, singular articles, singular pronouns and singular verbs are always used with regard to the cup at the Lord's Supper.

There are those among us who argue that unless God expressly disapproves of something it is approved, and then there are those of us who point to passages such as Hebrews 7 and argue that when God specifies something that is the example we should follow. This issue is that which has divided the American restoration movement since its inception and will likely continue to do so. For me, (and I only speak for myself) one of the strongest ways to help resolve some of these issues is to examine the historical data. How did the early Christians interpret and apply these principles?

With music all the historical evidence shows that Christians did not use instruments in worship until some 400/500 years after the church was established. Even scholars who use instruments in their worship acknowledge this fact (George Barna and Frank Viola, *Pagan Christianity*, p. 162). Thus, one cannot claim to practice 1st Century Christianity and at the same time embrace 3rd/4th Century practices. However, what about the Lord's Supper? How did the early church practice the Lord's Supper?

Historical Evidence

When looking at the historical data on how the earliest Christian's partook of the Lord's Supper, there are several things that make an impact on me.

First, I learned that it was some 400 years after the establishment of the church that we have any evidence of more than one chalice/cup being used in partaking of the fruit of the vine. The earliest quotation referencing more than one cup comes from "The Divine Liturgy of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark the Disciple of Holy Peter." Here we read:

We pray and beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy mercy, to let Thy presence rest upon this bread and these chalices. The only source of this document is a single codex

from the twelfth century, i.e., the Codex Rossanensis, discovered at Rossano, in Calabria Italy. It was deposited in the Basilian monastery at Rome, and first published in A.D. 1583, in Paris. Scholars estimate that this document, or portions of it, only goes back to the third or fourth centuries. Furthermore, due to heavy redactions, it is difficult to say with any certainty that the actual quote is any earlier than the mid to late third century. The document also contains quotations from the Nicene Creed, the earliest form of which only dates back to A.D. 325. Thus, the mention of "chalices" (vs. Chalice) is late and certainly not from the first century. My point is simply this, the best historical evidence suggests that one cup/chalice was used in communion until at least 300 years after the establishment of the church.

Second: I also learned that within the American Restoration movement it was not until around 1914-15 before any non-instrumental congregations begin to use multiple cups. It was a transitional process, faster in some locations, slower in others (a local congregation in my area did not adopt the multiple cups until the early 1940s). Brother G. C. Brewer (1884-1956) in his book *Forty Years on the Firing Line* takes credit for being the first person to introduce and implement multiple cups among churches of Christ.

The individual cup system, in use today, was not created until a physician and minister, the J. G. Thomas received a patent on his idea in 1894. Of course, I'm "preaching to choir" for most who will read these words. However, all of this information was completely new to me when I first started my research on the subject.

Third, I learned that such scholarly men as J. W. McGarvey (1829-1911) opposed multiple communion cups until the day they died. (David Lipscomb also opposed their use until G. C. Brewer was able to persuade him to soften his position. Even at that, Brother Lipscomb's change of mind reads in a somewhat unsure manner). Brother McGarvey never wavered in his opposition.

Thus, the historical data on this subject was a very strong factor in leading me to the conclusion that the correct way to worship in the Lord's Supper is with one cup and loaf as opposed to the multiple containers that are most commonly used.

Finally, another issue that led me to adopt the common cup is the symbolism implied by the cup itself. One cup is a symbol of unity.

Toward the end of his earthly sojourn Jesus prayed for unity among his disciples: "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe

that you have sent me” (John 17:20-21); “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:16).

As I study this subject one of the strongest impressions made on me was the symbolism of unity implied in one cup and one loaf, whereas division is demonstrated in multiple cups and loafs.

