

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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## THE “FEW” AT SARDIS

By *RONNY F. WADE*

Sardis was a wicked city. Ramsey says it was “more of a robber’s stronghold than an abode of civilized men” (Seven Churches, p.354). Swete said “The church perhaps encountered in Sardis no special danger to her place; but the atmosphere of an old pagan city, heavy with immoral tradition of eight centuries, was unfavorable to the growth of spiritual life.” James Strahan sums up the similarities between the church and the city under four particulars, all of which help us to understand the letter: (1) Each had a name that it lived, but was dead. (2) Each fulfilled none of its works; both would promise but fail to execute. (3) With each it was watch, or be surprised as by a thief; Sardis (the city) had been caught napping each time it was taken. (4) It is implied that the garments of the church had been defiled with immorality, for which the city was noted (Hastings, IV. 458). There is no mention of emperor worship, Jewish or Nicolaitan opposition. The problem suggested at the outset is that while from the outside she appeared to be at peace and working, in reality she was spiritually dead. The Holy Spirit declared “thou art dead.” What a dreadful sentence of condemnation. There were, however, a few who had not defiled their garments. That is they had not reveled in immorality, nor had they participated in the pagan defilement so prevalent in the city. They had not permitted the sins of the city to rub off on them. There is no question that people can remain faithful to the Lord in the presence of those who do not. There is no question that a few can exist in the midst of a church where the majority have become unfaithful. (It is important to notice that false worship was not the problem here. So far as the letter reveals the church was practicing what some would call “scriptural worship.”) The idea that the sins of many do not jeopardize the few could be a dangerous concept. The question that begs an answer is, “how long can the few remain faithful without defiling their garments?” First of all one cannot remain in any situation where he/she is caused to sin by being there. Secondly, any one runs a risk by remaining under the influence of ungodly or false teaching and practices. Thirdly, one is duty bound to speak out against such teaching and practice. Silence is not the answer. It does appear, however, that so long as one is not himself sinning he can continue to worship

scripturally in a place even though there are things that are not what they should be. Now let us consider the majority in Sardis. Since there were only a few who had not defiled their garments, we are led to believe that the majority of the church was guilty as charged. First of all, the Lord appeals to them to remember. Evidently there was a time when they were faithful. Such is the case with many congregations. Things were not as they are presently. It is hoped that by remembering they will be constrained to retrace their steps and return to the truth. If not, the impending doom is clearly spelled out. If repentance and change do not occur, then “I will come as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.” This is not a reference to final judgment, but rather to the coming visitation of judgment upon the church, for the destruction of the enemies of truth, and/or for the aid of the church. What should our attitude and behavior be if there were such a church among us today where, like Sardis, the majority were involved in things that were not as they should be, practices that were highly questionable, things unscriptural, even though this church maintained what some call “scriptural worship?” Should we praise them for their spirituality? Should we commend them because of their energy and desire to save the lost? Or should we do as the Holy Spirit did with Sardis, warn and exhort? And if there were a few among them who refused to go along with what was going on and being preached, what would we say to them? Can you imagine that the few in Sardis kept silent and said nothing? Could the few remain faithful and say nothing? We need to be careful, that in making allowance for the few, we don’t encourage and justify the majority. However, what about a church where no few exist? There are no few to protect or justify because everyone in the church goes along with both the preaching and practices. To seek to justify this church by appealing to the few in Sardis misses the mark entirely. Suppose such a church existed and tried to proselytize through studies and the establishment of other satellite groups. Should we just sit by and justify their actions based on the few in Sardis, or should we rise up and oppose their unscriptural practices? I believe that a proper and scriptural lesson can be learned from the church in Sardis, but to stretch that lesson beyond its original application is both dangerous and unwise. Remember the problem in Sardis was not with the few, but with the majority, and the same is true today.

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**Editorial**

**REMEMBERING MILES KING**

*By: RONNY F. WADE*

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to brother Miles King. My first recollection of him was when he stopped by the old Vaughn Blvd. church in Fort Worth, Texas one Wednesday night to preach. He would have been around sixteen or seventeen years of age at the time. I still remember the content of that sermon even today. A few years after that I began to preach as well and we met in South Alabama in 1952 while I was traveling with brother Homer A. Gay. During the meeting at Colquitt, GA some of the brethren from Pansey, AL came over looking for a preacher to hold their meeting. Brother Gay suggested that they get Miles and I. They agreed and so we went down the next week and conducted meeting for them. The next year we both returned and held a second meeting. By this time Miles had a car and at the close of the meeting we left and drove that Sunday afternoon all the way to Mississippi where we attended the Sunday night service of their annual August meeting at New Salem. As I remember it Pansey had paid each of us \$25 for the weeks meeting mostly in change. So we left with pockets bulging with dimes, nickels, quarters and half dollars. Our intent was to leave after service and drive all night in order to get back to the Dallas Ft. Worth area by early Monday. One of the brethren graciously told us of a short cut that would get us over to Vicksburg and then on to Monroe, LA. Well, we got lost on some country road and traveled for sometime when we realized we needed some help in getting on the right road. Finally we spotted a light in a house about one or two o'clock in the morning. I told Miles we needed to stop and get directions and since it was his car and he was driving he should go knock on the door. Reluctantly he agreed. The man was none too kind declaring that he had a test at school the next morning and needed his sleep. Anyway he gave us directions and as dawn was breaking we made our way into Monroe. Needless to say it was late in the day before we made it home. Miles was always a happy fellow. He wore a big grin, possessed a hearty laugh, and was easy to love and respect. He was a born salesman, a trait he inherited from his father Warren King. Brother Gay used to say that Warren could sell an Eskimo a fan. Miles could do the same. He sold everything from perfume to screw drivers. And in the process met and made friends with untold numbers of people. He could go in a café or Wal-Mart and before he left speak to a half-dozen people and invite each one to church. He traveled far and wide. Lynwood Smith said of him "he's like Johnson grass, he's everywhere," and at times it seemed he was. He had a way of brightening the corner where he was. He will be missed. I talked with him just two days before he moved out of his body. He had asked to be placed in his chair so that he could sit up for awhile. It was at this time that I happened to call. We talked for a few minutes. He seemed his old self laughing and responding to what I said. While it is always sad to say goodbye to those we love, it is

*continued on page seven*

## NATIONS THAT FORGET GOD

*By PAUL O. NICHOLS*

In this day and time we need to be informed and wise to the promises of God, both good and bad. The apostle Paul says, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22).

