

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

# OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

VOL. LXXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI • FEBRUARY 2015

NO. 2

## SOUL AND SPIRIT, JOINTS AND MARROW

BY IRVIN BARNES

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)

I remember a religious discussion my father had with one of our “Charismatic” kinfolks. Dad was reading and quoting one Bible reference after another. Feeling a bit overwhelmed by so much scripture, the man who held the “Pentecostal” view made this remark, “I just don’t see where you Church of Christ folks get your blessings. I don’t see much excitement coming out of all that paper and ink!” He believed in the direct operation of the Holy Ghost from which he expected a good feeling or something that might cause him to jump, shout or burst forth in some form of tongue speaking.

This view of scripture over looks the truth found in the above passage. The Hebrew writer affirms that the word of God is quick. This one little word proclaims that the message contained in paper and ink is indeed alive and capable of producing spiritual life to all who will hear and obey it. The reason the word of God is alive is because it was given to the inspired writers by the Holy Ghost (2nd Tim. 3:15-16).

The record declares that the word of God is also powerful. When I was in the 4th grade of school our teacher asked for volunteers to help

with an experiment. One student brought a jar of rich dirt. Another brought 2 or 3 kernels of corn. The teacher provided a glass box. We filled the box with dirt and pushed a kernel of corn down in the dirt on the inside of the glass box, clearly visible through the glass. We watered the seed and placed our experiment in the window so it would catch the heat and light from the sun.

Every day we would see if there was any change in the seed. In time, it swelled, then broke open and a sprout or root started growing. Eventually, the blades started growing and a small stalk of corn grew out of the glass box. When we placed the kernel of corn in the dirt it appeared to be totally lifeless! Contained in the corn, some how, some where there was a germ of life that came forth under the right conditions as God ordained in the beginning, “every seed shall bring forth after its own kind.”

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. (1st Peter 1:23) Just as an earthly seed appears to be lifeless, so the printed page may also appear to have no life about it. However, just as the corn has within it the germ of life, so the word of God has within it the powerful message of the gospel of Jesus, Christ which is the “power of God unto salvation.” (Rom. 1:16)

The Hebrew writer then declares the word of God is “sharper than any two-edged sword.” This sword, he says, has great piercing and dividing ability, dividing asunder soul and spirit and of joints and marrow. For many years, I viewed this passage with a bit of consternation. What possible benefit, spiritual or carnal, can come as a result of separating the soul from the

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year..... \$15.00  
Also On The Internet  
Published Monthly by **Old Paths Advocate**, Lebanon, MO  
A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536  
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536  
Send Form 3579 to **Old Paths Advocate**  
1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550.

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

Editorial

TIMELY SUGGESTIONS

By HOMER A. GAY  
SEPTEMBER 1955

Missing the run-way: Just last week there was a terrible plane crash not far from our home town - all thirty persons aboard, perished! The reason: one of the engines was burned out. The pilot seemed to try hard to make the landing, but it fell a few hundred yards short of the landing strip.

In Hebrews 4:1, we read, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.: It would surely be a tragic thing for any of us to "fall short of the run-way" in that final day!

It is a wonderful thing for one to get on the highway of Holiness, by primary obedience to the gospel; it is great to travel on this way, but if we were to try to land today, how many of us would miss the run-way?

Suggestion: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

Gratitude blesses the one who gives as well as the one who receives. "It is more blessed to give than to receive") Acts 20:35).

The art of conversation includes the habit of listening. "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Thess. 4:11).

"Your Preacher's Plight" - A clipping: "If he is young he lacks experience; if his hair is grey he is too old.

If he has five or six children he has too many; if he has none he is setting a bad example.

If his wife sings she is being too forward; if she does not, she is not interested in her husband's work.