In conclusion, these are the reasons that led me to realize that I was worshiping in an incorrect way by using multiple cups and loaves in the Lord’s Supper. This is the way the apostles and the early church practiced it, and Paul writes “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9). This is what I desire to do. Tom Atkinson 1082 Sunswep Union City, TN 38261

Resources

G. C. Brewer at <http://www.therestorationmovement.com/brewer.gc.htm>

Brett Hickey, The Lord’s Supper: Unity In One Loaf and One Cup (Brett Hickey, 2011)

J. D. Phillips, The Cup of the Lord, (Bill J. Ferguson. Broken Arrow, OK. 2007)

Ronny F. Wade, The Sun Will Shine Again, Someday (Yesterday’s Treasures. 1986)

Christian Ethereal Library at <http://www.ccel.org/lccellschaft7anf07.xii.iiLhtml>

What the Earliest Christians Wrote About the Eucharist “at <http://www.fisheaters.com/fathersoneucharist.html>

The Common Cup: Evaluated From A Biblical, Historical, and Medical Perspective. Presented by the Reformed Presbytery In North America February 14, 2001 at <http://www.reformedpresbytery.org/books/comncup/comncup.htm>

“WHAT THE LORD SAITH, THAT WILL I SPEAK”

BY RICHARD DeGough

This answer by the great prophet Micaiah who lived in the days of Ahab, Israel’s king. The Bible says; “But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.” Ahab was abominable in following idols and he had a woman, Jezebel who spurred him on to be wicked. She was about as wicked as you can read in God’s word.

Micaiah was not a “yes” man for Ahab. The scene was this; Jehoshaphat, king of Judah was with Ahab who tendered the question to him about Ramoth in Gilead being theirs and they had done nothing to recover it. Jehoshaphat agreed to go with him to recover it. Jehoshaphat wanted Ahab to “inquire of the word of the Lord to day.” Ahab complied and brought 400 false prophets, no doubt Baal worshipers and false as they could be. Their prophecy was; “Go up; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.” Of course that is what Ahab wanted to hear, but Jehoshaphat no doubt could see these prophets were not the prophets of the Lord, so, the question; “Is there not a prophet of the Lord besides, that we might inquire of him?” Well, there was one Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him said Ahab. He does

not prophecy good concerning me but evil. Jehoshaphat said, “let not the king say so.” Ahab was constrained to get Micaiah regardless of not wanting to hear what he had to say. The two kings were on their thrones with robes in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria, where the prophets of Ahab prophesied before them. Zedekiah, a “yes” man put on quite an act by making horns, and with them in his theatrical demonstration declared would push the Syrians until they were consumed. A messenger was sent to get Micaiah and encouraged him to speak the same as all the false prophets had spoken in unison to the king. Speak as one of them, speak that which is good.

Micaiah, being God’s man gave the age long words we should love and abide by as the people of the Lord. “As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, THAT will I speak.” He did speak and Ahab was not pleased though he spoke what he had wanted to hear as the prophets of Baal had said. Finally Micaiah speaks to him the truth of his going to battle and resulting in him falling there. Micaiah said that a lying spirit was in the prophets. At this saying of Micaiah he was smitten by Zedekiah. He was delivered into the hands of the governor of the city and to Joash the king’s son. The king ordered for Micaiah to be fed with the bread and water of affliction until he came in peace. Micaiah answered; “If thou return at all in peace, the Lord hath not spoken by me.”

They went into battle, but the Syrian king had told his captains not to fight with either small or great, save only the king of Israel. Ahab had disguised himself but told Jehoshaphat to put on his robe. The Syrians were in pursuit of King Jehoshaphat until he cried out and they left off pursuing him. No amount of disguise could change the destiny of Ahab. A certain man drew his bow and fired an arrow which found its way in a joint of his harness and he died. Perhaps he lived for a while, telling his chariot driver to take him from the battle. When he came back to Samaria they washed his blood out of the chariot by the pool of Samaria and the dogs came and licked his blood; according to the word of the Lord which he spoke.” (To get this narrative in detail read from I Kgs 18-22 seeing the history of Ahab and Jezebel’s wicked ways.) Remember; “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, THAT shall he reap.” Can we not learn from narratives in the O.T. (Rom. 15:4)

