

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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“MODEST APPAREL”

By DOUGLAS T. HAWKINS

Paul writes, “in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly array, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.” As evidenced here, the Bible teaches Christian women (and men too) to adorn themselves in modest apparel, which simply means the Christian should wear appropriate attire; attire that professes godliness.

Peter writes a similar message in 1 Peter 3:1-4: “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

As indicated in both passages, “modesty” and “modest apparel” first involves the human heart. Both writers emphasize what is within over what is without - by saying, as Paul did “not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly array, or as Peter did “...not that outward adorning of plaiting the hair and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel.” In those statements, the Bible is not forbidding, as some mistakenly think, the wearing of any gold or the putting on of any makeup or fixing the hair to any extent. Such positions become extreme. However, the inwardness overshadows the outwardness and our appearance reflects the heart. Paul and Peter show us not to put the emphasis on the outward man but on the inward man. How we dress, therefore, reflects either a heart of godliness and shamefacedness or a heart devoid of such an attitude. Godliness and shamefacedness create in the Lord’s people a keen sense of moral purity, holiness, and reverential fear. Broadly stated, this attitude of holiness overlays our heart and our clothes and appearance outwardly reflect this inward sense.

Shamefacedness stands in contrast to shamelessness and godliness to worldliness. Both can be seen in how we dress. The prophet Jeremiah asked, “were they ashamed when they committed abomination? No, they were not ashamed and neither could they blush” (Jeremiah 6:15). Without shamefacedness and godliness a person has no ability to blush. Paul also tells us, “...be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:1,2)

Going back to the initial readings in 1 Timothy and 1 Peter, notice the language used by both Paul and Peter. Paul says, “...with shamefacedness and sobriety and Peter writes, “...chaste conduct coupled with fear [reverence]” Peter continues by saying, “Whose adorning ...[should be] the hidden man of the heart in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price.” Again, these words describe the inward grace, reverence, and beauty that adorn the Christian’s soul, particularly the Christian woman’s soul. The Christian woman projects this grace outwardly by...”adorning herself in modest apparel.”

From the very outset, the gospel cultivates among the Saints a spirit of godliness and holiness. Titus 2:11,12 says, “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly righteously and godly in the present world.” Peter also says, “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:14-16) First, when we deny worldly lust and ungodliness and second, when we affirm godliness and holiness in our hearts (truly, fully, and sincerely), the gospel builds in us the divine nature of which all saints partake. (2 Peter 1:4) Again, Paul, writing in contrast to the adulterer, the fornicator, the drunkard and the like, says, “...And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Cor. 6:11)

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Editorial

This month, we have chosen to reprint yet another article written almost 42 years ago by Lynwood Smith. He didn't often write for the paper, though we would have loved for him to have done so. This article which appeared on the front page of the October 1972 issue is interesting. Lynwood had an amazing ability to explain the Bible in simple form. He would often delve into things of great depth but made it sound so simple it would only be realized later just how profound the teaching had been. This is the mark of a great preacher. He is gone now, but we hope all will appreciate this writing. -DLK

BEWARE OF SNAKES!!

By M. LYNWOOD SMITH

The following is taken from the Modesto Bee, Modesto, Calif.:

Snake Kills Man Proving Faith - Sparks, Ga.-AP--A man who handled a rattlesnake at a church service, died proving his faith. The authorities said Lloyd B. Hill, 41, died yesterday, several hours after he was bitten by a snake at a Saturday night service of the New River Holiness Church. He was the father of four daughters. The police said he apparently did not seek medical aid. Dr. J. P. Oliphant, Cook County medical examiner, said Hill died from rattlesnake venom.

This newspaper clipping seems strange compared to the account of a man in the New Testament. His name was Paul, and he was on a voyage to Rome, when he was shipwrecked and landed on the island of Melita. Here is his story: "And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, no doubt the man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, AND FELT NO HARM. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, they SAW NO HARM COME TO HIM, and they changed their minds, and said that he was a god" (Acts 28:2-6). Just what do you suppose the difference in these two men could be? The man in Sparks, Ga. is one of the many we have read about who suffered like fate. The account of this man indicates he had faith; he proved it by his works. But he was not sustained as Paul was.