If he speaks from notes he has canned sermons  
*continued on page eight*

## QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

**Question:** Can a Christian who mistreats his mother go to heaven?

**Answer:** I'm not sure what the querist means by "mistreats." There are some types of behavior that one might consider mistreatment, while another would feel it is in the best interest of the individual. For example a son might refuse to buy certain types of food for his mother because of her medical condition, since it would be counterproductive health wise. Some might conclude that the individual is not being fair or considerate, when in reality he is looking out for the best interest of his mother. On the other hand if his conduct involves abusive language, refusal to care for his mother either physically or spiritually, fails to show respect and love for her then it seems rather clear that he is wrong and if such behavior continues his soul is in danger. There are few things in life more despicable than a child who abuses and/or neglects his or her parents. The scriptures speak to this time and time again. Exodus 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." Proverbs 6:20 "A wise son makes a father glad. But a foolish man despises his mother." Proverbs 20:20 "Whoever curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in deep darkness." Proverbs 23:22 "Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old." Eph. 6:2 "Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise." In first Timothy five Paul deals with the care of widows: "honor widows who are really widows" v. 3. He then explains that "if any widow has children or grandchildren let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents for this is good and acceptable before God." The children or grandchildren of the widow are commanded to take care of her, that is support her and see to her needs. Then in verse 8 Paul concludes

"But if anyone does not provide for his own (that is take care of his mother) he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." A Christian not only has the obligation of respecting and honoring his parents but also is commanded to see to their needs. The one who fails in this "is worse than an unbeliever." Relationships between parents and children are often strained. There are times when parents can be unreasonable in the demands they make of their children. And then there are children who neglect and even abuse their parents. Both situations are sad and should not be. Many of us owe debts to our parents that we could never repay. They raised us to fear God and respect His word. They fed, clothed and nurtured us when we were unable to care for ourselves. To neglect, mistreat, abuse, or simply forget a Christian parent is unthinkable. I have no way of knowing what has happened that would cause the querist to submit this question, but I hope I have said something that will cause the unthankful/abusive son to rethink his behavior and while he can, make things right with his Mother and with God, as well. The day is coming when many thoughtless and abusive children will stand before an open coffin and view the remains of the one who brought them into this world. Even though hot tears may stream down their cheeks it will be too late to make things right. If you still have your mother and father please take time to let them know how much you appreciate and love them before it's too late. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

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## HERE AND THERE

*By RICK MARTIN*

New Year's resolutions are usually a statement of our intentions to improve in some area of our lives. Many times they are motivated by our guilt over past failures. We should not drag our last year's failures into the New Year.

Failure is an ugly word and no one likes it. Everyone is subject to its attack. No matter what the situation might be, failure can become a reality. Throughout the scriptures many of God's servants suffered failure. Why do some who fail go on to succeed and others do not?

In Matt. 7:24-27, Jesus gives a picture of both success and failure. Two men built a house: one on the foundation of a rock-the other on the sand. When the storm came, one house stood while the other fell. In this parable we find two principles, which if applied, can keep us from permanent failure.

1) We should always build upon the strong, immovable foundation of truth. It is for certain that if something violates truth, it is doomed to failure. It may stand for a while, but it will eventually collapse. The truth of the scripture should be our guide in everything we do.

2) We should build for the storms. Storms are sure to come. Whatever we build, will be tested. A person may hide shoddy work, laziness, and dishonesty for a while; but eventually, he will pay with failure.

Successful people are those who apply God's remedy for failure. As you move into this New Year, don't drag your past failures with you. Use them as a means to get better.

I hope that you had the opportunity to attend one of the New Year's meetings. The meetings are always refreshing and uplifting.

I sometimes hear people say to a preacher in a Gospel meeting, "I sure would like to be a member of your home congregation so I could hear sermons like these all the time." Well, let

me let you in on a little secret. The people of that preacher's home congregation don't hear sermons like that all the time. You see, they hear that sermon for the first time, before the preacher has worked all the kinks out, or they hear that sermon that the preacher preaches and then puts away and never preaches again. Be thankful for your local teachers. Most of them put a lot of work and time into what they do.

For some folks, it is all "about me". Let someone mention a problem, difficulty, or sickness they are going through to some folks, and it won't be long until the person they are talking to starts telling how difficult things are for them. I get tired of that! When someone tells you about their problems, be a friend and listen and encourage them during their difficult days.

Benjamin Franklin said, "If you want to be remembered, do something worth writing about, or write something worth remembering." With that thought in mind preachers, the paper could use your articles. Why not take the time to sit down and write a few articles that we could print in the paper. It would be greatly appreciated.

