

Our purpose is to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,” and to “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

“To continue speaking the truth in love,” “endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace,” “keeping the ordinance as delivered.”

“Thus saith the Lord, ‘stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest of your souls.’ (Jer. 6:16) “And they that be of Thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Paths to Dwell in.” (Isa. 58:12).

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NO. 12

THE DANGERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

By *RONNY F. WADE*

Social media is defined by Wikipedia as “computer-mediated technologies that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, career interest and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks. The variety of stand-alone and built-in social media services currently available introduces challenges of definition, however there are some common features.” The writer goes on to explain that users typically access social media services via web-based technologies on desktop computers, and laptops, or download services that offer social media using mobile devices such as cell phones. Some of the most popular social media websites are Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. A recent survey indicated that 84 percent of adolescents in America have a Facebook account. Over 60% of 13 to 17 year olds have at least one profile on social media, with many spending more than two hours a day on social networking sites. The total time spent on social media sites in the U. S. across PCs as well as on mobile devices increased by 99 percent to 121 billion minutes in July of 2012 compared to 66 billion in July of 2011. These staggering figures indicate not only the popularity of social media sites, but also the tremendous impact they are having on young people in our society. From time to time I scroll through Facebook. Generally I see the same names day after day who have something to say about a post they initiate or a response to a post made by someone else. It seems that this indicates not only the popularity of the site but also the habit of spending significant time to both read and send messages. This does not indicate, in and of itself that those involved are doing anything wrong, but does speak to the amount of time spent in such endeavors. Social media can spread good news, encourage the downtrodden and broken hearted. It can spread joy by sharing news about success in spreading the gospel and furthering the cause of Christ. It can inform us of illness and the need of prayer for those who are sick.

Suppose for a moment that the person who spends two hours a day on Facebook spent the same amount of time reading the Bible, or visiting the sick, or encouraging the downtrodden, would the outcome be better or more profitable? Unfortunately, in my casual perusal of what I see on Facebook, I have observed people (members of the church) immodestly clad, seemingly unashamed at exposing parts of their bodies for display which the bible plainly condemns. 2Timothy 2:9 “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, but which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.” I see women with shorn (cut hair) which Paul taught against in 1Cor. 11. I have witnessed posts in which vulgar and shameful language is used by people claiming to be church members. I have seen and read outright false doctrine taught without any rebuttal from anyone. I have read long posts by women publically teaching the bible which is a clear contradiction of 1Timothy 2:11-12 “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over the man, but to be in silence.” Just today as I looked at some posts a sister wrote trying to prove the idea that there is no scriptural reason for divorce and remarriage. In her effort to teach her belief she actually disobeyed the teaching of Paul, both in 1Timothy and 1Corinthians. Often articles appear written by men who are digressive in both teaching and practice and such articles go unanswered. This in and of itself presents a problem for the unlearned and unsuspecting. In addition there are some who seem to be bent on divulging church problems and troubles existing in their areas. What a shame. Church trouble needs to be kept at home and resolved there. It should never be paraded before thousands of readers who know nothing about the problems or situations existing in another congregation. By the same token if I have a problem with a brother I need to resolve that problem with that person Mt. 18:15-18, and not with Facebook readers. This media

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Editorial

O MAN OF GOD

By DON L. KING

In 1 Timothy 6:11 Paul wrote to Timothy saying: “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”

Consider what an honor it would have been to have an inspired apostle refer to you as “man of God.” Timothy was apparently not a man of great education, not a great man of the world famous for something, not a man of huge power, but a man of God! This sort of title in the Old Testament was used to refer to such men as Moses and Samuel. How it must have thrilled Timothy to hear his name called by the great apostle in such a flattering manner.

In II Timothy 2 Paul gave Timothy some things for him to work on and utilize in his work as a “man of God.” I want to notice in particular a few things from verses 23-25 of chapter 2.

“But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife.” What valuable advice to any teacher or preacher! Things not really taught of God need to be avoided, because they are likely to breed strife and later, division. A fellow may have his own ideas or opinions, but these do not qualify as matters worthy of being taught as though they really come from God. If we plan to teach an idea, we need to be sure it is based on the Word of God rather than some fancy we might have. Points of vital import should be studied carefully in the light of the Scriptures before presenting them as fact.

In verses 24-25 Paul said:” And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will”

“Must not strive.” This tells every teacher or preacher that we are not to be difficult to get along with, or often involved in strife. The word “strive” in this verse in the

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QUERIST COLUMN

By CLINT DE FRANCE

Question: Please explain 1 Corinthians 6.1-4

Answer: The text under consideration reads: I dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?