We are warned in the scriptures that "in the last days perilous times will come" (2 Tim. 3:1). During our lifetime we have not seen more perilous times than the days in which we now live. "Wars and rumors of wars" is the order of the day. Weapons of mass destruction are a threat to the security of the world. Some nations have atomic weapons and can deliver them to any part of the world for the destruction of their enemies. Diplomacy and sanctions and threats of other nations do not deter the building of arsenals of weapons which can pinpoint and destroy an object thousands of miles away. Immorality of every description is practiced without impunity by people who justify living like animals. Marriage of same sex couples is being pushed to be legal, and law makers of our country practice immoral relations and excuse their conduct to make it acceptable by law. Every year the murder of millions of innocent babies is now justified under the "right circumstances" in our "civilized society". Rape and robbery are everyday occurrences. Human life is cheap and murders of innocent victims fill our newscasts. Child abuse and murders of children by their own parents and others is a common occurrence. Our justice system is in peril and our courts are often controlled by judges who care nothing about what God has to say, but hand down decisions based on human reasoning and laws passed by officials who have no regard for what the Bible teaches, and who ridicule people who do. Prisons cannot be built fast enough to house all the criminals. Prayer and the name of Jesus Christ are forbidden in public schools. Laws are passed to stop the mouths of those who would condemn any kind of sin, and a person can be charged and sent to jail for preaching against something the Bible condemns ("law of antidiscrimination"). However, as far as Christians are concerned, members of the church of Christ, we are not involved in politics and this has nothing to do with politics. It makes no difference who belongs to what or what station in life he may occupy, If the word of God condemns some practice, it is wrong. If a thing is right by the Bible we try to defend it and uphold it. Jude the apostle says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). And that is an obligation bound by the word of God. We also need to be reminded that "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD" (Psa. 17:15).

True Christians are a peaceful, loving and law abiding

people, who are taught by the word of God to submit to the laws of the land; wherever they live. That is, if they are not contrary to the law of God. As said by the apostle Peter, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:28). If rulers and lawmakers demand submission of Christians under any and all circumstances, they need to answer the question asked by Peter and John when the high court of the Jews demanded of them something contrary to the command of Jesus. "But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye" (Acts 4:19). No, God's law has priority.

Christians, the followers of Christ, are a praying people. We believe "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). And also we believe that John revealed the truth when he wrote, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14). One of the things we are told to pray for are those who have the rule over us. The apostle John says, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior" (1 Tim. 2:1-3). We must be careful not to be among those who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities" (Jude verse 8). Civil government is of God; "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation" (Rom. 13:1,2). "They are ministers of God..." (verse 4). That is, according to the divine plan of civil government. But we still have to remember to "obey God rather than men" if it contradicts the word of God (Acts 5:28).

The whole world is in spiritual and economic peril today because of the corruption of people who have dealt dishonestly with their fellow men. "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:10). We are on the brink of disaster, and the love of money is at the root of it all. Greed is at the bottom of the problem. Infidelity, doubt and disbelief; disregard for things high and holy has turned the world upside down. People are losing their jobs, homes are being lost, pensions have been destroyed, and in general the future is uncertain. Churches are closing their doors because they have over-spent, and attendance is down. Fun and games and entertainment in the guise of religion motivated them, with total disregard for a "thus saith the Lord". And many persons who formerly were church goers, decided they did not need God in their lives. Now look at the mess we are in. But didn't the word of God warn, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and the nations that forget God"? Think about it! Maybe now if I make any sense at all we will

be more inclined to let God have a say about things we need to hear. A solution to the problem was given in the Bible long ago : “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (2 Chron. 7:14). Nations that forget God shall be turned into hell!

## Pages from the Past

### BUILDING A CHRISTIAN HOME

BY HOMER A. GAY

Many wonderful homes are entirely without children, and there are some children who have come to a useful maturity without home. But homes need children, and children need homes. The influence of the child is one of the most ennobling and developing influences that can be exerted upon an adult life. Baby opens up a world of meaning and sympathy to the heart it knows.

Childless homes have always seemed empty to me. “Marry, bear children”, is the instruction of the Lord. The elder, who is to be an example to the flock, is to have “believing children” (Titus 1:6). He must have his children in subjection with all gravity (I Tim. 8:4). In as much as the elder is to be an example to the flock, it follows then that the other families of the flock should also have children faithful children, and I believe that when it is reasonable and possible a home must have children to be a Christian home. One of the good works mentioned for the woman in I Tim. 5, is “if she have brought up children.”

Children in the home are a wonderful blessing, and if a young couple does not want to be “bothered” with children, they should never marry. The men or women who have not had the experience of raising children are not qualified for overseers in God’s work, according to His word.

It is possible that where a couple cannot bring children into the world, they may adopt children and have about the same experience as with their own. But, I doubt if God smiles upon a childless home.