That's all for now, pray for the brotherhood.

Rick Martin, mmartin@bellsouth.net, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189

## PSALMS, PSALLO, AND INSTRUMENTAL WORSHIP

*By ANDREW K. RICHARDSON*

Has God authorized instrumental worship?

No, the New Testament presents no such authority. The first century church was instructed by the apostles of Christ (Luke 11:49; Acts 2:37,42; 4:35; 8:18; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 2:20; 2 Pet. 3:2; Jude 1:17) whom were guided by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13) into all truth (John 16:13), yet, instrumental worship is nowhere to be seen in the pages of the New Testament. Therefore, it is not of the truth. And if it is not of the truth, those offering

such worship are not worshipping God in truth as Christ said must be done (John 17:17). No, God does not desire this type of adoration from the church or else He would have inspired the apostles to say so. Jesus explicitly commanded His apostles to teach the observance of all things He had commanded, and this would include all things commanded by the Spirit (John 14:26).

Sometimes scripture is cited from Revelation where harps are mentioned in heaven, but it must be remembered that Revelation is a book of symbolism. The harps are no more literal than the vials (bowls) of incense which are said to be the “prayers of the saints” (5:8). Furthermore, literal or symbolic, the harps are in heaven and therefore authorize nothing for the church on earth. It has been said, “To argue that what is accepted or rejected there is accepted or rejected in the church proves more than our friends will accept. Shall we conclude that since there is no marriage in heaven, we in the church are not authorized to marry?” (Caldwell, p. 255).

However, let’s consider some common replies in defense of instrumental worship in the church. Matt Slick, apologist, creator of CARM.org. and host of CARM Radio presents some of these responses in an article titled, Can We Use Instruments in the Church.

#### DAVID AND THE PSALMS

Mr. Slick first goes to the Old Testament for authorization, saying, “The Psalms contain instructions that we worship the Lord with musical instruments...” Instrumental praise in the book of Psalms is commonly the reason people believe the same is acceptable in Christianity. If God accepted it then -why not now? It is true that the book of Psalms contains many Biblical principles that Christians can learn, and it includes forms of worship that the New Testament further authorizes (such as singing, and praying, etc.). In fact, the whole Old Testament is profitable for learning. Throughout it are countless truths, morals, prophecies and foreshadows to be valued. However, it is essential to understand that Jesus

Christ established a new covenant with God’s people (Heb. 8:8-12), and whatever is to be done within the relationship between God and man must be authorized in that covenant alone. The Mosaic Law, including the book of Psalms (Jesus referred to it as the law - John 10:34), ended at the cross (Rom. 7:4; Gal. 3:24-25; Eph. 2:15-15, etc.). Thus it is useless to appeal to a discontinued covenant in an effort to claim authority for one’s practice of worship. Jesus declared that He has been given “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). Therefore, everything, including our interaction with God through worship, must be authorized by Christ. David can authorize nothing. Jesus, through the inspiration of the Spirit, by the word of the apostles, has authorized a variety of forms of worship including, prayer (1 Cor. 14:15; Thess. 5:17, etc.), observance of the Lord’s supper (Acts 2:42; 20:, speaking praise (Heb. 13:15), singing, (1 Cor. 15:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), etc. However, instrumental music is not approved once.

Reflect on another important truth. Just because something was approved or even demanded by God in the past does not mean it is still authorized now. The baptism of John, for example, was ordained by God at one time (John 1:26,28), but He no longer accepts it in the Christian dispensation (Acts 19:3-5).

#### EPHESIANS 5:19 AND PSALLO

Mr. Slick continues, -

“Furthermore, in Eph 5:19, the phrase ‘making melody’ is the Greek word, psallo which means, ‘1) to pluck off, pull out, 2) to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang, 2a) to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate, 2b) to play on a stringed instrument, to play, the harp, etc. 2c) to sing to the music of the harp 2d) in the NT to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song.’ We can see that the making melody to the Lord involves the use of musical instruments.”