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Is it wrong for a congregation to make gluten free bread or bread from rice flour to avoid gluten for members who have been diagnosed as gluten intolerant?

Answer: The scriptures tell us that Jesus took bread when He instituted the Lord's Supper (Mt. 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and 1Cor. 11). Matthew, Mark, and Luke all indicate that Jesus instituted the Supper on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread during the eating of the Passover. Exodus 12:8 describes the Passover meal while Exodus 12:15 describes the bread to be eaten during the feast of unleavened bread. This being the case we conclude that the bread to be used in the observance of the Lord's Supper must be unleavened bread. The scriptures do not, however, indicate or tell us what kind of flour was used in making the bread. That being the case so long as the bread is unleavened one cannot insist on one type of flour i.e. barley, rice, wheat etc. Gluten free bread is still unleavened bread and hence would not be a violation of scripture.

Question: Please explain how Mt. 23:10 relates to those we call teachers in the church?

Answer: The scripture in question reads as follows "And do not be called teachers, for one is your Teacher, the Christ." The context of this passage is about wearing religious titles. The Pharisees loved the attention they received when in the market place. They also loved being called Rabbi and took pride in the fact that people looked up to them. Beginning in verse 6 Jesus rebukes them for their pride and warns that such behavior is not only unbecoming but a violation of right living. They were essentially appropriating for themselves titles that belonged to deity. Hence the warning, "call no man Father." Today, like then, men still persist in calling some man "the holy father," when "one is your Father in heaven." Men today are called "reverend" when there is no authority at all for the wearing of such a religious designation. In verse 10 Jesus said "neither be ye called teachers" most revisions say "neither be ye called masters," the idea being that no man

should be elevated to a position belonging only to deity. One may be accurately described and called a teacher if indeed he is that. We commonly use the term "teacher" to describe the function of a brother in the church. There is nothing wrong with this. Eph. 4:11 "And he Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." However one should never be elevated to a position where he is designated "the teacher or the master." This distinction belongs only to Christ. Titles of distinction as those mentioned here have no place in the church. To elevate someone by assigning this type of title to them, runs counter to the teaching of this passage, and to the spirit of Christ, ultimately resulting in a misdirection of praise. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

BAPTISM'S SYMBOLISM

By Andrew Richardson

Though the apostle Peter said baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38) and that it "doth also now save us" (1 Pet. 3:21), and though Jesus taught, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), the larger part of the denominational culture still chooses to believe that baptism is not a requirement for salvation. Instead, it's taught to be just an "outward sign of an inward grace." In other words, it just (as the modern clichés go) acts as a visible "badge" or "sign" of salvation that has already occurred and thus has no place in the attaining of salvation. Truly the Holy Book does ascribe symbolism to baptism, but it is not after the denominational kind, i.e., past salvation.

A "LIKENESS" OF CHRIST'S DEATH

According to the apostle Paul, Christ's burial and resurrection is visualized in baptism:

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:3-5).

Here, baptism is called a “likeness” of Christ’s Death. Like Jesus was buried in the tomb and then rose to life, so is the man who is buried in the watery grave of baptism, subsequently arising to “new life.” Therefore, the death of both Jesus and the sinner is pictured in the act. Christ arose to life after being buried, and the formerly lost sinner emerges from the water to a new life, forgiven of sins (Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21) through Jesus’ blood.

Yet, what does Paul say here about baptism representing forgiveness that has already been achieved? Nada! Not a word is uttered about it. There is no stated “likeness” of previously attained pardon anywhere in the pages of inspiration. Neither hide nor hair. Yes, baptism is symbolic, but the new life of the lost sinner that it symbolizes is at the same time achieved. In other words, the symbol and the thing symbolized are simultaneous.