And I am just old fashioned enough to believe that God meant “children” when He said, “children.” I doubt the wisdom of trying to bring up a child by itself. My observation is that the child that is brought up alone is usually petted, spoiled; and is selfish, overbearing, and hard to get along with. This shows up in the home when other children come to his home or when he goes into the other children’s homes. They are usually a problem in the school room and on the play grounds, in the church, and a lot of times are troublesome neighbors and citizens. It is not giving a child a fair chance in life to bring it up alone.

God’s Instructions to the first pair were to “be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28). But,

the qualifications of these parents were “very good” (Gen. 1:31), and God expects us as parents today to be very good. This is why I mentioned in my first article that certain qualifications should be seen in both the boy and the girl before they agree to marry. The little babe that is born into the home is just what its parents make it. There certainly is a grave responsibility placed upon the parents, so, it is well that they study closely just what kind of folks they should be and determine to work under the guidance of God and direct and shape the destinies of these Immortal souls intrusted to their care.

Parents need strength in body, mind and soul, and every effort should be made to develop all the powers we have for good - both for the good of the parents and for the good of the children. Usually, the parent who cares the most, feels the least capable, but God can and will accomplish wonders with us if we will cooperate fully with Him. Too many parents today try to raise their children by the clock rather than by the help of God.

“Woe to him who smiles not at the cradle and weeps not at the tomb. He who has never tried the companionship of a little child, has carelessly passed by one of the greatest pleasures of life, as one that passes a rare flower without plucking it or knowing its value. The gleeful laugh of happy children is the best of home music. We are all kings and queens in the cradle, and each babe is a new marvel, a new miracle. The perfection of the providence for childhood is willingly acknowledged by all. The care which covers the seed of the tree under tough husks, and stony cases provides for the human plant, the mother’s breast and the father’s house.” - The Royal Path of Life.

Children will not trouble you for long - they grow up so fast, nothing on earth seems to grow faster than children. Jesus touched the little children while He was here, but some folks today seem almost afraid to touch one. Jesus also said “suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:16), and again: “Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:3). The converted person will learn many good lessons in honesty, frankness, and purity from the little child. “Whoso receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me” (Matt. 18:5).

“Children are a heritage of the Lord” (Psa. 127:3-5). - OPA

### DANGERS IN SOCIAL MEDIA - PART 1

BY JUSTIN OWEN

There are very few of us in the church who aren’t at least aware of the social media site Facebook. Four hundred million users spend six billion minutes per average day surfing and posting on the site (Statistics were gathered from [www.penn-olson.com](http://www.penn-olson.com)) This internet sensation has grabbed hold of us, at least for now, and caused dramatic changes

in the lives of many. I want to begin by saying that I have a Facebook account. My wife has a Facebook account. I don't think the use of Facebook is sinful. However, I'll be blunt, many folks are using this tool in a poor way. It is with great care that we should investigate this technology and how the bible permits its use.

Facebook and other social media websites do have a great purpose. They link us with people we would otherwise not be able to visit. We can view pictures, chat with, or encourage people easily and quickly on a daily basis. It has never been easier to "greet and encourage" (Rom. 16:16) our brothers and sisters in Christ than now. Where once we would have to send standard mail to grandparents of pictures and birthday celebrations, now we share with a simple click. Now, even our church meeting invitations are sent through social media sites. We have much easier access to potential converts to the gospel. Connections made with old classmates, coworkers and their circle of friends and family are easily made with this wonderful online tool.

While I could write a whole article on the benefits of such sites, the scope of this article is focused on the dangers that lie beneath all of the good that can be accomplished.

Facebook Addiction. I knew that people can get obsessed with internet browsing, but I did not know that this is a serious addiction that many people face today. If you use Facebook daily, I'd recommend you visit this site: <http://janiquesvedberg.com/am-i-addicted-to-facebook-10-signs-of-facebook-addiction> just to be sure that your use is appropriate. People can login to Facebook and lose hours of time from their day, unaware of the clock's continuous march. This is common with other entertainment addictions like the Internet and/or video games, creating a lost sense of reality within a virtual world.

A lot of people use Facebook as an escape outlet for depression, which ironically, has been shown to cause depression, especially in young adults (<http://www.parentdish.com/2011/03/28/facebook-depression/>). Deuteronomy 4:24 says, For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. When we examine the amount of time we spend on His word, as opposed to the amount of time we spend on the internet, can we honestly say that God is pleased? If the answer is No, or if you're unsure, it's time to start giving yourself a time limit on how much you "Facebook" each day. I can remember a video game I used to play that displayed your "career" statistic line. One of the statistics measured was "Game Time Played." It can be pretty scary to see how much of our time is wasted on nonsense. Brothers and sisters when it's not the Lord's work it is nonsense. Let's be more productive with our time. When we take time to enjoy any entertainment, including sites like Facebook, let's be aware of our hours and be diligent to make sure we aren't "sucked in" with the rest of the world.

Facebook can be a Gossip Rag. When we go to the supermarket and are ready to check out, one can look to the

right or left and see the latest gossip about all the celebrities of the world. Personally, I have little interest in what these people are doing in their lives. But there is something alluring about a good story, isn't there?

Proverbs 26:22 says, The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body. God gives us warning doesn't He? Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy (Psalm 101:5); Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers (Ephesians 4:29). Finally, But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other people's matters (1 Peter 4:15).