These verses constitute a series of arguments in the form of rhetorical questions in response to an issue troubling the Corinthian congregation. The problem is stated in verse 6: But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers! The Apostle Paul makes it clear in verse 5 that Christians taking one another to law-courts to work out their disagreements is shameful (i.e. sinful). Instead Christians should allow the church to help them work out differences, and in cases where no resolution may be reached" the spiritual Christian should allow himself to be defrauded. In verses 1-4, Paul makes a compelling, multi-part case for this conclusion.

1) The saints (that is all Christians" 1 Corinthians 1.2) will judge the world and angels. 2) The things pertaining to this life are the smallest matters by comparison to the aforementioned. 3) If Christians have the wisdom and maturity to do the former, surely they can do the latter without relying on unbelievers and their justice system.

Understanding Paul's point and logic allows us to better understand what Paul means by the saints judging the world and angels. The most popular interpretations suggest that Christians will have some authoritative position with Christ at the end of time, empowered with supernatural discernment through the resurrection. However, this idea does not fit with Paul's logic. If Christians will somehow be equipped with the ability to exercise judgment over the world and angels in the resurrection, how would that guarantee Christians today have the ability to arbitrate problems with each other?

Though not without its weaknesses and difficulties, perhaps the best interpretation comes from McGarvey: it is more probable that saints will only participate [in the final judgment] as mystically united with Christ

the judge, just as, by mystical union, they are kings and priests, though in no sense exercising these offices literally. The church shall judge the world in Christ her head. But the point made by Paul is that those whom God honors by association so important a judicature may well be entrusted to judge trivial matters; for the weightiest matter of earth is light compared with the questions of eternal destiny decided on that day (Commentary on 1 Corinthians).

To understand Paul, we must ask, why had God honored the saints by association so important a judicature? The answer is most likely contained in Jesus comments to the wicked generation of Jews in Matthew 12:41 or the writer of Hebrews in 11:7. Just as the men of Nineveh condemned the Jews of Jesus day by repenting at the preaching of Jonah, and just as Noah condemned the wicked of his own time by obeying God, Christians demonstrate prudence and wisdom above all wicked men and angels by coming to Christ for salvation! Why then should we think these evil ones" so foolish that they have rejected the only Lord and Savior" could help us work through our own problems concerning merely physical matters? Surely Christians can use the same wisdom which brought them to Christ at the first to imitate Christ in love, patience, and self-sacrifice unto the resolution of any problem with brothers and sisters of like precious faith.

Question: Are crosses or crucifixes on or in a church building a form of idolatry?

Answer: The Bible never places any sacred meaning or emphasis on the shape of the cross or any effigy of the same. In all expressions of worship or religious devotion, only that which is authorized by the Apostles is acceptable (Acts 2.42; Colossians 3.17). Crucifixes and crosses do not honor God for the same reason that instrumental music in the worship does not honor God" they are no part of His revealed system. Church buildings are only authorized by implication and we would do better keeping our meeting houses plain, rather than decorating them with man-made religious iconography. Christ is glorified and souls are saved when the message of cross is preached (1 Corinthians 1.18)" not when the image of the cross is seen. For more information, the reader is directed to a sermon titled reImagery and Christian Worship. This lesson was presented at the Preacher's Study in Oklahoma City and the Mid-Missouri Study in Columbia. It is available online. If you would like a copy on CD write or email me your address and I will be happy to send one.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY - THE GIFT OF DESIRE

By GREG GAY

When God created man and woman, he created us with all the amazing complexity that makes us uniquely human.

As creatures of free will, we are capable of deliberate choices of both evil and good. As a result, we can choose to deny or succumb to desires, both good and ill.

While today's enlightened scientists present the logic that evolved mankind is nothing more than an animal needing to follow every possible impulse for gratification, survival, and procreation, the God of creation says otherwise.

One of God's gifts to mankind is the natural gift of desire. We find a Biblical discussion of this topic in 1 Corinthians 7 when Paul addresses the implied question raised by our brothers and sisters at Corinth: "Are we better Christians if we do not marry?" Inspiration's answer is a masterpiece of propriety in addressing a very sensitive subject in an appropriate way.

Paul writes, "Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. But I say this as a concession, not as a commandment. For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that. But I say to the unmarried and to the widows: It is good for them if they remain even as I am; but if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Corinthians 7:1-9 NKJV).

In verse 7 of the above reading there is the phrase, "But each one has his own gift from God..." "The word

rendered "gift" is the transliterated word, "charisma." We are familiar with charisma, but we usually find it used in relation to the miraculous spiritual gifts of the early church.

In this case, this gift, this charisma, is a non-miraculous gift of desire from God that is part of God's creation and is an essential part of his plan for mankind's continuance and appropriate marital relationships.