We have the teaching of Peter in I Pet.4: 11 “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: An oracle is a “divine utterance” which in fact is the word of God. Deity gave us this word and all commands by the men of God. No one can surpass infinite wisdom by using the words of men which is in fact finite wisdom. Man has tried to change the word, or to fix it to please him. We cannot afford to delete, prefix, suffix, or any “fix” to it. Paul wrote to Timothy: “hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.” He also said: All scripture given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

II Tim.3:16-17. The denominations couldn't care less when it comes to adding or subtracting from God's word. This has affected brethren I know to the extent that they come out with strange sounds about the worship, obedience to the gospel, singing with mechanical instruments, ect. It must be that which "pertains to life and godliness." Folks are forgetting the words of the Lord, Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts your thoughts." The apostle Paul instructed Timothy concerning servants and their attitude toward masters, then he warned: If any man TEACH OTHERWISE, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, But dotting about questions and strife of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings. I Tim.6:3-4

Subjects with a "Thus saith the Lord"

Baptism for the remission of sins, to be saved, to wash away sins, to get into Christ, into the body of Christ. Acts 2:38, Mk. 16:16, Acts 22:16, Rom.6:3, Col.3:27, I Cor. 12:13. Why do I contend for these: Well, it is because what the Lord saith, that will I speak.

The Lords supper, no women speaking (teaching) in church, Contribution. Singing not playing. Well, why do I contend for these: Because what the Lord saith, that will I speak. I Cor. 11, 14:34-35, 16:1-2, Worship on the first day of the week. Acts 20:7, Heb. 10:25, Acts 2:42. Well, I contend for it because; what the Lord saith, I will speak.

In communion, one cup (drinking vessel) containing the fruit of the vine (not alcoholic wine) one bread unleavened unbroken (not wafers, nor leavened) Why do I contend for these: Well, it is because what the Lord saith, that will I speak. Matt. 26:26-29, Mk 14:22-25, Lk. 22:19-20, I Cor. 10:16, 11:23-25.

Women wearing long hair, (her hair uncut period!) why do I contend for this, Well, what the Lord saith, that will I speak. Why would we want to change anything, nor trouble the church with what we want in lieu of what god says? Remember we must "contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." We can know the will of God to teach it, live it, contend for it, and with it teach the lost how to be saved. Micaiah of long ago certainly was not a man pleaser, nor sacrifice the word of the Lord for the sake of pleasing Ahab, or his false prophets. Please take this to heart and determine you will always in living the Christian life be ready to "speak as the oracles of God," and like Micaiah: "what the Lord saith, that will I speak. The word of God is; "quick (alive) and powerful' Perfect in converting the soul, sure making wise the simple, right rejoicing the heart, and pure, enlightening the eyes." Psalms 19:7-8. "Gods power unto salvation." Rom.1:16. I am not ashamed of it, are you my brethren in Christ?

YOU ARE TOO NARROW-MINDED FOR ME

By BARNEY OWENS

It is refreshing when we receive requests asking for Footprints Of Jesus. On the other hand, it is somewhat disappointing when we are asked to remove a name from the mailing list. Footprints Of Jesus continues to be one of the best bargains, since it is sent without cost. Often we wonder why someone wishes to be withdrawn at other times there is no mystery to it. As the above caption was intended (I think), to discourage or at least to push us to amend our teaching and ways, which would happily be done, if, it accomplished anything to the praise and glory of God or the betterment of humanity. However, as things stand, we must accept the authority of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible, leaving us without power to alter anything. After all, we can only point our readers to the Scripture. The invitation is always open to show wherein we err and with due consideration each matter is investigated. Otherwise, our desire is rather simple: to live the Christian all our days and go to Heaven after we die.

Do you, dear Reader think us too narrow-minded? While we wish to be offensive to none, just how broad-minded can we be and remain loyal to God and faithful to Jesus Christ? Perhaps by pursuing this idea there may be profit in it for some.