Facebook is not just a dangerous place to talk about other people, but to learn about other people, which according to the scriptures can be a condemnable offense (see 1 Peter 4:15 above). Not all investigation of persons is wrong. We should be encouraged to learn about our brothers and sisters in Christ. We should desire to learn about people of the world as well, to know how we may better reach them with the gospel message. Most folks who browse Facebook, do so to find out what's happening in other's lives. There are no ill intentions from the beginning, in most cases. However, no matter our intent, the end result of our browsing is sometimes discovery of people's imperfections, instead of finding how we can love more or serve greater. Pictures and comments that were never intended for public view make their way before the eyes of anyone smart enough to operate a mouse. Some of these things are truly to the disgrace of the people who perform the actions. But other times a picture is viewed and judged completely out of context. One reason that gossip is condemned, is because it judges unfairly. Without context, people can jump to conclusions about things seen and create whatever story they want to attach to the image. Facebook, much like gossip, is an image or a small comment only telling a portion of the story.

Another sad thing about this behavior, is that the people being judged are likely individuals with no personal ties to the viewer. In my humble opinion, we would be wise to assume and hope the best of people. If Brother Geary Trent has taught me anything in the time that we've studied together, it is that we are to learn to give folks "the benefit of the doubt." When we see something on Facebook that seems inappropriate, do we give the benefit of the doubt? If we have personal ties to the individual involved, and we see things that we think are violations of scripture, then of course we should talk with the person and try to find the truth of things. We should also encourage right behavior. But often times we jump to conclusions about what we see and privately pass judgment without even giving a person the chance to share the whole story. Some would ask, "Do we need the whole story?" I would say most of the time ...yes. Lori and I have a picture of a brother in Christ with a cigarette in his mouth at age 15 or so. He had picked it up off the ground, unlit and popped it in as a joke. We laugh about how silly we all were as teenagers. That same photo on Facebook could create all sorts of judgmental attitudes

toward the brother. Don't we see the unfairness with which we can make our judgments?

On the other side of the equation, people can also blatantly post pictures of doing things that they ought not to do, and hide behind the mask that I've just offered for protection. I think we are missing something by just assigning blame to Facebook. We don't have the kind of relationships that the 1st century church had with one another. The brethren we read about were so involved with one another's lives that there weren't many "hidden" things. Christians ought to be in one another's lives, but not through Facebook alone. If you personally interact with people of your congregation on a regular basis, you will likely know what's going on in whatever pictures are posted. If our relationships were better, and we were less private with what we consider our "personal lives," I doubt Facebook would have the impact it does on our opinion of people we know.

Please, don't use Facebook as your only source to keep up with people. Understand that it is a dangerous source for gossip and treat it with the same Christian care you would gossip in person. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother (2 Thessalonians 3:11-15). To be continued next month. 6634 Winery, Clovis, CA 93612, easytarget11@hotmail.com

**ALL SHOULD COME TO  
REPENTANCE - PART 1**

*By SHAHE GERGIAN*

The word "repentance" is not commonly used in our everyday vocabulary. You don't hear anyone telling their neighbor that they've repented from playing loud music into the night. You don't hear politicians say they've repented from making a particular statement, or taking an unpopular position. "Repentance" is a "church word," and so many in the world today are unfamiliar with its true meaning. What is repentance? What role does this word and its implications bare on our lives?

The Lord Jesus often discussed the need for repentance. In keeping with His forerunner John the Baptizer, Jesus declared early in His ministry, "repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17 NKJV). While addressing some natural disasters and their spiritual implications, Jesus twice said, "unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5). These, as well as other passages, affirm the great need and importance of repentance. But again we ask, what is repentance?

To answer this let us first examine what repentance is

not. There are grave misconceptions about repentance in the religious and non-religious worlds. These ideas have crept into the Lord's Church, resulting in a diminished understanding of repentance among God's people.

First, repentance is not guilt. Some think that if they feel a sense of guilt or shame for personal wrongdoing, then they have repented. They recognize their sin, and feel terrible for what they've done, so surely they have repented, right?

In Acts 26 we read of the apostle Paul standing before King Agrippa. Paul gives a stirring speech recounting his conversion to Christ and declaring the risen Jesus to the King and his court. The climax of the sermon comes when Paul simply states, "King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe" (Acts 26:27).

Agrippa was a man who knew the prophets. He knew that the Christ would come, die and then rise from the tomb. He surely felt a sense of guilt and shame when Paul preached this powerful sermon, yet because of his personal desires he responded to Paul by saying, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian" (Acts 26:28). Sadly, there was no repentance for Agrippa that day, and no salvation in Christ.

Secondly, repentance is not fear. Many equate repentance with the fear of being caught, fear of God, or fear of punishment. They think that if they are sufficiently afraid, then they have repented.

In Acts 24 we read another account of Paul standing before a powerful man, a governor named Felix. On this occasion Paul preached a targeted three point sermon on righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come. No doubt these were three areas in which Felix needed to pay special attention. What was Felix's response? "Felix was afraid and answered, 'Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you'" (Acts 24:25). Fear was present, but repentance was not found.

Thirdly, repentance is not sorrow. This may be the most common misconception of repentance among religious people today. If I sin, and I'm really sorry for what I've done, isn't that repentance?

When writing his second letter to the church at Corinth, Paul addresses the idea of sorrow. He wrote, "godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death" (2 Corinthians 7:10). The context of this passage will be addressed a little later, but what fundamental truth do we glean from that simple sentence?

Sorrow, by itself, is not repentance. Paul wrote that godly sorrow PRODUCES repentance and that worldly sorrow PRODUCES death. So sorrow, alone, can do nothing for us. Sorrow is simply, a gateway that leads us in one of two directions: repentance or death.

Though these emotions (guilt, fear, and sorrow) can be

beneficial at times in helping us to fully understand and appreciate the gravity of our sins, they alone do not constitute repentance in the eyes of God Almighty.

We then ask again, what is repentance? The Greek word used in the New Testament for our English word repentance is "metanoia" and its most basic definition is a "change of mind" (Vines).