This gift is at least part of what is being discussed in Adam's speech at Eve's creation, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24 NKJV). who is married cares about the things of the world - how he may please his wife" (1 Corinthians 7:32-33 NKJV).

When Jesus was being questioned about divorce he quoted Adam's words: "And He answered and said to them, "Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate" (Matthew 19:4-6 NKJV).

While the gift of desire is part of our natural creation, Paul reveals in 1 Corinthians 7 that there are different degrees of desire and different degrees of ability to control this desire.

When Paul states, "For I wish that all men were even as I myself" (1 Corinthians 7:7 NKJV), he is sharing he was able to control his gift of desire successfully without sin, as an explanation for being unmarried.

Paul realized though, that many were not like him in that regard. Inspiration's advice, providing they are otherwise qualified, is that those with less self-control than Paul should marry to avoid sin and for the appropriate expression of their gift of desire.

It is very clear that the intended fulfillment of the gift of desire is marriage: "but if they cannot exercise self control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Corinthians 7:9 NKJV).

Today's cultural answer to the gift of desire is to follow

any and every lifestyle ever devised by mankind and then influence all to accept those choices as “normal” in society. Regardless of laws that are passed, God’s will is that no lifestyle would be pursued that is “contrary to nature.”

The scriptures say, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due” (Romans 1:26-27 NKJV).

While these are choices all can make in life, because we are creatures of free will, anyone desiring entrance to the Lord’s Church must be willing to repent and leave those practices behind. After enumerating a series of sinful lifestyle choices that our brethren at Corinth had practiced prior to coming to Christ, Paul says, “And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11 NKJV).

While it is expected and permissible for most to marry, there is no command of God for anyone to marry. In fact, God commends those who will devote themselves to his service rather than to a marital relationship. “But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares for the things of the Lord - how he may please the Lord. But he who is married cares about the things of the world - how he may please his wife” (1 Corinthians 7:32-33 NKJV).

Some however, no matter their desire, end up in situations where marriage is not a choice for them.

Some may not ever have opportunity to marry, for various reasons. In such cases, regardless of their gift of desire, they are expected to practice self-control.

Still others, because of previous choices and actions may not have the right to marry.

For example, the guilty party in a divorce loses the right to remarry anyone except their former spouse. Such situations fit the solution given by Paul, “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” (1 Corinthians 7:10-11 NKJV).

Since the guilty party in a Christian’s divorce does not have a scriptural exception to allow them to leave the marriage lawfully, their choice is to remain unmarried or to be reconciled. But, if their former spouse is not available to them because of remarriage or does not consent to reconciliation, they, the guilty party, are expected to remain celibate for the rest of their life and maintain control their gift of desire. They should not date or engage in courtship at all, because they do not have the right to do so.

Where congregations have members who do not have the right to marry, leaders would be wise to have the discussion with them that they are to avoid the type of relationship that could lead them and someone else astray. Sadly, many times leaders do not say anything until someone is nearly at the altar for a wedding, then it may be too late to be able to reason with them from the scriptures. Just because bad choices were made “long ago,” which is the most frequent reason I hear, does not change God’s timeless truths.

If a husband or wife becomes ill or incapacitated to the point they are not able to cooperate in the fulfillment of desire, their spouse has no right to divorce them scripturally or to seek fulfillment outside the marriage. They are expected to control themselves and remain faithful in the relationship.

Just because a husband and wife possess the gift of desire, there is no guarantee the gift is the same for each, either in the beginning of their relationship or with the passing of time. Paul helps with this difficult area by presenting the concept of shared ownership of each other’s body in a husband and wife relationship that encourages each to be appropriately responsive to the other. Also, the fulfillment of desire is to be seen as a type of debt that each owes the other in a marriage.

Paul writes, “Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another except with consent

for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control" (1 Corinthians 7:3-5 NKJV).

The implication of this mutual ownership and obligation is that each in the marriage is supposed to be as generous as possible for the good of the marriage and to help their spouse avoid temptation to stray.

Young people are asked to be in control of their gift of desire before marriage even though it may be very difficult for them and even though the majority of others around us in the world do not practice self-control in this area. Regardless of what is happening around us, Christians are commanded to avoid immorality of all kinds, both before and after marriage. "But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints" (Ephesians 5:3).

While young men and women both need to be committed to purity, in premarital studies I always challenge the young man in the relationship to be a leader in self control during courtship as proof of his willingness to be a future leader in all areas in the home, especially when it may be difficult.