NARROW-MINDED DEFINED

Consulting Webster, I found the following definition: "narrow-minded, adj. limited in outlook; not liberal; bigoted; prejudiced." In our world today, all these things are looked upon with downcast eyes, and rightly they should be if and when we are considering earthly, worldly or fleshly things. Yet, it is entirely another matter when we consider things that are moral and/or religious. Jesus as a preamble to His Kingdom which He was to set up in the world counseled His disciples, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Mt. 7:13-14). God's way is narrow and restricted demanding that His followers limit our view, restrain our heart from the liberal ways of the world, accept the label of a bigot and refrain from any practice which fails to conform to Divine will.

Furthermore, Jesus declared, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jn. 8:32). By way of the Lord's definition that enables us to know what He meant by "truth", He said later, "thy word is truth." (Jn. 17:17). It is the word of God that makes us free from sin, from error, from damnation. Error cannot save nor free one from either guilty sin or the practice of error. As narrow as it may seem to many there are some who yet appeal to the word of God for their belief and practice. Since the Bible is our only guide all else is false and must be rejected. Our mind must be aforehand made up leaving us "limited in our outlook, not liberal, bigoted, prejudiced." "There cannot be an apology for following the Bible as the rule for living.

BIBLE TRACHING REGARDING THE CHURCH THAT DEMANDS ONE BE NARROW-MINDED

From the time the church was established in the world members have been viewed as too narrow-minded. They regarded it as a heresy among themselves speaking of it as a sect. "Concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against." (Acts 28:22). The Apostle would not allow themselves to be classified as a part of anything. Paul before Governor Felix declared, "But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the prophets." (Acts 24:14). After Paul's sermon, "Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way." (Acts 24:22). The religion which the Jews embraced was taken away by the death of Jesus on the cross and He brought into the world a new creation—a new man—a new body—a new church containing both Jew and Gentile. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2:13-16). In spite of all the efforts of the Jews to stamp out the church, it continued to flourish. "When they called the apostles, and had beaten them, they commanded them that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go." (Acts 5:40). "And devote men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and hailing men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them." (Acts 8:2-5). The Cause of Christ and the sword have nothing in common. If the sword is drawn by an individual or a nation to extend Christianity it will soon be learned that the effort is a vain one, since Christianity cannot be stabbed into a man or forced into him in any other way. Likewise, if any should try to thwart Christianity with the sword he will soon learn (as those of the past) that it cannot be exterminated by force since it is the message of truth that "makes or breaks" the church.

As time passed, the Bishop of Rome began to muster power, over the elders of surrounding churches. By the third century, he had gained favor with the Emperor of Rome. The Bishop took supreme authority over the church revealing himself as the "man of sin—the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (II Thes. 2:4-5). All those who were bigoted or narrow-minded against the Pope were punished in ways almost inconceivable to us living in modern times. Some were even put to death as they sought to please God. Ultimately the Bible was taken from the common man and the world entered into the period known in history as the Dark Ages. As the Jews before them, the

Roman Catholic Church looked upon all who would not accept them in fellowship as heretics. Christians went into hiding. The light flicked but even this monster with all its power could not extinguish the light nor persuade all men to abandon "the Way." Catacombs were poor substitutes for our modern church building with heat, air-conditioning and carpeted floors, but the people esteemed the things of the world as nothing and Jesus Christ as all in all, as they feared "not them which kill the body; but are not able to kill the soul:" (Mt. 10:28).