FORGIVENESS AND UNITY

“New life” is spiritual life that the alien sinner previously did not have. Spiritual life is unity with Christ and God. This unity is attained by having the sins, which caused the separation (Deut. 31:17-18; Isa. 59:1-2; Mic. 3:4; Rom. 6:23), forgiven. Therefore, where there is forgiveness, there is new life in unity with Christ. The lost sinner who has believed and has repented achieves all this in baptism. Observe:

1) FORGIVENESS

Paul wrote that the Christians at Rome were baptized “into [Christ’s] death.” The Son of God’s death on the cross paid the due penalty for sins (Matt. 20:28; 26:27; Rom. 5:9), but to benefit from that death, one must be baptized into it. One dies with Christ in immersion and as a result receives the forgiveness that was made available by the Savior’s sacrificial death; for Paul says, “He who has died has been justified from sin” (ML V, v. 7). Such a clear declaration! A man becomes justified, i.e., forgiven from sin when he dies with Christ in baptism. So it is written!

2) UNITY WITH CHRIST

Paul also says the Roman Christians were baptized “into Jesus Christ.” Immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ is the point in time God has chosen for the penitent believer to become united with Jesus. To be “in Christ” is to be united with Him in a spiritual relationship wherein one is able to partake of all the “spiritual blessings” offered by Him; for all such blessings reside “in” Him (Eph. 1:3). It is to be identified as belonging to Him.

Therefore, “into Christ” and “into His death” are the same spiritual result -a union with Jesus. Thus one literally rises to new life in Christ when baptized.

BURIED WITH CHRIST IN BAPTISM

Paul also says, “In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses” (Col. 2:11-13).

Again, the symbolism of death and life in baptism is noted. New life is living united with Christ, and the Colossians were “raised” to this life. Yes, they had been “made alive together,” but when did this happen? “Buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him”! Without baptism, there is no rising to new life, because God, Who gives the new life, chose this act to be when this spiritual resurrection is accomplished for the lost sinner.

UNIFIED IN BAPTISM BY FAITH

With the same thought, Paul told the saints of Galatia they were the “children of God by faith” (3:26), and then says, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Faith in Christ and His redemptive work leads an alien sinner to be baptized, and thus “put on Christ,” i.e., become unified with Christ. That is when they became the “children of God by faith.” Unmistakably, Paul taught that baptism has a purpose in the receiving of salvation, and not as an act symbolizing already-attained salvation. Lost sinners become identified as the Lord’s children by faith when baptized.

In recent ages, a new type of baptismal symbolism has been born from denominationalism such that is understood to be a sign of prior salvation. This is not the baptism authorized by Christ. His Holy Word speaks for itself. For the lost sinner, salvation and the symbolic act of baptism are simultaneous.

A GLORIOUS CHURCH

By Rick Martin

The Apostle Paul writes in Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that

it should be holy and without blemish. There are so many glories of the church of our Lord and it would be impossible to include them all in one article. David said of Zion, long ago, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." David of course was referring to Zion of old, yet we can say the same of spiritual Zion today. In this article I want to talk about four things that make the church, a Glorious church.

First, we see that the church has a Glorious Founder and foundation: Matt. 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. No other institution can claim Christ as the founder. There are others who would try to claim this, but to no avail. The church was founded at a glorious price which was the blood of a King. We see that other kings have established their kingdoms by shedding the blood of their subjects. This glorious institution was established by the King shedding his blood. Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. The church has a glorious foundation. 1 Cor.3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. The church is the only institution with this foundation. No man-made institution can lay claim to such a foundation. Samuel Stone wrote: The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord, She is His new creation by water and the Word. From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride; With His own blood He bought her and for her life He died.

Second, we find that the church had a glorious beginning. This beginning was on the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is mentioned only in the New Testament, Acts 2:1, Acts 20:16, and 1 Cor. 15:8. We see that it is referred to as the "feast of harvest" Ex. 23:16: the "feast of weeks", Ex. 34:22: The "day of the first fruits" Num. 28:26. This was 50 days after the second day of the Passover. Isa. 2:2-4 shows us that the Word of the Lord was to go forth from Jerusalem in the last days. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. Not only did the prophets point out the time and the place of the Gospel proclamation, but they also show how it was typified in the giving of the Law of Moses. It was fifty

days from the slaying of the paschal lamb in Egypt until the giving of the Law of Moses on Mount Sinai. At the giving of the law 3000 were slain, Ex. 32:28. Paul says, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; 1 Cor. 5:7. It was just fifty days from the slaying of the Lamb of God until the Law of God was sent forth and the apostles were "endued with power from on high"; Luke 24:29. The former law was called, "the law of sin and death", but this glorious new law is called the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus"; Romans 8:2. At the giving of the Gospel law 3000 people were given spiritual life. It was a Glorious beginning! A nation was born in a day!