The gift of desire is addressed in the scriptures in the verses I have used and others throughout the Bible. Additional helpful resources I am aware of include books by Clifford and Joyce Penner who write about intimacy issues from a spiritual perspective. 5109 Chicago Ave., Fair Oaks, CA 95628 papagreg@aol.com

PAGES FROM THE PAST

The following article titled Class Teaching is from the October 1932 Issue of the Old Paths Advocate. It was written by Brother Paul Hays. In this article, Brother Hays answers some of the arguments that are used to promote the class system of teaching. -Rick Martin

Class Teaching
By Paul Hays

I am in receipt of a brotherly letter, favorable to the Class Method of teaching the Bible. The usual arguments are

advanced, with some others of a more original nature.

As we find the words Master and Disciple frequently used in the New Testament, it is reasoned that we have the equivalent of Schoolmaster and Pupil.

This argument would be stronger if the word Master did not universally refer to Christ, and the word Disciple to Christ's disciples.

Besides, where does this constitute an argument for the Class System? Did Christ use the Class System? The verb form of the Greek word is used with reference to the varied conditions of Christ's teachings, but without suggesting a class.

It is claimed that the words "Teacher, and teaching are used about 159 times in the New Testament." But a bare 8 times is the Greek word, translated Master, used loosely, to include others that Christ. Only twice does it refer to uninspired teachers, and one of them is in rebuke of the ambition. The single exception would lay upon every Christian the obligation to become a Teacher, and would imply Mutual Edification, rather than the Class System.

Another argument is based upon the fact that Christ and His Apostles accompanied Preaching with Teaching, with both Saints and Sinners. This is supposed to necessitate other method than the public proclamation of the gospel.

But a careful study will show that they did Teach by public proclamations, and nothing is said, or implied, as to a class system. Preaching is the initial announcing; of new truth, while Teaching is the continued repetition of the truth, whether publicly or privately.

Still another argument is based on the fact that Christ and the apostles sometimes asked, or answered questions. It is reasoned that this involves the Class, catechetical-method of teaching.

But it can be shown that questions were asked and answered without the class system being employed. The occasional asking of questions for information, or the asking of 'catch questions,' to provoke thought, do not lead to the Formalism and Ritualism, which our Reformers fought so hard to destroy.

I need not say that the formal asking and answering of

questions leads to the Literature System, and the set Catechism, which leads to human Creeds, and to men becoming disciples of Disciples, instead of the disciples of Christ.

We would be shocked at the idea of using Campbell's Christian System, for systematic study; but we deliberately teach from human literature, because, forsooth, it is prepared by Master minds.

Another argument used by my brother is to the effect that the children can be better taught in a class, by the catechetical method. But the New Testament does not indicate that the church is to teach children. That is no part of its 'organized effort,' if we are confined to 'what is written.'

Parents are admonished to teach and train their children. Our business is to save the parents, and set them to train their own children. We destroy the contrast between Christian homes and others by training other people's children for them. God's way is always best.

Usually, questions were asked by the learner, of his superior, in New Testament times. We have reversed the process. This destroys the dignity of the Parent, as teacher, and spoils the child.

Another argument is based on what my friend chooses to name, "The Schools of the Prophets," in the Old Testament. Now, the word 'School' is found but once in my Bible, and that is in the New Testament, and refers to a heathen school.

I know no reason for supposing that the schools of the ancients were taught in classes, or by the catechetical method. I am supposing -that the 'Sons of the Prophets' were taught much as our Savior taught the Twelve and the seventy.

Our brother refers to what he calls the 'Synagogue school,' and assumes that it was taught just as the modern schools are taught. We do not even know that children were taught in the ancient synagogue.

But our Savior did away with the synagogue idea. There were no Churchhouses for 150 years after the apostles. The Ritualism of the moderns was strikingly absent from the New Testament church.

The initiative of the Mutual Edification taught in the

New Testament is calculated to develop volunteer workers, as contrasted with the ecclesiastical machinery of this institutional age, where every worker, from the Pastor down, is appointed to his respective sphere of action.

Our brother refers, to the 'tutors' of Galatians 4:2. Is he not aware that the tutors and governesses of the time previous to the days of Robert Raikes were private teachers, and confined to the homes of the children taught?

The modern custom of sending the children away from the home, and parental control, to be taught in herds, is the curse of this age. Orphan homes, and even Bible colleges, are no exception to this rule.

Orphans had better be adopted into Christian homes, and young preachers associated with older evangelists.

If the Class idea had been prevalent in the New Testament age, or had it been contemplated, or desired by the Holy Spirit, Paul would not have needed to tell women to 'learn in silence,' or 'ask their husbands at home'.

According to 'our Loyal Brethren,' the permissibility of woman's participation in class work is based on its being a 'Private' work, independent of the 'church meeting'. It usually comes before the 'Church meeting', and gives the women a chance to ask questions before they get home to their husbands, and before they are even tempted to ask in the Church.