It’s remarkable that while Mr. Slick is defending the use of instrumental worship, he quotes a

Greek lexicon (Thayer's) that actually refutes the very argument for which he quotes it. He argues that the Greek word psallo (translated "making melody" KJV) incorporates the use of a stringed instrument, but, in fact, the very lexicon he cites makes it clear that during the era in which the New Testament was written, psallo meant simply to sing. The lexicon says, "In the NT to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song." Did you notice that all those stringed-instrument definitions vanish when the word is defined by its New Testament meaning? Did Slick? The apostle Paul is only commanding them to sing, not to play an instrument, and Mr. Slick has presented evidence of such.

In the ages previous to Paul's, as the Lexicon states, psallo did carry the idea of plucking on strings, but it is natural for words to evolve in meaning over time. For instance, in the 14th century, the word "nice" meant foolish or silly, but now, of course, it has a pleasant, positive meaning. The word "lewd" in the 1300's meant the common people, or the laity, while our modern usage is that of showing lustful excitement or desire in an offensive way. Countless words could be listed to exemplify the point. Numerous lexicons and sources could be referenced to confirm that by the time Paul penned psallo in the first century, it no longer embodied the idea of plucking strings on an instrument.

Yet, amazingly, but not surprisingly, Mr. Slick passes right over that important nugget of truth. He brings no attention whatsoever to the New Testament definition. Instead, he just says, "Making melody to the Lord involves the use of musical instruments." Either he doesn't understand the Lexicon he quotes, or he's being intellectually dishonest by ignoring the New Testament definition of the word.

### PSALLO'S INSTRUMENT

This having been said, the fact is that regardless of the era in which it is used, no specific instrument is inherent in the word psallo. Such must be determined from the context. Some examples will suffice from the well known

Greek version of the Old Testament, the Septuagint.

"Play [psallo]" happens "on the psaltery with ten strings" (ps. 33:2). "I will sing songs [psallo] on the harp" (ps. 71:22). "Sing [psallo] with a harp" (ps. 98:5-6). "Let them sing praises [psallo] with timbre! and psaltery" (ps. 149:3), etc.

The only instrument in Ephesians 5:19 that is connected with psallo is the heart. He says to psallo "in the heart." This means man's spirit and thoughts must be involved in the singing. (Compare 1 Corinthians 14:15 where psallo is used with "understanding.") It is out of the heart that praises shout forth from the lips; thus when music is made in the heart, we sing praises to God and our Lord Jesus Christ. The praises of a song exist only in the words of a song. Mechanical instruments have nothing to offer on that front. No, vibrations from inanimate devices can offer no praise to the Lord. Neither pops, nor bangs, nor clicks, nor jingles, nor is any other mechanical sound able to render to God the music He desires. "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

### DEALING WITH ANGER

*By COLBY CULBERTSON*

Have you ever let your anger get the best of you? Have you ever wanted to retaliate against someone who wronged you? These are things that sometimes confront many of us. In this article Colby Culbertson discusses the idea of dealing with anger.

#### Dealing with Anger

The carnal, human side of a person advises us as Christians to use retaliation as a means of getting even when we are wronged. This writer will be the first one to confess to struggling a great deal with this. Yet, the New Testament clearly points out that for a Christian to allow his/her anger to control oneself is sinful and therefore putting a Christian a guilty distance from the Lord.

The apostle Paul instructs the brethren at Rome very plainly in Romans 12:19-Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. It is not sinful to be angry about things that happen to us when we are wronged. It is wrong, however, when we allow that anger to turn into a grudge that we hold (James 5:9), or worse, we seek revenge on whoever it is who does us wrong. That's what Paul explains here.

I'm going to use myself as an example, because I believe I struggle with this just as much as anyone. Suppose someone comes along and does me the wrong way or does something to me that makes me mad; immediately my carnal side tells me to let them know quickly, what a mistake they just made in doing me wrong! But I can't do that and still be right in God's eyes. I'm no better in the Lord's eyes if I return evil for evil. Two wrongs don't make a right. We are not at liberty to issue justice to those who have done us wrong out of vengeance because vengeance DOES NOT BELONG to us! It belongs to the Lord, and he will give all those in sin their just reward when this earth stands still.