Third, we see that the church has a glorious mission. That mission is to make known the will of God. Notice nothing is said about recreational activities. Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. This verse shows us that the teaching of God's word is to be done by the church. Sunday schools, Missionary societies and such are additions to this glorious church and have no right to perform the mission that is given to the church. The church is self-edifying and does not need an auxiliary body to perform that duty; Eph. 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Finally, we see that the church will have a glorious translation into glory. 1 Cor. 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. Only those who are faithful members of the church/kingdom will experience a glorious translation into heaven.

Ralph Hudson wrote: Do you hear them coming, brother, Thronging up the steeps of light, Clad in glorious shining garments, Blood washed, garments pure and white?

Do you hear the stirring anthems, Filling all the earth and sky, 'Tis a grand, victorious army, Lift its banner up on high!

Never fear the clouds of sorrow; never fear the storms of sin. We shall triumph on the morrow, Even now our joys begin.

Wave the banner, shout His praises, for our victory is nigh! We shall join our conquering Savior; we shall reign with Him on high.

'Tis a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, Washed in the blood of the Lamb; 'Tis a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, Washed in the blood

of the Lamb.

It should be the desire of every person to be a member of the Glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish! Are you part of the Glorious Church?

ISAIAH - The Salvation of the Lord
By MICHAEL BOLTON

Called by some the Old Testament evangelist, Isaiah is unquestionably the premier prophet of the Old Testament. Whether they are the superb soliloquies speaking of the suffering Savior, or the forecasting of impending doom for Judah and Israel, Isaiah’s writings are refined and exemplary. His work began in the year King Uzziah died, approximately 750 BC. Scholars conservatively estimate Isaiah’s work as lasting forty-eight years. But Jewish tradition indicates a life work spanning over sixty years; it seems the tradition has a preponderance of evidence as he recorded Hezekiah’s death. Ancient historians suggest that Isaiah was sawn asunder by wicked King Manasseh. Scripture tells us that he was married and had two sons, whom he symbolically named Shear-Jashub, meaning a remnant shall return, and Maher-Shalal-hash-baz meaning the spoil speeds, the prey hastens. His influence, both politically and religiously, was very great. He served in the courts of the kings of Judah, namely, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and reportedly Manasseh. During times of distress, King Hezekiah leaned on him for counsel. The New Testament has more quotations from Isaiah than any other single prophet. There are 68 quotations from the book of Isaiah in the NT that is enough for more than one from each chapter as men have divided it. Only the collection of Psalms has more quotations in the New Testament than Isaiah. Isaiah’s uncompromising style serves as a stellar example for our preaching. Too often many today compromise truth in the face of opposition or for fear of hurting someone that is loved or respected. This was not so with Isaiah. While it appears that he did polish his speech more than other prophets, than perhaps Amos, he did not exercise eloquence at the expense of truth. Isaiah denounced in the strongest of terms the wickedness and sin of the nobles (Is 28.7-15). To the common people of Jerusalem he cried “How is the faithful city become a harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.” (Is 1.21) and the previous verse he faithfully warns “if ye refuse and rebel...” His uncompromising

attitude toward sin and the debauchery that was rampant everywhere won him no favor with many and is reported to have ultimately cost him his life.

Today we need to be as courageously faithful as Isaiah, even in the face of stern opposition. We must call sin, sin. We cannot dress up wrong and make it appear right to appease the thirst for iniquity and peace. 2 Peter 2.18 brings this home to today under the New Testament law. Do we draw people through the lusts of the flesh, do we speak “great swelling words of vanity? Or, do we honorably hold to the truth of God’s word that sets men and women free from sin.