Courageous men arose who were so narrow-minded that they no longer accepted the traditions, images and relics of Catholicism that had no authority in the word of God. Discarding the threat of being shunned and banished from the established church now authorized by the state they protested. The number grew until the Reformation was in full bloom. The difficulty was that these tried to "reform" the Roman church. Various groups opposing vigorously certain tenants of Roman Catholic Doctrine spawned denominationalism. Accentuating certain doctrines or the men that proclaimed them the names of these men or particular doctrines began to be worn as religious names. These increased as honest souls joined the various sects or churches around them. Having a common foe (Roman Catholicism), the churches sought unity in error which meant that the Church established by Christ lost its value and these began to preach that church membership is not important and a man may join the church of his choice with the approval of God. Today these Protestant Denominations have espoused common ground with the "Mother Church" to the point that very few even think about the meaning of being a Protestant. Being a Catholic or a Protestant is accepted by the majority as pleasing to God. Narrow-mindedness has all but vanished. The Broad Way is the popular way. Amid all the confusion, division and mayhem when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," (Jug. 17:6) with little or no regard for God's way, arose men who not only carried a Bible in their hand but cherished it in their heart. Such men were not content with the confines of Rome or the separating walls of denominationalism. They pointed people to the work of Jesus who sought to unite men in one body not many bodies. They looked not to Italy or Germany, but Jerusalem as the model for the church. If preaching Gospel on the first Pentecost after Jesus arose from the dead caused men to give ear creating faith and obedience, whereupon the Lord added these to the church, then preaching the same Gospel in modern times would also result in the same faith and like obedience. The result would be the Lord adding the obedient to His church. They resolved to read the Bible and allow it to guide in all things religious. Soon it was learned that a pattern was within the Bible for men to follow. If the Bible said it, they also would say it. If the Bible said nothing about it, they kept silence about such matters. For faith and practice, it was the "perfect law of liberty." (Js. 1:25). For every rule of action they were governed by "the law of the Spirit of life" (Rom. 8:2). For their creed, it was "Jesus Christ" alone. Rather than attempting to Reform the Roman Catholic Church, their desire was to Restore the church of the Bible or be like

of offending people. Now, it should not be our intent to offend anyone, but truth is far more important and sometimes it does offend those who are not content to follow it.

You can be sure the side of error is doomed by the eternity of truth, and the “man on the other side” will meet the same fate. Obadiah vs. 18 And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it.

We must not shirk our responsibility in the fight for the church and truth. We need to do our part in this crusade against sin and error in every-form. We must take sides on every issue involving the life of the church. As soldiers of God, let us take our stand at the front of battle. Let us face the enemy, and without compromise, fight those who compromise truth. To simply stand by and allow the truth and the church to be attacked by men in error is to be “as one of them.” It is to be the man on the other side! -Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189

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“BLINDED MINDS.” continued from page two

spite of what the Bible says. The minds of many have been blinded. (Romans 3: 3, 4) Remember, Paul said “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.” (Romans 3:3) When we look around the world and see the blinded minds of so many, we are saddened to realize we are seeing those who are lost!

We read much about the evils of the Internet; and while there is undoubtedly much good to be found, there is overwhelming evil as well. Pornographic sites are virtually numerous. Yes, this is an obvious source of evil and many are enticed. This is plainly the work of the Devil. However, there is another problem with the Internet becoming more and more obvious in our modern world. In the past, a person who published a religious journal felt a great sense of responsibility to censure false doctrine and keep it out of the publication. The devil has found a way to get around such publishers. False teachers, who once had no way to reach the masses, now go on the Internet and teach error worldwide. Do you realize an Internet site teaching false doctrine can do just as much harm as any other evil site? In our opinion, this has become one of the greatest enemies the church has today. Just think of those who have been taught false doctrine and left the church as a result! Any crackpot can establish a web site and begin blinding the minds of millions all over the world. Most of us could give names and cases where this has happened over and over. Facebook, a commonly used form of social media, while harmless in most cases, can also be used to fool the unwary.

The Devil is working! It is so easy to gossip, criticize the church and her members, and this on a worldwide scope. Women, perhaps without thinking, can teach Bible things in direct contradiction to what Paul said in 1 Timothy 2: 11, 12. It is so easy to forget that the devil is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

The church is facing a great battle right now. Enemies beset her on every side. Brethren, be careful. We are not facing a novice who knows nothing. The apostle spoke of him as “the god of this world.” (2 Corinthians 4:4) One foolish move by the unsuspecting and souls are lost. Think on these things. DLK

Announcements

NOTICE

“Greeting to All the Christians who read the OPA. It has been some time since I last wrote to the paper. I want you to know I have moved and changed addresses. Our prayers are for all of you. Roy Lee Criswell 10306 Lucca Lane, Peculiar, MO 64078-7807 Phone number 417-342-1336”