If Paul were here we would ask him what a woman is to do if she has no husband, or if she is smarter than her husband? And what is a child to do who has no parents, or whose parents are infidels?

Also, what is a woman to do if there are no men to preside at the Lord's table, or to preach? And what is a family to do whose head is ignorant, or drunk, and whose mother is at the club?

What is a congregation to do that has no preacher, and no elders qualified to lead? What is a man to do if there is nobody to baptize him, or if a tree falls on him and kills him?

What if a single congregation is not financially able to do what it is told to do, without joining a missionary

society? What if our song leader is unable to lead a song without the aid of an instrument?

It appears to me that we would do well to bring about conditions to fit the New Testament teaching, and trust the Lord to supply any deficiencies.

THE DANGERS continued from page one

should never be used to “get back at someone” and make public that which should have remained private. Gossip is a sin and using public forums to divulge secrets or “hear-says” is wrong. Serious dangers lurk in the shadows when private matters are made public. The dangers of messages and pictures appearing on social media outlets are often overlooked to the harm of those involved. Social media is a part of our society whether we realize it or not. It is likely to be used and unfortunately misused for years to come. May God help us to realize that what we say, the way we dress, and the way we respond to others may well determine our eternal destiny.

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original means to “quarrel, dispute, fight, or wrangle.” Obviously, this does mean we are not to stand for the truth; because Jude wrote that we are to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3) However, we are not to be the sort who look for a quarrel or fight. Once in a while such a fellow comes along and seems to cause disputes wherever he goes. Sometimes, in sermons a fellow will speak in such a way that causes hurt feelings unnecessarily. There is never an excuse to fail in teaching the truth. However, there is also never an excuse to be rude, caustic, abrasive and hurtful. Some seem to seek ways to be controversial. A teacher should always have as a goal the salvation of his audience. To hurt their feelings or make them angry is seldom a successful method.

I am reminded of an incident in the life of my father. He told of going with a fellow preacher to visit a non member who was married to a good Christian lady. He said that almost immediately the preacher initiated an argument that quickly escalated into a heated exchange. The fellow suddenly stood up and ordered both of them out of his home. In the car the preacher told Dad, “sometimes you have to make them mad before they see

the truth.” To which my Dad replied, “Well, he should be seeing it right away then because you certainly made him mad.” That isn’t the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus, nor is it the attitude any of us should manifest in the work of the Lord. We have no excuse to engage in bitter strife. We will only hurt the church if we do.

Rather than be a fellow who engages in strife, we are instead told to be “gentle” (a word in the original denoting a mild and kind attitude). Virtually any Bible subject may be taught with the desired end result, if the audience can see that one is doing so with love and in a kind manner. In fact, folks will sometimes thank the teacher for helping them see the truth. We’ve heard of preachers who claimed they were unpopular in some places because their preaching is too “hard.” Frankly, that is doubtful, though there could be such cases. It is, however, possible they became unpopular because their preaching was seen as caustic and abrasive. Few want to hear that, and such an attitude may cause the truth to be hidden from the hearers. If what a man teaches is presented in a poor manner, his opportunity to develop some great Bible truth is often squandered and lost.

Few things are as upsetting as problems within a congregation. This is especially so when the problems might have been avoided in the beginning. Like a family problem, it is often the last thing you are conscious of as you go to sleep and the very first thing to enter your mind upon awaking. I once read of a young girl who came in from a long and difficult day with her playmates and asked her mother, “Do we have any band aids?” “Yes,” the mother replied, where do you need one?” The little girl sighed and said, “Just any place-I feel bad everywhere.” Sometimes, working among brethren who are the causes of unnecessary trouble can make a fellow want a band aid everywhere.

Brethren who are producing the wonderful fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5:22) are kind, gentle, patient, self-controlled persons according to the Scriptures. Only weak persons feel the need to bluster and bully their way through life. Such a fellow will eventually cause problems in the church. A good translation of Proverbs 30:21-23 reads, “Under three things the earth trembles; under four it cannot bear up; a slave when he becomes king, and a fool when he is filled with food: an unloved woman who gets a husband, and a maid when she succeeds her mistress.” Hence, a little or insecure man may become quite difficult to deal with when given authority. He may feel threatened and can only survive by threatening others around him. If

one encounters several of those in the Lord's work, he is facing a serious problem indeed. Get the "band aids" ready because he will need them.