Yes, Isaiah was bold in the face of opposition. He serves well as an example to us in this respect (Is 7.13); but He was also full of compassion for people. “My heart shall cry out for Moab” (Is 15.5) “therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer I will water thee with my tears..., gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field...,” (Is 16.9-11) What poignant declarations of sorrow and empathy this prophet of impending doom expressed. We today need to feel great and tender empathy toward those who are lost. Rather than wrap ourselves in indignant robes of self-righteousness, we need to weep over the lost. The thought of one person being lost should cause us restlessness. Just as on being saved causes joy in Heaven, so one being lost should cause mourning in our hearts. Michael Bolton, 2105 Diamond Head Way, West Richland WA 99353, mwbolton2001@yahoo.com 903-491-6802



MODEST APPARELcontinued from page one

Conversion involves transformation - something is put off (Col. 3:8) that something else might be put on (Rom. 13:14); something dies that something else might live (Romans 6); we flee lust to follow after faith righteousness and charity with them that call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart. (2 Tim. 2:22)

Contemplate this very serious point. What mostly influences our lives and our thinking? If television, magazines, the internet and other forms of modern culture have greater sway with us than the gospel, then chances are we may lack the moral strength to be transformed from the world and are more likely conforming to it. We may be found adopting its trends, sporting its fashions, and accepting its standards. Friends, we must take the Scripture’s admonition very seriously. When Paul says, “Come out from among them and be separate says the Lord... and touch not the unclean thing” (2 Cor. 6:17), he is not merely suggesting a way to live. He is admonishing us to avoid the evil in the world. With so much talk and so many

images involving lust, sin, and immorality, do we deny the effects of the world on our hearts and minds?

With this as our premise, I want to discuss briefly the Biblical principles of our clothes and how we dress. Our clothes should: 1. Honor The Lord 2. Adequately cover our bodies 3. Distinguish our gender.

Honor The Lord: The ornament of a quiet and meek spirit is of great price in the sight of God. The Christian woman (and man) professes godliness adorning herself (or himself) in modest apparel. Do we really need to sketch a mental image of what's appropriate and what's not? Are our senses so dull of hearing and our consciences so seared that we fail to recognize immodesty? Paul would say, "...present your bodies as living sacrifices holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1) I have been told of people making the argument that if you were in a public place where everyone is dressed in bathing suits (like the lake or the ocean) and you stand out because you are not dressed as they are that you are immodest and "drawing attention to yourself." In response to such a silly notion, Paul would say, "Come out from among them and be separate says the Lord ...and touch not the unclean thing." (2 Cor.6:17) and Peter would write, "wherefore they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot..." (1 Peter 4:4).

Brother Ronny Wade referred to the following passage once in a sermon a number of years ago and that reference has stuck with me through the years. He quoted Paul saying, "whose glory is their shame" (Phil. 3:19) and then made appropriate application. Just think of how men glory in shame. That statement aptly summarizes the thinking of the modern world. The more seductive, provocative, and salacious the appearance, the more celebrated, recognized and noted that look or that person becomes. The world glories in its thin bodies, its muscled abdominals, its tanned skin, and its nakedness ...Again, their glory is their shame. Is the church unaffected? Hardly friends. May God's Grace teach us and may we keep ourselves from evil.

Covers The Body: Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and their eyes "were opened." (Genesis 3) Suddenly, they felt a strong sense of shame and with "opened eyes" saw that they were naked. Notice the correlation between their shame and their nakedness. Adam and Eve attempted to cover themselves by sewing fig leaves together. I can hardly imagine that their apron of leaves looked more scant than what some are willing to go into public wearing today. God deemed them inadequately clothed and instead made them coats of skin and "clothed them." (Gen.3:21) Scholars suggest that the clothes that God made covered them from their shoulders to below their knees. You see friend, we can have clothes on, but still be naked and expose our shame. We may not feel ashamed, but we expose our shame even still.