In Acts 9:35 metanoia is translated as turned. In Acts 2:38, 3:19, and 8:22 it is repent. But of all the uses of metanoia in the Bible, we see a perfect definition given in the pages of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) when the word metanoia appears in 1 Samuel.

"Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, 'If you return (metanoia) to the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths from among you, and prepare your hearts for the LORD, and serve Him only; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines'" (1 Samuel 7:3).

The prophet Samuel is pleading with the people to repent. What does he describe as being necessary for repentance here? First, the heart's affection must return to God. One must reposition the true and living God of Heaven and Earth to the primary place of importance and standing in his/her heart and mind. One must seek after Him and His ways above everything else in life.

Second, one must rid their being of all spiritual impediments, which in this passage primarily deals with putting away foreign gods. Those idols that had dethroned God must be cast aside and forever forgotten. Nothing can stand in the way of their devotion to God.

Finally, service, dedication, and obedience are given to God and God alone. Once one's mind is fixed on God, and the impediments are removed, this becomes a simple task of following through. Everything they do must reflect their devotion to God.

And what would be the result of one's repentance? Blessings. In this case, God would deliver His people from their physical adversaries, the Philistines. So, repentance is a changing, a turning, a returning and a conversion of mind and life away from sin and directed toward God.

In part two of this article, we will look at the evidences which ought to accompany repentance.

\* \* \* \* \*

*REMEMBERING MILES KING . . . continued from page two*

heartening to know that a better home awaits the redeemed of all ages. We hope to meet him again some day on the far side of Jordan. Our respects and thoughts are with his family at this difficult time.

**OBJECTOR LETTER**

**My Position On Carnal Warfare**

I cannot participate in military service in any form, directly or indirectly, in combatant or noncombatant Service, because:

1. My duty and obligation to my God is superior to all other obligations (Acts 5:29; Matt. 22:37).

2. My God in the Bible forbids that I engage in carnal warfare in the following references:

"Put up thy sword," "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52)-Jesus.

"My Kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. 18:36).

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:3, 4).

"Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:44); "Turn the other cheek" (Matt. 5:39).

3. "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17). To enter any military branch or 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"-Jesus. Matt. 5:34).

4. To enter any military service I would be compelled to be yoked with unbelievers, which is forbidden "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14).

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

6. To serve in any way in the military service, I would be deprived of obeying the command to assemble on 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 war in any form or branch, and for the above reasons, I authorize my name to be listed in support of the above principles.

Austin Aaron Grant McDonough, GA

Jared M. Grant McDonough, GA

Evan Aldon Grant McDonough, GA

Caleb Newman

Garrett Lane Thornton - 903 Hwy 84 West  
Brookhaven, MS 39601

## Announcements

### 50TH SPRING MEETING

April 1-8 the Crescent Ridge Church in Birmingham, AL will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their annual Spring Meeting. This year Rick Martin will be the preacher. All are invited to attend. For information you may contact Harlon Howell at 1-205-856-5674

### TIME CHANGE--LEAWOOD IN JOPLIN, MO

Beginning March 4, the Sunday afternoon service, at Leawook Village congregation in Joplin, MO, will begin at 5:00 PM.

### BOOKLETS OF ARTICLES

Booklets of Articles by Paul O. Nichols as compiled by John Catron of the Stony Point Church of Christ, Kansas City, KS. are once again available. A new printing of the booklet has made it possible to supply those who are interested. The fifty two articles deal with many Bible subjects beneficial to those who are interested in doing "Bible things in Bible ways". The booklets sell for \$5.00 each plus postage.

### BACK IN PRINT

The booklet, Reasons Why You Should Investigate The Church of Christ by Ronny F. Wade is back in print. They are \$58.00 per 100 copies plus postage. Send all orders to Ronny Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net or call 706-416-2631.

### PUBLIC BIBLE DISCUSSION

Church of Christ 3511 Hwy 99 Seminole, OK March 17, 2012, 6:00 p.m. What constitutes religious authority? Rhett Brotherton (Catholic Church) affirms: Church traditions, Papal decrees and the scriptures all constitute religious authority. George Battey (Church of Christ) affirms: The NT scriptures only constitute religious authority for today.

## Our Departed



**KING-** Brother Miles Tinsley King, known far and wide as a long-time beloved preacher of the Gospel, was born Dec. 12, 1932 at Morrison, TN, the son of Warren Tinsley and Gladys Miles King. Miles peacefully passed from this earthly life on the evening of Dec. 19, 2011, at his beautiful mountain home in the Arkansas Ozarks, on "the mountain top", surrounded by members

of his adoring family, not far from Scotland, where he lived for so long and was loved and respected by the many who knew him. Miles was baptized into Christ at the age of 12 in 1944, near Gadsden, AL and began preaching at the age of 15. In 1952, he graduated from high school at Cordell, OK. During these high school years, he worked with the church in Sentinel, OK in an effort to plant the church at Cordell. During this time he was befriended by all at Sentinel, and especially by Homer and Laura Smith, long-time pillars and philanthropists of the church. Miles was married to the love of his life, Johnette Reynolds, native of Scotland, April 11, 1955 at Little Rock. To this union, 2 daughters were born, Laura Jean (Jeannie) and Rebecca Lynn (Becky). Miles spent his life preaching the gospel, in many of the 50 states, and in Russia. He lived and worked with the church for some 18 years at Norman, OK. The Kings' house, wherever it stood, was always "hospitality house". There is no way of knowing how many through the years, young and old, have sat at the Kings' table, enjoying the bountiful meals that Johnette is known for. If you have not sat at hers and Miles' table you have missed something very unforgettably special as they definitely have been for years unselfishly "given to hospitality" in the brotherhood which both of them cherish. Through the years many young men traveled with Miles training to be preachers of the Gospel. Numerous tales can be told about Miles by these young preachers-in-training. Miles was tireless in his work for the Lord; he was one of the friendliest of men in the world, and one of the most outgoing. In trying to tell the world about Jesus and spread the Gospel to the world, he would do such things as pass out business cards at McDonald's and Wal-Mart, stating with no shame or apology, he was a preacher of the Gospel. He was an expert door-knocker, inviting everyone he could find to attend a gospel meeting. It was said that Miles never met a stranger and always had a big smile, earning the nickname "Miles of Smiles". He was indeed "one of a kind". Many called him "Miles the King". Most recently, he worked with congregations at Scotland, Jerusalem (Cedar Creek), and Witts Springs, AR and Conway, LA. He stood in the pulpit as long as he was able, preaching his last sermon Sept. 4, 2011 at the Cedar Creek congregation in Jerusalem.