Paul shows us in the verses we briefly noticed that a servant of the Lord (teacher, preacher) is to be a gentle person, skilled in teaching and long suffering. He does not become impatient as he is among members of the church, and he certainly does not cause trouble unnecessarily. Such a good brother will think before he speaks or acts. A servant of the Lord, the "man of God," always keeps in mind that his goal is to save souls rather than discourage them. Such a person is of inestimable value to the Cause of Christ, and will be respected among all. Think on these things. -DLK

QUERIST COLUMN continued from page three

Question: Please explain 1 Corinthians 11.25-26.

Answer: The verses under consideration are the conclusion of a thought, thus, for clarity we shall include and explain all the verses in the context.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me. In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. (1 Corinthians 11.23-26).

In 1 Corinthians 11.17-34, the Apostle Paul addresses a two fold problem in the Corinthian congregation. The Corinthians, like most ancient Christians, practiced an ancient form of hospitality called the Agape, or the Love-Feast, in which wealthy Christians provided food for less fortunate Christians and all ate together in happy association. However, the Corinthians feast became corrupt and charity was replaced with selfishness, cliquishness, and exclusivity.

Apparently, the Corinthians ate the Love Feast just prior to their worship on the Lord's Day. But the wealthy Christians ate their food before the poor Christians arrived, thus, one was hungry and another was full (verse 21). This uncharitable conduct on the part of the

rich humiliated the poor and filled them with bitterness. Consequently, when they came together as a church the attitude was not one of reverential honor toward Christ, but selfish anger toward each other.

In verses 25-26, Paul reminds them that the pattern for the Lord's Supper includes focusing our minds on Jesus and discerning the sacrifice of Christ in the emblems" that is, we do this in remembrance of Jesus.

When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper, it requires more than just setting the table with the correct items. Each worshiper must examine himself and focus his heart on thanksgiving to Jesus Christ. Each worshiper must discern Jesus body, given for us - pictured in the one loaf; his blood, shed for us - pictured in the fruit of the vine; and the New Covenant instituted by Christ's blood - pictured in the one cup from which all drink.

Earlier, in 1 Corinthians 10.16-17, Paul says that sharing the one cup and the one loaf in the communion makes us one body in Christ! Taking the Lord's Supper with hearts full of hate and bitterness toward others is an unworthy manner that actually makes it morally impossible to eat the Lord's Supper (J.W. McGarvey on 1 Corinthians 11.20).

Paul summarizes his case for keeping Christ at the forefront of our minds in the Lord's Supper in verse 26: For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Jesus Himself said, if we draw near to him with our lips, but our hearts are far from Him" our worship is in vain (Matthew 15.8). Send questions to Clint De France, 2121 S. Columbia Ave., Ste. LL2, Tulsa, OK 74114

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Announcement

To Whom It May Concern:

I cannot take part in military service in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant service. Below are listed some of the reasons:

1. My duty and obligation to God is superior to all other obligations (Acts 5:29; Matt. 23:37).

2. My God in the Bible forbids that I engage in carnal warfare in the following references: "Put up again thy sword ... for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Matt. 26:52); "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (II Cor. 10: 3-4); "Turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39); "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17).

3. To enter any military service, combatant or noncombatant, I would be compelled to "swear" (take an oath), but the Bible forbids that I do so. "Swear not at all" (Matt. 5:34).

4. To enter any military service I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Cor. 6:14).

5. To be in any branch of the military service in any way, I would be a part of an organization and would therefore have fellowship in the service, but such is prohibited. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11).

6. To serve in the military service in any way, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on the Lord's Day to worship God in the Bible way, at least part of the time, hence would disobey God. (Heb. 10:25; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).

Therefore, I cannot conscientiously engage in carnal warfare in any form or branch, and for the above reasons, I ask that my name be listed in support of the above principles.