Paul has a bit more to say on the subject to the congregation at Ephesus in Ephesians 4:26-27- Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil. Believe it or not, Paul tells these people that you can be angry and refrain from sinning! This is possible if we only learn how to deal with anger. We have to control anger that we have, rather than letting it control us and eventually getting out of hand. Pay close attention to verse 27. Did you know that every time we retaliate, hold a grudge, or seek any means of revenge, we are giving place to the devil? When that happens, we are allowing the devil to corrupt us by making our anger and wrath impossible to contain! This is why it is so very important for the Christian today to master the art of temperance as the scriptures refer to it, or self-control. Friends, the smallest spark can start the largest fires, and so it is with our anger. Believe me, I know how hard it is. If you are a Christian, you must learn how to

deal with anger in the proper way. The way a Christian is taught to do so in the scriptures.

## GOOD INTENTIONS

*By AARON BOONE*

Acts 24:25, Felix says to Paul "... Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you." Are good intentions good enough? If so, why would Felix have thought to say he would call Paul back? We live in a world where we have placed a higher emphasis on sincerity, than on truth. The attitude of the world, and fearfully, of some that wear the name of Christ, is that if our intentions are right, if we have a good motive, then our actions no matter how awful, are justified. But the end never justifies the means. Right is always right, even if everyone is against it, and wrong is always wrong, even if everyone is for it. We have to be careful as we go through life and face the many difficulties that come with good intentions.

One of the greatest threats to us as Christians is the threat of good intentions becoming a substitute for actions. I intended to read my Bible! I intended to dress modestly! In the case of King Saul he may have intended to serve the Lord, and yet, 1 Samuel 15:24 tells another story: "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." Our good intentions can only take us so far before we must take action or be in sin. In the 18th century James Boswell said, "Hell is paved with good intentions." Boswell's quote is a summary of humans great ability not to follow through on what is right. James tells us: "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Good intentions are never a substitute for actions. This mindset only pushes away the truth and drives us further from God. It is always hard to admit our sins of inaction, especially when at first we had the greatest of intentions.

Just like any sin will continue to grow as we do not correct our ways, as we continue to substitute actions for good intentions, the idea

of what we can get away with grows and we start to use the excuse of good intentions to justify a wrong doing. In 1 Samuel 13, Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, with the best intentions went against the Lord's decree and offered a burnt offering, something only the priest (Num. 3:10) were allowed to perform. Samuel then rebukes him saying there in 1 Samuel 13:13: "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you." Although we, like Samuel, at times might have good intentions, even the best intentions do not justify wrong doing to others and especially to God. Just read of Uzzah over in 1 Chronicles 13:9-12.

But what are our intentions today? Are we planning on being the best Christian that has ever walked this earth? Do we plan to imitate Christ like never before? The time to put these intentions into action is now! Felix had the opportunity, and yet he told Paul to go away for a more convenient time. Felix may have sent Paul away with good intentions, but the time may have run out for him, just as it will for us. If we do not seize opportunity, God will shut the door (Gen 7:16; Matthew 25), and all those on the outside will be forever lost, no matter how great their intentions may be.



*SOUL AND SPIRIT . . . . .continued from page one*

spirit? What good can come from separating joints from bone marrow. The answer to this question is NOTHING, absolutely nothing! Dividing soul from the spirit is not the intent of the verse. Neither is dividing joints from marrow.

The lesson is simple. It is a lesson about the difference between things that are earthly and things that are spiritual. The division or separation is between soul and spirit (heavenly or spiritual things) from joints and marrow (carnal or earthly matters). The scriptures tell us time and again to keep the earthly things in their place in comparison to things that are spiritual.

The Hebrew writer then declares the word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word discerner explains the capability

of the word of God to "pass judgment" (WE. Vines p. 315) on the thoughts and intents of the heart.

How wonderful that we have holy writ that we can read to pass judgment on our hearts, hence to guide our every step in our relationship with God and man. We need not wait for a good feeling or wonder if some odd incident might or might not be a sign from God. Paul, Eph. 3:4, says "when ye read, ye may understand." John says, in so many words, "these things I have written so ye may know!" (1 st John 5:13) Irvin Barnes, 3218 East Farm Road 88, Springfield, Mo. 65803-irvinbarns@aol.com



*TIMELY SUGGESTIONS . . . . .continued from page two*

and is dry; if he is extemporaneous he is not deep.