Miles was preceded in death by his parents, infant sister, Miriam, and brother, Neal. Miles is survived by an adoring family; his faithful wife, Johnette; two faithful daughters, Jeannie (Don) Furr, Scotland, and Becky (Terry) Baze, Mansfield, TX, one brother, Charles (Pat) King, Troy, TX; one sister, Joyce (Dale) Land, Crockett, TX; one brother-in-law, Morris Reynolds and one sister-in-law, Loeta Acton; two uncles, Frank and Buster Miles; three grandsons, two granddaughters, two step-grandsons, two step-granddaughters, three great-grandsons, one great-granddaughter, four step-great-grandsons, two step-great-granddaughters, many nephews, nieces, and other family members; many brothers and sisters in Christ, and a host of friends. Funeral services were held Wednesday, Dec. 21, 2011 at the Harris Funeral Home Chapel with Bro. Terry Bare and Bro. Doug Edwards officiating. Burial was at Mt. Zion Cemetery near Jerusalem.

### **In Memory of Brother Miles King**

*By: IRVIN BARNES*

A conversation between Miles and my mother in 1962 was largely responsible for my becoming a gospel preacher. This, in turn, was the beginning of a special friendship between Miles and me..

By the time I obeyed the gospel in 1961, my brother, Ira had traveled with Miles to Kentucky for meetings at Chestnut Ridge and Blue Springs. As Miles was planning his meeting schedule for 1962 he came by our parents home to see if Ira could travel with him again that summer. My mother took Miles aside and explained that I had obeyed the gospel and was showing an interest in the work of the church. Since I had done Ira's farm chores while he was away, now it was time for Irvin to go and Ira to stay home and help with the work.

In later years, Miles would laugh at how apprehensive he was at the prospect of taking me with him on a preaching trip. In his own words, "Irvin was kind of a country boy. He seemed more interested in farming than in going on a trip. He just seemed like a homebody! I was afraid Irvin wouldn't enjoy the trip! I was worried that he might get homesick!" Miles kept on with our parents until he persuaded them to let both of us make the trip.

Our first meeting was at Bandy, Ky. We had a full house every night. The singing was good! Miles was at his best in his preaching. Miles asked Ira to read his text every service for the first half of the meeting. Miles didn't know that I was on a debating team in high school and had taken some courses in public speaking. Miles, in his own words, "was afraid Irvin might feel left out" so he asked me to read his text. I not only read the text but made a little talk about the meeting and how much I enjoyed the folks in Kentucky. When the service was dismissed Miles came to me and exclaimed, loudly, "Why, Irvin Barnes, I didn't know you had it in you. I am going to make a preacher out of you!" When we arrived back at our parents home Miles jumped out of the car and called out to my Dad, "Brother Barnes, Irvin is going to make a preacher!" I hadn't agreed, but Miles never let up! He took me to Harrodsburg, Indiana where I preached on radio for the first time. He called or wrote several churches, asking them to schedule me for meetings. He saw to it that Ira and I were able to go to the Sulphur meeting for the first time. It wasn't long

until I had all the preaching responsibilities that I could handle.

As I reflect on the time that Miles and I spent together preaching I am reminded of several things about Miles that all of us can learn from.

I was only one of many young men that Miles encouraged to preach. Some who traveled with Miles did not become Evangelists but went on to become teachers in the local congregations. In over 50 years of preaching Miles had dozens of brethren travel with him.

Once he showed up at my house accompanied by a Baptist preacher from Cleveland, Arkansas that he had been studying with. He barely got in the house until he had me and his Baptist friend engaged in a vigorous discussion on our differences. I think Miles had become a bit weary trying to teach the man so he brought him to me to see what I could do!

Miles had an unusual ability at personal work. At one time I preached on a TV program that aired out of Louisville, Ky. We had a large number of leads in southern Indiana. David Griffin and I went to Corydon, Indiana for a weeks mission meeting. Miles met us there to help for the week. David and I went out each day armed with leads from the program. Miles went out by himself, starting at McDonalds every morning at 6:00 a.m. Even though we were in a town that none of us had been before, Miles knew where to go to find people to visit with. He would find people who watched the program and set up a time for me to meet with them for private studies.

Miles almost always had a smile on his face and the spirit of optimism in his heart. He never allowed himself to be depressed for very long. He would often, for no apparent reason, quote Phil. 4:4, Rejoice in the Lord always: And again I say, Rejoice."

Miles made his share of mistakes. However, when his error was pointed out Miles would immediately acknowledge his wrong and repent. My mother said, "In some ways Miles is like a child and I'm afraid he will never grow out of it." I think that when it came to dealing with his mistakes that it was in this, that he was the most like a child. Miles literally grieved if he thought he had wronged some one or said the wrong thing or acted inappropriately.