The prophet Isaiah writes, "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers. 3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man." (Isa. 47:1-4)

Distinguishes Our Gender: "Have you not read that He which made them at the beginning made them MALE and FEMALE?" (Matt. 19:4) You couldn't tell by listening to modern thought in western civilization. Through concerted effort over the last fifty years, academia and progressive social thinking has largely removed all distinctions between men and women, especially with the help of television. Consequently, West Coast States have now opened "unisex bathrooms" for "transgender" children. Shocking? Why? Isn't it only the natural progression within a society that has removed all specific gender identities from its conscience and mores? Moses commanded, "A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God." (Duet. 22:5) This unmistakable principle of gender distinction remains in the New Testament too. For example, Paul condemned "the effeminate" (1 Cor. 6:9), that is, men who act and dress as women. Now if it's wrong for a man to dress and act like a woman, is it right for a woman to dress and act like a man?

Beloved, dress, clothes, fads, and fashions reflect a culture, its beliefs, and values. That's true for the Kingdom of Heaven too. I pray this discussion helps someone, somewhere in the world to be more resolved and dedicated to be all that our Heavenly Father desires us to be. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. 7: 1)



BEWARE OF SNAKES continued from page two

Poor man! We pity him. Doubtless a good man, but led to believe an unscriptural doctrine. This man had read and had heard preached, no doubt, the verse found in Mark 16:17. It reads like this, "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; THEY SHALL TAKE UP SERPENTS; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." This man, like so many, many today thought this applied to all who were baptized, but a close study of Mark 16 will show us it applied to all apostles who would believe on Him

as they ought to, for heretofore they were doubting Him (verse 14). Then He told them to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Then he again speaks to the eleven about their disbelief and tells them of the signs that would follow the ones who would go forth and preach the Gospel and believe on Him as they should. It was to the eleven ONLY that He promised these signs. The eleven only were to expect them. The eleven received them (verse 20). "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, confirming the word with the signs following." That was the purpose of the signs in the first place. To confirm the word was why they were given. Paul says in Heb. 2:3, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was CONFIRMED unto us by them that heard; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?"

Now when the Gospel was revealed and confirmed unto the world, we no longer need the signs and wonders. "Confirm" means "to make firm" and "to give assurance." To say the word of God is not already confirmed is to deny the Bible.

So this man's fate came from misunderstanding God's plan and His will. Nowhere are we promised the signs which these special men in a special day did a special purpose. The special purpose was to confirm the word, and that has been done. Beware of Snakes!! -OPA

Announcements

A NOTE FROM C.A. SMITH

Not long ago, we reported that we were in desperate need of an Evangelist, to work with us, for an extended period of time and as of this date, have not been able to find one. However, our fervent prayers are being answered, since a brother that had left the fold, some twenty five years ago, came back, and the prospects are looking good for, even more to return to their first love, in the near future. Of course there is great happiness among the Saints here, and we are encouraged to press onward with the work ourselves, and perhaps, if we all do what we can, we can build the church up without the aid of a full time Evangelist. We ask all of the brethren, everywhere, to pray for us. We have had Brother Morgan Stripling, of Lubbock, coming to teach for us on the first and third Sunday's of each month, and lightning our load somewhat. We are planning on having a Summer Gospel Meeting this Summer. We have always prayed that the church here, in Andrews, would be found faithful and growing, when the Lord returns to judge the world in Righteousness, and we are encouraged to think, that this might well happen.

God bless all the faithful everywhere and the work that is being done for the Lord's cause. C. A. Smith, 7 Old Lampasas Trail, Odessa, Texas -79765

MISSOURI FOURTH OF JULY MEETING

The annual Missouri fourth of July meeting will be conducted in Springfield under the direction of the Mission Hills church. The dates are June 29-July 3. Services at the church building Sunday morning at 10 A.M. Sunday night the services move to the Remington Center where the meeting will continue thru Thursday Night. Below we have listed Motel Information. For further information you may call Ronny Wade 417-766-2700, Mark Triplett 417-823-9665 Chad Smith 417-839-8222