James Taylor McNeill
17124 Mable Lane
Neosho, MO 64850

Dylan Leon McNeill
17124 Mable Lane
Neosho, MO 64850



Field Reports

Ronny F. Wade, P.O. Box 14352, Springfield, MO 65814 October 14 - Of late we have had the privilege of conducting meetings at Walnut Grove, Ky where we were greeted by good crowds at each service. Two sisters were restored to duty which encouraged the church to press on in their quest for the spiritual involvement of all members. From Walnut Grove we went to Claxton, MO. This church located deep in the Ozark hills continues to press the battle. They now have a group of young men who are helping in the song leading and seem to be interested in growing in strength and service. Our next meeting was at Livermore, CA We had good crowds each service with visitors from churches in the Valley most every night. Three were baptized into Christ which gave all great encouragement. Brother Don King calls this church home and is respected by all there. At McGregor, TX we were happy to see and associate with brother Wayne Mckamie. Wayne is respected and dearly loved by this church. He has given a great portion of his life to its existence and development. Good crowds greeted us at every service. We are currently at home and the Lord willing we look forward to several weeks working here in Springfield and with other local churches.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820 cmjthebackpage@gmail.com Nov. 7 - Jimmy Cating conducted our fall meeting here at Ada and did an outstanding job. We had visitors from the community several nights and good support from neighboring congregations. I just completed the last two meetings on my schedule for 2017. During the first week of October we had a wonderful meeting with the Mission Hills congregation in Springfield, Missouri. We had visitors from the community, a lot of folks from the area congregations, and several visiting preachers. We next went to the Odom Congregation near Dora, Missouri. I conducted one of the first meetings in my preaching career in October 1970 at the Odom congregation. Several of the folks I met on that occasion are still faithfully there. We had a 101 visitors during the meeting. Some of the cups-and-classes brethren from the nearby Ball Congregation were in attendance at every service. I am confident the meeting did some good. It is good to be home for a few months. I am scheduled to preach here at home at least three services per month and I have some Sunday appointments scheduled at nearby congregations. Phyllis and I are very grateful for the hospitality and encouragement we have received during

our travels this year. Please continue to remember us in your prayers. God bless and keep you.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, November 13, old paths@juno.com - The home congregation continues in peace for which we are grateful. We recently closed a good meeting with Ronny Wade which was well attended by some outsiders and visitors from area congregations. The last service was blessed with three young women who desired baptism. That was a wonderful thing to witness and made the meeting a tremendous success. Ronny did an outstanding job and we enjoyed having him with us. The Philippine work continues to grow with new congregations being established and precious souls obeying the gospel. It will soon be time to make another trip to that land and we look forward to it. After all these years we have many friends whom we love and look forward to seeing. The work in Hawaii seems to be progressing as well and we count all these things as great blessings. Preachers, we need your field reports and articles for the paper. Have them to us no later than the 12th of the month since we try to send the copy to the printers about the 15th. Brethren enjoy and benefit from knowing where you have been working and the results. Lord bless the work everywhere.

Greg Gay, 5109 Chicago Ave., Fair Oaks, CA 95628, 916-804-3787, papagreg@aol.com, November 5, 2017 - Cassie and I, along with our grandson Kelan Owen, were in London for a couple of weeks in October and enjoyed seeing many ancient and modern sites. Any opportunity to visit the British Library to see the ancient New Testament manuscript, the Codex Sinaiticus from the 4th. Century, is time well spent, in my opinion. While in London we worshipped with the congregation that meets in Kentish Town where Brent Wilson from Norman, OK was in a gospel meeting the first weekend of our trip. We enjoyed hearing him and getting acquainted with the brethren, then I was honored to preach for them the second Sunday of our trip. After a few days at home, Cassie and I travelled to Houston, MO for a long-planned meeting. We enjoyed the congregation's hospitality and appreciate the community visitors as well as support from area congregations. While there I met Todd Richardson who has moved to Houston and is now working with the congregation. We stayed with Cassie's dad, Ervin Baker, who at 90 is still going strong and is in fairly good health. Lord willing, our next meeting is to be the Northwest's Thanksgiving Meeting, this year in Spokane, WA. Our work continues at 64th. St. in Sacramento, for which we are thankful.

Roger Rivera - It is my pleasure to have this report

hoping that you are in good health and ready to be here in the Philippines on January God willing. I heard that you were treated on a voice problem and a broken arm where we were very much concerned about it. Nevertheless, we hope that there will be no problem on your planned visit. We are excited for our meeting again. I am doing well though I am very busy in the work. The weather in our place is not good as of these days because most of the time it rains and most often than not, I am showered by the rain during my travels. Despite on Sundays, I continue doing visitations and Bible studies in Bangui and in Burgos. Last October we had one baptism in Burgos. The work in Cagayan is doing well also. Since my elder brother Rey asked me to help him I travel from Burgos to Cagayan early in the morning of Mondays. We are preaching in three places, Sla Rosa, Banguian and Dugo, all in Abulug, Cagayan, my birthplace. We are encouraged because there are other 3 additional baptisms. We also visited other prospects particularly three preachers, one from Luna Apayao and two in Sta Ana Cagayan. I will be busier because an FM radio station in Burgos offered us to have a 30 minutes religious program on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 7:30-8:00 AM. This is free of charge. It has a limited area of coverage but be that as it may, it is still a great help for those who can hear the program. Our church building will probably begin to be constructed late this month as we still have lack on our financial needs.

Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace Woodstock, GA 30189 - At the beginning of October, I had the pleasure of holding a meeting at Bandy, KY. I enjoyed the meeting and the time with the congregation. The meeting was supported by several congregations in the area. It was a pleasure to have fellow preachers Barney Owens, Doug Hawkins, Stan Owens, Zac Evans, and Philip Scott in attendance. At the beginning of November, I was with the Green Oaks congregation in Arlington, TX. Preachers who were present during the meeting were, Joe Norton and Nathan Battey who work with the Green Oaks congregation. Also in attendance were Brett Hickey and Melvin Blalock. Several congregations in the metro-plex area supported the meeting. Joe and Joann Norton were our gracious hosts and it was a pleasure to get to know them better. It is my prayer that much good was done at both meetings. Lord willing, we are looking forward to attending the Alabama New Year's meeting. You should make your plans to attend one of the upcoming meetings. Please pray for the work here in this area.

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THE BACK PAGE...

REFORMATION DAY 2017

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Today is October 31, 2017, and while a lot of little goblins and princesses are going to be celebrating Halloween by ringing doorbells and declaring, "Trick or Treat," the Protestant religious world is going to be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the official beginning of the Protestant Reformation Movement.

Five hundred years ago today Martin Luther, a Roman Catholic monk, nailed 95 theses on the door of the church in Wittenberg Germany, protesting the grossly corrupt practice of "indulgences" within the Catholic Church.

Luther was born in Saxony, Germany to a peasant family. He excelled in school and was planning to become a lawyer. However, when he was 22 years old he was walking a street during a thunderstorm and was nearly struck by lightning. He was terrified by the experience and cried out, "Saint Anne help me! I will become a monk!" Without telling his parents he put his affairs in order and entered a monastery.

Copies of the Bible were extremely rare in that day and most copies that existed were written in Latin, a language that could be read only by priests and university academics. For the most part the common people in Germany, Gaul (France; Belgium), and England could not read the Bible for themselves.

In the monastery, however, Luther, who was fluent in Latin, managed to get copies of the Scriptures. He carefully studied Paul's epistles and was alarmed to discover a great difference between what Paul wrote and what the Catholic Church believed and practiced. He became especially incensed at the church's fund-raising practice of selling indulgences. Indulgences were documents prepared by the church and sold to individuals as a guarantee of avoiding the suffering of purgatory when they die. A purchaser was no longer compelled to attend mass or make confessions to priests. Indulgences could also be purchased for dead loved ones already in purgatory. The moment you purchased the certificate, the suffering soul would be released from purgatory.

Pope Leo X dreamed of rebuilding St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, but he needed money for the project. So, he commissioned priests to travel throughout Europe selling indulgences. One friar named Tetzel set up shop near Luther's home in Saxony and hoisted a banner that read, "When the coin in the coffer rings, the suffering soul of your loved one from purgatory springs!" The peasants thought the idea was intriguing, but Luther considered it blasphemy and was outraged. October 31, 1517, he went to the church in Wittenberg and nailed 95 theses on the door pointing out the corruption of the practice of indulgences and attacking the church's efforts to justify such a practice. He also challenged all comers to debate the propositions.

Luther's timing was impeccable. His was not the first effort to protest and reform the Catholic Church, but others failed because of the timing. The Renaissance was now in full swing, and people were beginning to turn to a greater appreciation of learning, art, music, history, and religion. Also, Gutenberg had just invented the removable-type printing press which made possible mass-printing and mass-distribution for the first time in history. Consequently, the 95 theses Luther intended only for the Wittenberg church were copied and distributed all over Europe. The distribution resulted in wide-spread pamphlet wars and debates. Luther was called before a church council that demanded he recant his charges, but he defiantly refused. The church labeled him a heretic, excommunicated him, and made several attempts on his life. He found refuge at Wartburg Castle for a couple of years where he began a translation of the New Testament into German.

Luther came to realize the main issue behind the corruption within the Catholic Church had to do with "authority." He argued the authority granted the pope and church councils was a corruption of the Bible's teachings, and that the Bible itself is the final authority in religious matters. He argued that every individual, including the lowest peasants on earth, had just as much right as the pope to read and interpret the Scriptures for themselves. He also argued that the priesthood consists of all believers (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).

Paul teaches in Romans 11:5 that regardless of how bleak things may look in the world, God has always had a remnant of people that has remained faithful to Him. There is no doubt that a remnant survived the Dark and Middle Ages and existed in Luther's time. It is tragic that Luther came so close to finding the remnant, but apparently came up short. His failure to understand the true meaning of salvation by grace through faith is just one example.

In his later years Luther was constrained to write down his beliefs on paper. He then spent the rest of his life defending what he had written instead of studying further into the Scriptures. Who knows, had he continued his focus entirely upon the Scriptures he may have come all the way to a full knowledge of the truth. That would have been something really worth celebrating today. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com