Miles never considered himself a debater, yet he was quick to defend the truth. During meetings in Kentucky, he was walking about Mt. Vernon, Ky., on a Saturday afternoon. At that time most farm folks came to town on Saturday to do their trading. The little town was working alive with people.

A denominational preacher by the name of Cox, along with a group of his cohorts were passing out religious literature and announcing that Mr. Cox would speak at a certain time at the court yard outside the Courthouse.

When Mr. Cox began speaking, he claimed that all baptism in the New Testament was either figurative or spiritual in nature. He challenged any man to prove that baptism had anything to do with literal water. There was a short hedge around the yard. Miles jumped the hedge and with his right hand high in the air, yelled out, "Sir, I will accept that challenge! Please, allow me to talk. I will prove from the Bible that you are wrong!" Miles commenced quoting scripture. Several brethren were in town that worshipped in the 3 or 4 congregations in the area. Every time Miles made a point, these brethren would lay in a volley of amens. When Miles realized he wasn't alone, he really picked up the pace. Miles and I, along with some local brethren, met this group for discussions at a later date. They wouldn't sign propositions so it was difficult to pin them down on what they believed.

Miles was a hard worker for the Lord. Miles never learned much about physical labor. However, he did in fact, labor in the kingdom. I was accustomed to hard, physical, farm labor. Yet, 2 or 3 weeks with Miles would absolutely wear me out!

One of the highlights of Miles' preaching career was the work he did in Russia. This required a lot of courage as well as a lot of wear and tear on all his faculties. I think Miles worked more for the cause of Christ than a lot of people realized or knew about.

On one trip, Miles held 3 meetings in a row at Chestnut Ridge, Blue Springs and Walnut Grove. He preached every night for nearly a month. Between 30 and 40 people were baptized!

It has been over fifty years since Miles moved to Witt Springs, Arkansas, to help start the church there. The congregation is still meeting. What a tribute to Miles and Johnette for the sacrifices they made when they

started the church there so many years ago.

Some time before Miles fell ill, he sat in my living room and cried telling me that Johnette and the girls were insisting that he quit traveling. I tried to help him understand that it was age, and poor health that would soon force him to stay home. This was the last time I saw him.

I applaud Jeanie for taking her daddy to Kentucky for a meeting at Blue Springs and also for driving him to other places allowing him to continue to preach in spite of the cancer that had invaded his body.

Although a year or more had passed, it seemed only a short time after I last saw Miles, until we received word that Miles had taken his last trip! Not to go preaching again! But to travel into the eternal paradise realm, where we trust he peacefully awaits his reward at the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Due to failing health I was unable to attend the funeral service. On behalf of all the Barnes families we extend to Johnette, Jeanie, and Becky and their families our deepest sympathy and affection. Irvin Barnes, 3218 East Farm Road 88, Springfield, Mo. 65803

## Field Reports

Don L. King 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old\_paths@juno.com Dec. 30, 2011. Lord willing, we are to depart for the Philippines on January 4 for about three weeks among the churches there. Bro. Duane Permenter is to meet me there. I will have a report of the work when we return. If plans work out, we plan to visit the work in Honolulu, Hawaii sometime in February or March, Lord willing. The plan is to spend some time with Eric Stone, perhaps visit some leads he has and hold a short meeting. That work is dear to us and we recall when it first began a number of years ago with Bro. Danao. We ask your prayers for the continued success of the work there. We also wish to thank all who have sent payments for the building there. For the short term things are all right but a long term solution is badly needed. If four congregations could commit to making three payments a year for \$1500 each, the problem would be solved. If your congregation can do this, let us hear from you, please. Brethren, we thank all who

have subscribed to the paper and renewed on time. Quite a number choose to get the paper on line while many still prefer the old way of receiving a hard copy each month. There is no doubt the Old Paths Advocate still serves a very relevant purpose among the Brotherhood. Let us keep up the good work. Preachers, we hope you will send articles and reports to Ronny Wade until after February 15 and then to me as always. Ronny's mailing address is on page two of the paper every month as well as in the church directory. May God bless us all in the New Year.

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net January 16-The last few days of December over four hundred people gathered in Dothan for the annual Alabama New Year Meeting. This year seventeen states were represented and enjoyed sermons from a large group of preachers and young men. If you have never attended this meeting, make your plans now to attend next year. You will not regret it. One of the highlights of the meeting is the annual picnic held at the home of Charles and Donna Marsh. Charles, as many of you know, has been very ill for a number of months and has been away from home for treatments in Little Rock, AR. We are thankful that he was able to be home for the meeting and once again he and Donna opened their home for the picnic which everyone enjoyed. Please continue to keep Charles in your prayers. Kevin Presley compiled a booklet of new songs for the meeting and ably led us in singing during the final minutes of the old year. His presence and influence in Dothan is a big boost for the meeting each year. Currently we continue to work in the LaGrange area. Our television program out of Columbus generates numerous leads which we continue to utilize in our attempt to spread the truth to the people of west Georgia and east Alabama. Lord willing we will be in a meeting at Crawfordville, FL Jan 27-29, Greenville, S.C. Feb. 3-4, and Manteca, CA Feb. 24-March 4. We look forward to seeing and working with the brethren in all these areas.