If he spends too much time in his study he neglects his people.; if he visits he is a gadabout.

If he is attentive to the poor he is playing the grandstand; if to the wealthy he is trying to be an aristocrat.

If he suggests improvements for the church he is a dictator; if he makes no suggestions he is a figure-head.

If he uses too many illustrations he neglects the Bible; if not enough he is not clear.

If he condemns wrong he is cranky; if he does not he is a compromiser.

If he preaches for an hour he is windy; if less he is lazy.

If he preaches the truth he is offensive; if not he is a hypocrite.

If he fails to please everybody he is hurting the church; if he does please everybody he has no convictions.

If he preached to tithe he is a money grabber; If he does not he is afraid to declare the whole council—So, what's the use!"

All of which makes me think of Galatians 1:10, "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."

Someone said the other day, "If you want to know how to build a house ask a carpenter; if you want to know how to build a baptistery ask a preacher- he is the one who uses it." This might work on a lot of things. When the preachers and the church learn to cooperate in the work much more can be accomplished. The preacher might (he should, and usually does) know a few things besides his sermon.

**Suggestion:** Talk things over together, and use good judgement in arranging the work so as to receive the greatest amount of good from your money and efforts.

Our preachers travel too much, and too many meetings conflict.

**Final Suggestion:** When you run out of "sermons" try preaching the word.

**Announcements**

**OPEN BIBLE STUDY**

Date March 14, 2015 Time 6:00 pm  
Place Seminole, OK (Jeff Johnston Fine Arts Center - Seminole State College campus)  
Subject "Is there ever an exception for divorce and remarriage?"

Speakers: Malcom Kniffen (presenting the "no-exception" view); George Battey (presenting the "exception" view).  
Format: Each speaker will speak 30 minutes, presenting his views on divorce and remarriage.  
After a short break, the study will resume with each speaker fielding questions from men in the audience.

Special Note This is not a hostile presentation. This is a Bible study which is "open" for everyone to hear. Please come, bring your Bible, and a positive outlook.  
May God bless our study together.

**70TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

On January 27, 2015 Donald and Eloise Bee are celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary. Donald has been a faithful member of the church since 1941 and Eloise since 1948.

Cards of congratulations and remembrance may be sent to: Don and Eloise Bee at 26 Oak Rd. Greenville, Pa 16125.

It has been my privilege to spend many happy hours in their home. They are among my dearest friends. May God bless them with good health and many years of happiness yet to come.  
-Ronny F. Wade



**BROTHER DARRELL BREWER**

As we go to press we have received word of the passing of Darrell Brewer from Bakersfield, CA.

Our sympathy is extended to his immediate family. The Lord be willing in the next issue of the paper we will have a complete obituary. Darrell will greatly missed by all.



**The Cup of the Lord**

We are happy to announce that the Cup of the Lord, a tract by brother J. D. Phillips is back in print, thanks to brother Nathan Battey. You may contact him at 500 Roswell Lane Arlington, Texas 76002 or call him at 817-600-6536 for information about price and mailing.

**Field Reports**

Greg Gay, January 5, 2015. We are home after the Oklahoma City New Year's Meeting. The theme of the meeting focused on the cross of Christ. The preaching was very edifying and the hundreds who assembled were able to sing

the songs written and selected for the meeting beautifully. The Edmond congregation did a great job with the many details that accompany such a large event. I held a meeting at Edmond in October and many in that growing congregation took time to invite neighbors and friends resulting in visitors every service. Then and recently, we stayed with our daughter and son-in-law, Lori and Justin Owen, who labors with the congregation. Spending time with them and four of our grandchildren is always a special treat. I was honored to be asked to preach at Norman the Sunday the New Year's Meeting started. I enjoyed visiting with the brethren there and especially Matt Trent who works with the congregation. Other recent preaching travels have been to Clovis and Yuba City in California. Our work continues with the 64th St. congregation with plans for a busy 2015. 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747 papagreg@aol.com