Our Departed

KARR- Roy Bradford Karr, Sr. of Temple, Ga passed away October 5, 2013, at his residence after battling colon cancer for more than two years. He was born November 23, 1937 in Temple, son of the late Ercell Karr and Rosa Muse Karr. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Roy Bradford Karr, Jr.; a sister, Eva Jo Wright and brother, Cyril Karr. He married Melba Ann Laney on June 22, 1956. Survivors include his wife Melba, sons and daughter-in-law, Steve Karr of Temple, Keith and Lisa Karr, of Carrollton Ga, three grandsons and four great-grandchildren. He was baptized by Edwin Morris less than two months after being married and remained faithful to the Lord’s church the remainder of his life. Roy and Melba loved gospel meetings, attending all local meetings and often traveled out of state for gospel meetings. A number of times they carried preachers to their next meeting before returning home. Roy was a retired builder and drove a school bus in Temple for 31 years. He raised bird dogs and loved training them and riding his walking horses. Roy was laid to rest at Center Point community cemetery on October 7, 2013. Services were conducted by brothers Terry Langley and Jeff Thompson. He will be missed by all who knew him. Please pray for Melba and the family. (Keith Karr)

HARPER- Martha Cleo Harper (age 90) was born September 22, 1923 in Rockcastle County, KY. The daughter of Charles and Eva McKinney. She passed away October 12, 2013 at The Rockcastle Health and Rehab Center in Broadhead, KY. She is survived by her husband: Russell Harper of Broadhead, KY. Three sons: Tom, Bill and David Renner. Five daughters: Kathy Spencer, Chis Harrison, Georgia Krahenbuhl, Debord and Gladys Akers. One Sister: Magdalene Mink. There are also grandchildren, great grandchildren and great, great grandchildren surviving. Preparing for eternity was the subject selected for the occasion. -Barney Owens

Field Reports

Greg Gay 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747 November 3. We were in Fremont in October in a weekend hosting. We stayed with Rod and Alice Moyer who were wonderful hosts. It is always great to be in a congregation where there are multiple generations

of dedicated families. Don King was in town and we were able to share great food (thanks Patsy!) and have a wonderful visit. Our families have been close friends in the church for about 100 years. We were also in Redding for a Lord's Day recently and enjoyed visiting with the brethren there, as always. We attended two nights of Fair Oaks recent Young Speaker's Meeting and heard Ben Bonnett from Manteca and Aaron Newman from Placerville. Both gave excellent presentations on their assigned topics of two of the Old Testament kings, Saul and David. We are continuing our work with the 64th St. Congregation in Sacramento. We continue to have frequent neighborhood visitors and are still following up on leads from the TV program sponsored by the generosity of the Oakdale congregation.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com Oct. 22- Since my last report, I held meetings at Hoyte, TX Aurora, MO, Moore, OK, and Columbia, MO. I enjoyed being with these congregations and felt like good was accomplished by the preaching of the gospel. In a sense, the meeting at Hoyte was special because Jerry and I held it together. I enjoyed spending a whole week with Jerry, my brother and best friend. We have many dear friends at Hoyte, brethren we have known for years, and you won't find a more hospitable congregation anywhere. Our parents, Bill and Jimmie Dickinson of Pasadena, TX were able to attend the last weekend. Being the first long distance trip they have made in a while, it meant a lot to have them in attendance. It was a pleasure to be at Aurora. Although they recently moved to Peculiar, MO, Roy Lee and Zella Criswell were present for most of the meeting. Roy Lee has been a faithful evangelist for many years and I have always admired him for the good work he has done at Aurora and other places. John Strain is working with the church at Moore and I saw evidence of his efforts to reach the lost in that area. We had large crowds every night and I was impressed with this congregation's zeal. Finally, the meeting at Columbia was also special because it was a "homecoming" of sorts, coinciding with the church being established 50 years ago. We had visitors from near and far, many of them having once called this home. There was one confession of faults and the baptism of a young man into Christ. To God be the glory I am now looking forward to the end of this year and the beginning of 2014, Lord willing.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA, 94550, old_paths@juno.com November 18- Pat and I just returned late last night from Hawaii. We worked with the small church there and held a week end meeting as well as preaching one other Lord's Day. We enjoyed hearing Eric the first Sunday afternoon and Edimar on Wednesday eve. Both did a good job and edified the church. We are impressed with the dedication and zeal found among them. Brother Eric Stone and family have been there nearly three years and have done a good work but much remains to be done. Those who support him are to be commended and we hope their support will continue. Their singing is very good and they study the Bible Book by Book and chapter by chapter which has helped all to have a better understanding of the Bible. They have repaired and painted the building on the exterior, the lawns look nice, all of which presents a nice picture to the community. We were happy to see an elderly Filipino couple and their son the last Lord's Day which we met back when the church first began in Hawaii. They indicated they plan to attend regularly now. All in all, we believe the church there is on the right track for growth. We pray our time was well spent. Many have written inquiring about the terrible storm which has ravaged the Philippines. At this time, we have no reliable information about our brethren there or what the losses are. One preacher wrote to inform us of a brother who was swept away in a flood and found some time later hundreds of miles away a victim of drowning. We suspect cell phone towers have been destroyed which has made it next to