From Roger Owens Freeman Road Congregation Neosho, Missouri. The New Year has arrived and great things await us as Christians. The congregation is doing well with visitors at most services. Last year we added 2 new souls. We have completed

the overview of the Old Testament books. We are over halfway through the New Testament books. Our Casper Wyoming work is moving along with good results. I have 2 firm leads and 2 other leads with many reading our weekly articles. Currently 3 congregations are contributing to the work in Casper. These include Freeman Road, Brumley MO, and Fayetteville Arkansas. I personally make up the difference each month out of pocket. We are hopeful to get at least 3 to 4 more congregations to make monthly contributions to this effort. It cost us about \$900.00 each month. We currently take in \$400.00 from the 3 congregations each month. It is our plan to make a follow up trip to the area within the next 3 months. I have received reports from the "other Church of Christ folks" that they are excited and reading the articles each week. We welcome any support you can give us in this work. We will send you a copy of funds received and how all has been spent to date if you desire. Two of the men at Casper have engaged in ongoing communications and study. If you know of individuals in that area we would like to know so that we can do follow up with them. I plan to offer Irvin Barns pamphlets to the public as well. I hope to utilize Brother Paul Nichols articles as a part of our mission effort as well. I must mention that last year posed many difficulties with sickness and death in our area. My brother Jerry Owens passed away in early December. Since that time 4 other family friends and church members have passed on. With all that has happened we are determined to keep on keeping on. The brethren here see only opportunity ahead and are set to the course to do all we can to save the lost. I learned of a dear friend in Ohio that passed away and I was drawn to tears at the news. I pray God comfort Carolyn Kidd at the passing of her brother. It was sad to learn of Miles King passing. I am deeply concerned for our brethren as some among us embrace false practice and false doctrine. Then we are saddened that each year I continue to learn of more that simply are walking away from the Lord, denying him. The bride of Christ is to be pure and free from the works of darkness. May we keep her the way she was given at the first. Age may slow our feet and hands but we will never grow weary in well doing. Brethren pray for us and all seeking to serve the Lord in this new year.

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## THE BACK PAGE . . .

### JOHN MUIR: THE REST OF THE STORY

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

Most Californians are familiar with the name of John Muir. He was a Scottish-born American naturalist, author, and early advocate of preservation of wilderness in the United States. Millions of people have read his letters, essays, and books telling of his adventures in nature, especially in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California. His activism helped save the Yosemite Valley, Sequoia National Park, and other wilderness areas. The Sierra Club, which he co-founded in 1892 and served as president until his death in 1914, is now one of the most important conservation organizations in the United States. A few of the many places named in his honor are Muir Woods National Monument, Muir Beach, John Muir College, Mount Muir, and Muir Glacier. Because of the spiritual quality and enthusiasm toward nature expressed in his writings, he was able to inspire readers, including presidents and congressmen, to take action to help preserve large nature areas. Today Muir is known as the "Father of the National Parks," his image is on the 2005 California State Commemorative quarter, and the state of California officially recognizes his birthday on April 21st, as "John Muir Day." One thing that millions of people do not know about Muir, however, is his association with the Lord's church.

Muir was born in Scotland in 1838, to Daniel and Ann Gilrye Muir, members of the Presbyterian Church. Daniel, however, disagreed vigorously with the church's Calvinist doctrine of election, which proclaimed certain favored individuals were preordained by God to be saved while the rest of humanity was doomed to perdition. Daniel eventually withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and began a search for the church he believed actually had the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

He eventually found a faithful congregation of the Lord's people in Dunbar, Scotland, organized by a family named Gray. Philip Gray was a personal friend of Alexander Campbell, who was also a Scotsman, and who had been preaching for several years in Scotland, Ireland, and now America, pleading with people to rid themselves of the creeds of men and to return to the Bible alone as the source for authority in religion. Following his conversion Daniel and his family immigrated to America in 1849, settled in Wisconsin, and became actively involved in the American Restoration Movement.

Daniel was a strict disciplinarian as a parent, believing that anything that distracted from Bible studies was frivolous and punishable. By the time John was 11, he had learned to recite "by heart and sore flesh" all of the New Testament and most of the Old Testament.

Young John also had a genius for invention. When his father forbade him to waste daylight hours on reading, he asked and received permission to rise early in order to study. Attaching wheels and levers to his bed, he invented "an early-rising machine" that dumped him out of bed at the precisely set time. In 1860 he displayed this and other inventions at the Wisconsin State Fair.

In 1861, at the age of 22, Muir entered the University of Wisconsin to study science. Subsequently he tried studying medicine but soon gave it up for various jobs that challenged his inventive skills. In 1867 he made the career decision he never regretted-to give up his own inventions "to study the inventions of God." He commented, "I might have become a millionaire, but I chose to become a tramp."

He had already committed to his heart the words of the Bible, and now he was anxious to study God's other "book," the great book of nature. God has revealed Himself to us in nature as well as in Scripture (Ps. 19:1-6; Acts 14:17; Rom. 1:20).

He took his first botany lesson at Wisconsin. Fifty years later Muir wrote, "This fine lesson charmed me and sent me flying to the woods and meadows in wild enthusiasm." He was an eager traveler and an indefatigable walker. In 1867 he began a 1,000-mile walk from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico. He ended up in California and began his love affair with the Yosemite Valley. He also toured Nevada, Utah, and Alaska, but he settled in California where he wrote, managed a fruit ranch, and campaigned for the establishment of Yosemite National Park, which Congress approved in 1890.

I do not know what Muir's relationship with God and his status within the church were during his last years (Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5). I do know, however, that he remained a deeply religious man and he never ceased to give God glory for His beautiful works of nature. He once wrote that in Yosemite he could "listen to the winter songs and sermons preached and sung only there." He wrote his brother saying, "Here (Yosemite) in this place of surpassing glory the Lord has written in capitals."

Whether discussing his insight and inspiration for invention or his passionate love of nature, the constant theme of this tall, gangly, fully-bearded explorer with the clear blue eyes remained, "To God be the glory!" Amen. [cmjthebackpage@gmail.com](mailto:cmjthebackpage@gmail.com)