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, cmjthebackpage@gmail.com Jan. 10: Phyllis and I had a wonderful time at the Oklahoma New Year's Meeting. Justin Owen and the Edmond brethren obviously worked hard in the preparation and conduction of the meeting. This annual meeting was begun in 1947 in Sulphur, Oklahoma by M. Lynwood Smith of Brookhaven, MS and Tom E. Smith of Healdton, OK, and it affords us an opportunity to hear some great preaching, beautiful singing, and to see some dear friends from all parts of the country that we seldom get a chance to see. I would estimate the largest crowds to be somewhere between 700 to 1,000, including 38 preachers. We are already looking forward to next year's meeting. Lord willing, OKC 21st Street will be in charge of it, and it will be conducted by Allen Bailey and Ronny Wade. Our annual March weekend meeting in Ada is scheduled for March 6-8. Why not make plans

to join us? Phyllis and I were blessed with a new granddaughter December 19th, born to our son David and wife Stacy of Norman, OK. They also have a son who will be 2 years old in February. We now have three grandchildren and son Corey and wife Julie are expecting a little boy in May, which will make four: two boys and two girls. Not too bad for this grandparent who was beginning to think he would never have grandchildren. We have a full slate of meetings tentatively confirmed for this year which I shall post later. Please continue to pray for us. God bless you all in this new year.

Bob Johnson 431 W. Wintergreen Rd. Apt. 31104 Desoto, TX 75115 bobusj@gmail.com January 9, 2015. Since our move back to Texas the first of July 2014, I have been assisting in the work for the Lord's church in Duncanville, TX. Though small in number, these brethren are actively helping in the support of five preachers, myself included. It is indeed a great joy and pleasure to be with such a loving, caring group of brothers and sisters in Christ, that work well together, and are a great encouragement to the furtherance of the gospel. Not long after our move here I had gained two studies from door knocking, and engaged preaching brethren Melvin Blalock and Nathan Battey, to participate, which they gladly did. Though neither of these studies proved fruitful, we did plant the seed of truth in their hearts, and perhaps along life's way these individuals will reconsider their non-biblical views in regards to salvation. I am looking forward to warmer days that I may continue my work in the community in hopes of finding some honest hearts that will heed the gospel invitation. In the nearly three years that I labored for the Lord's church in Lexington, KY, I became acquainted with several of the church leaders from the Bandy, Blue Springs, Chestnut Ridge and Walnut Grove congregations. I also came

to know and appreciate fellow preacher Philip Scott, who was also very supportive of my labors in Lexington, along with brother Doug Hawkins. The latter, connected me with brother Zac Evans a young preacher that worked under my tutelage his first year in Kentucky. I came to love, respect, and appreciate this young brother for his work sake and his friendly attitude in putting up with my ways (I tend to be very repetitious in repeating things) yet he endured well and never complained about the work. After his first year working with me, he moved on to assist in the work for the Walnut Grove congregation outside Somerset, KY. Though several church leaders from other areas, some outside Texas, contacted me to consider moving and working with them, I declined, seeing as how my wife and I prefer to spend our latter years in life being close to family. May God bless the efforts of our elders, church leaders, and preaching brethren in this new year as we press forward in our efforts to reach out to the many precious souls that need saving.

Ronny Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com  
 January 22- The Alabama New Year meeting at Dothan ended our work for 2014. Brethren gathered from several States to study and enjoy the fellowship of fellow Christians. The midnight singing on the 31st and the period of association just before it served as a fitting and inspirational end to the meeting. The churches of the immediate area are to be commended for their diligence and commitment in making the meeting possible every year. Currently we are at home enjoying the fellowship of surrounding congregations and our home church here in Springfield. The Lord willing, winter will soon be past and spring will be upon us. We look forward to a number of meetings that will engage us at that time. May this coming year bring us all success as we endeavor to honor

the ancient landmarks and carry the message of salvation to the lost of the earth.