impossible for many to get word out. We do know that some areas were spared, and we thank God for that, but others were directly in the line of the typhoon and just what the loss is to our brethren is yet a mystery. Please, pray for them.

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, November 9- We ended our gospel meetings schedule on a high note with the Jamesville, Missouri congregation a few weeks ago. We had wonderful crowds with visitors from far and near. Visiting preachers included Jimmie Smith, Ronny Wade, Dan Wissinger, and Brad Shockley. Of course, Billy Dickinson of the Jamesville congregation was there every service and it was a pleasure to be associated again with him. Since my last report we have also conducted meetings at Napoleon, Alabama; Shawnee, Kansas; and Neosho, Missouri. Again, we had some wonderful crowds at these services, good outside interest from some of the communities, and numerous preachers in attendance to support our efforts. In August, I participated in a study at the Moore, Oklahoma congregation dealing with the various components of personal work. John Strain, Allen Bailey, Joe Hisle, Matt Trent and I each took a Saturday evening, gave an oral presentation, and fielded questions afterwards. My topic was "Establishing Bible Authority as a Basis for Personal Work." The study was good and I benefited from it. Phyllis and I enjoyed the hospitality of Steve and Nancy Martin during our weekend stay. We had Clint DeFrance for our fall meeting here in Ada last month. Clint's preaching was outstanding and we enjoyed his presence very much. We were fortunate to have several interested visitors from the community in attendance. We are grateful for God's wonderful blessings of the past year and we continue to solicit your prayers as we strive to serve Him.

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 ronnywade36@gmail.com Since our last report we have conducted the following meetings: Harrison, AR where brother Jimmy Smith resides. Our crowds were outstanding with numbers of outsiders attending throughout the entire meeting which was a testament to the work Jimmy has done throughout the years. One was baptized. We next were with the church in Arlington, TX where Joe Norton lives and works. I have known Joe most of my life and find him to be a man of both talent and stability, who keeps on fighting and living for God. He is well respected by the church. Our meeting was well attended and I truly enjoyed being among the members there. Nathan Batey also calls this home. Nathan is a fine young man and is well equipped to defend the truth. Our next meeting was in Sharonville, OH where Barney and Stan Owens reside. Their influence on the church is evident. Our crowds were good with several outsiders present throughout the meeting. We enjoyed being in the home of Jearl and Bernice Cromer whose hospitality was outstanding. From Sharonville we went to London, KY for a good meeting. We had from 8-12 outsiders at several services. This congregation, is now back in their building after being deprived of its use for nearly two years. The last Sunday we had 40 in attendance. Their normal crowd ranges in the upper 30's. Brother Phillip Scott works among them and has done an outstanding job in bringing them together in an effort to strengthen and equip them for better service. From London we went to Athens, AL where brother Bobby Pepper labors. It was good to be with Bobby. He is always upbeat and full of energy. Brother Johnny Fisher, now in his eighties came and stayed for the entire meeting. Though growing older and weaker Johnny still loves the Church and loves to talk of its welfare. The church in Athens is alive and active, and it was a pleasure to be among them. Currently we are back home in a good meeting with brother Frank Brancato. His preaching is sound and it is a pleasure to have him among us.

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THE BACK PAGE...

THE MUST FRIEND

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Geoffrey Greif has written an interesting book entitled, *The Buddy System: Understanding Male Friendships*. Greif concludes there are four categories of friendship among men and he labels them as “must,” “trust,” “rust,” and “just” friends.

A “must” friend is a best buddy, a member of the inner circle, the closest of relationships. If something very important happens (birth, death, hole-in-one, awards winner, etc.) these are the men you must call. These are the men you can count on when the chips are down. Greif says, “if I have a personal crisis, I talk to my wife first, then I call my brother Steve. I can count on him to listen well and offer a perspective I haven’t considered, which often brings me to a solution I might have missed. No matter how personal the issue, Steve won’t gossip about our discussion. Without ‘must’ friends like my brother, life would be less fulfilling and, in many ways, less fun.”

A “trust” friend demonstrates a level of integrity that allows you to feel comfortable talking with him but you would not seek him out as a “must” friend. “Trust” friends will keep a confidence, and they will give you feedback that makes you feel understood when you talk to them. You might want to develop a closer friendship with them but have never had the opportunity or time. If you run into one of them, and the context is right, you trust him enough to feel comfortable talking with him about a personal problem.

A “rust” friend is one you have known a long, long time. Elementary school friends may be “rust” friends. When you see them you may fall back into patterns of behavior from when you were 10 years old. A “rust” friend may or may not be especially close but exists because of the length of time you have known him. These friendships are locked like rust to iron over time. It is even possible to have a “rust” friend you do not like all that well; the kind of friendship that leads others to ask, “Why hang around with that guy?” The answer-“I’ve known him a long time.”

A “just” friend is a little closer than an acquaintance and is pleasant to be with, but you do not socialize outside of basketball, golf, stamp-collecting or any other sports or hobby-related contact. He is enjoyable company, but you have not known him long enough for him to be a “rust” friend, or well-enough to be a “must” friend.

Greif admits these categories are not strict pigeon holes and that plenty of overlap exists among them, but obviously the friend we covet the most is the “must” friend.

The book of Proverbs abounds in statements concerning the worth of friendship and explains that true friendships can be better and stronger than family ties (Prov. 17:17; 18:24; 27:6, 9, 10, 17).

David had such a friend in Jonathan. Soon after their first meeting “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:1). Much that is called friendship is not worthy of the name, but the friendship of these two men “shines for all ages as an eternal type.”

They were completely honest with each other (1 Sam. 20:1-3). The strongest bonds are created by those who allow their friends into the innermost places of the heart-revealing hopes, dreams, and fears. They sought each other for advice and safeguarded confidences.

They were loyal to each other (1 Sam. 20:30-34). Jonathan took a stand for his friend who was right and against his father King Saul who was wrong, showing that a good friend will stick through thick and thin (Prov. 17:17). One of the great sorrows of Job was that his friends turned against him when he needed them most. Rather than comforting Job, they added to his consternation (Job 16:2; 19:19).

The greatest tie that bound Jonathan and David together, however, was their love of virtue and their fear of God (1 Sam. 20:42). A friendship based solely upon profit or pleasure will cease to exist as soon as the profit or pleasure ceases, but virtue makes love and friendships continue. Jesus told His disciples, “You are my friends if you do what I command you” (Jn. 15:14-15). Obedience to the gospel puts God and Christ at the top of our “must” friends list and then, as the song says, we should “make friends of God’s children.” Evil friends destroy genuine happiness and threaten our spiritual well-being (Prov. 22:24; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14).

You may be thinking, “I would give anything to have a friend such as Jonathan!” It is better to say, however, “I wish I could be such a friend as Jonathan.” Friendship is mutual. You must deserve it before you are worthy to bestow it (Prov. 18:24). Make yourself worthy, and you will not lack for “must” friends who will be as true to you as Jonathan was to David. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com