**Food For Thought**

**Begin Again**

Things that are worth the winning  
 Must ever at cost be won;  
 A feeble wish can accomplish naught  
 And sees no great thing done;  
 They that are wise press onward,  
 Those that are strong ascend;  
 So be not stilled by a great defeat,  
 But begin again, my friend.  
 What is a fall or a failure,  
 But a call to try again?  
 Have some short roads to  
 success been closed?  
 There are others that still remain;  
 Therefore be yet brave hearted,  
 And faithful to reach the end,  
 The crown was best that  
 was hard to win;  
 So begin again, my friend.

Author Unknown

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## THE BACK PAGE...

### THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER

By *CARL M. JOHNSON*

The argument is often made that the church still has the power to perform miracles such as the ones performed by Jesus Christ and His apostles because “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8). However, such a conclusion is a misapplication of this wonderful text.

The preeminence of Christ is the major theme of the book of Hebrews. He is superior to anything or anyone with whom we might compare Him. This preeminence derives from His eternal changelessness. The Hebrews author first contrasts the changeless Christ to the changing universe. “They will perish; but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail” (Heb. 1:11-12).

Chapters 5-9 contrast the changelessness of Christ as a redeemer, a sacrifice for sin, with the changing procession of the high priests, who once a year on the Day of Atonement, went behind the veil of the temple to sprinkle blood upon the mercy seat. Christ, however, is the eternal Priest who offered Himself on the cross once and for all to bear the sins of many.

Hebrews 12 contrasts the changing kingdoms of this world with the changeless kingdom of Christ. The kingdoms of the world are shaken down one by one, but the eternal kingdom of Christ cannot be shaken or moved.

Finally, Hebrews 11-12 contrasts the changelessness of Christ as a friend, teacher, and companion with the ever-changing friendships and associations of this life. The apostle calls the roll of the heroes of the faith, from Abel down to David and Samuel. These all having served their day and generation, disappeared. We should remember all of the late heroes of the faith, including those who have died in recent years. We should honor their memory, but we must not place our faith in them. They were here a brief time yesterday, but are gone today. Our faith must be placed in the eternal Christ who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Christ never changes as a teacher of divine truth. This fact contrasts with earthly teachers and systems. History is a subjective art and the perspective you receive about historical happenings will depend largely upon the perspective of the historian. There are plenty of historians in the business of rewriting history on a daily basis. The same is true of philosophy.

Science also fits into the above category. There are many laws of science we know to be factual and unalterable, such as the law of gravity or thermodynamics. However, there are a multiplicity of theories in the scientific realm that are being altered daily.

Christ’s teachings of divine truth, however, never change. Which one of His sayings is obsolete, outmoded, or no longer applicable today? His sayings have withstood the severest of all tests the test of time. What He taught in the streets of Capernaum, on the banks of the Jordan, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, on the mountainside, and in the temple of Jerusalem, is still being taught in our pulpits today. As long as hearts have passion and life has woes, the words of Jesus will resonate with the souls of people. He says, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Mt. 24:35).

However, it is a mistake to conclude from the above teaching that Christ’s promise to His apostles and other first-century Christians that they would receive power to work miracles, to heal mental and physical illnesses, and to speak in “new tongues” extends to us today. Paul makes it clear that the Lord intended miraculous spiritual gifts to be TEMPORARY in duration (1 Cor. 13:8-10). They were used to confirm the preaching of Christ’s death, burial, and miraculous resurrection (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3-4). However, when the perfect law of liberty was fully revealed and confirmed, miraculous spiritual gifts ceased to exist (1 Cor. 13:10; Jas. 1:25).

A careful reading of Acts 8:12-18 and Acts 19:1-7 shows spiritual gifts were imparted to the first-century Christians only through the “laying on of the apostles’ hands.” When the apostles died, there was no one on earth who had power to impart spiritual gifts by laying on of hands. Consequently, when the last man upon whom the apostles laid their hands died, there was no one left on earth who could work miracles.

The fact that we cannot perform miracles today such as Christ, His apostles, and other first-century Christians performed has nothing to do with Christ changing His mind. It was the Lord’s plan from the BEGINNING that miraculous spiritual gifts would be temporary in their duration. The Lord’s plan has not changed. Therefore, while miraculous spiritual gifts have vanished away, Christ remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. [cmjthebackpage@embarqmail.com](mailto:cmjthebackpage@embarqmail.com)