Motels For The Fourth of July Meeting,
Springfield, MO. **Holiday Inn Express**--Medical District (Formerly Comfort Inn and Suites) 310 E. Monastery St. Springfield, MO 65810 Phone: 417-887-8500 Rate \$99.00 plus tax per room per night Free Hot Breakfast. **Sleep Inn**--Medical District 233 El Camino Alto Springfield, Mo 65810 Phone: 417-866-2464 Rate: \$74.00 plus tax per room per night Free Hot Breakfast In order to receive these rates at either hotel, the guest must call the hotel direct and the rates will be honored based on availability. Tell them you are with the Church of Christ. **Hampton Inn**--Springfield South 3232 S. Glenstone (Near the Battlefield mall) Springfield, MO 65804 Phone 417-882-6611 Rate: \$89.00 plus tax per room per night Free Hot Breakfast Must call the Motel directly and tell them that you are with the Church of Christ. **Candlewood Suites** 1035 E. Republic Rd. Springfield, MO 65807 Phone:417-881-8500 Rate: Studio Suite \$84.00 plus tax per room per night One Bedroom King \$119.00 plus tax per room per night Must call Motel directly and ask for Church of Christ rate.

There are other motels in the area that are available that can be reached by telephone or e-mail. Should you need assistance you may call or write any of the references listed in this letter of announcement.

NEW SONG BOOK ABOUT READY

I am happy to announce the soon-publication of the 2014 song book 'Ceaseless Praise.' The book should be available by or before the annual 4th of July Meetings. This book contains a number of wonderful new songs, beloved hymns and a host of favorites from yesteryear. The price will be \$5 per book, plus shipping. A companion CD will also be available this summer. I want to take this opportunity to apologize for the binding problems with the last book "Abiding Hope" that many congregations experienced across the nation. The printers are aware of the problem and are identifying the cause. They have assured me that the issue will be corrected in this new publication. I appreciate your use of these past song books and I appreciate

your patience and loyalty to the effort we have tried to continue since the passing of Bro. Lynwood Smith. Purchasing the books is a wonderful way to keep high interest in the good singing in your congregation and allows us to continue in this effort! I would appreciate it if you would consider using 'Ceaseless Praise' in your congregation. If you would like to pre-order, you may email: legacymusicpublishing@gmail.com or call 334-618-1550 and you will receive your books with the very first shipments. May we always be a singing people!

• • • • •
BOOKS BY TOMMY SHAW NOW AVAILABLE

We now have the 2nd printing of Tommy Shaw's two books: The Destruction of Jerusalem and The First Epistle to the Corinthians. The price is \$8.00 for the Destruction of Jerusalem and \$10 for First Corinthians. You may purchase both books together for \$15.00. Please send orders to: Bart Shaw, 670 Breedlove, Sturgeon, MO 65284, e-mail tbartshaw@hotmail.com



Sulphur Oklahoma's Annual 4th of July meeting will be June 28 through July 4, 2014. Services will be 8:00 PM nightly and 10:00AM as the crowds increase. Greg Jordan and Terry Studdard, both from Alabama, will be in charge of the services. For information on lodging or eating places go to www.sulphurokla.com or call 580-622-2779 or 622-5213 & we'll mail you listings. Come worship with us on this 77th year of the meeting. We are looking forward to great preaching and singing as we have always had in the past.

Our Departed

GOAR- Velma Oneta Goar, a charter member of Southside Church of Christ, Andrews, Texas; was born in 1926, at Madisonville, TX. Passing away at Andrews, TX. Thursday, April 3rd, at the age of 88 years, 1 month, and 21 days. She was a remarkable Sister in Christ, who lived with many infirmities here on earth, yet she lived her days, thinking and doing for others and living for Christ. Many of the preachers who held meetings here will remember her insisting on preparing a sumptuous meal for them, although, she was hardly able to do so. Thus, with Christ's peace in our hearts and Christ's hope in our spirits, we say good-bye to our beloved sister, whom we hope to meet one day at Jesus' feet, when with her new body, void of strokes, falls, broken bones, and hospital stays, she will be where the sunshine of His love forever shines, and where she will never grow old, be sick, or die. May God bless her only survivors, her son Ray and his wife Roseanne and may her good life continually be a reminder to her brothers and sisters in Christ to be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10). It was my lot to speak words of comfort and warning to those at her graveside memorial. Brother Kevin Fox led the two songs she wanted sung, "Amazing Grace and I'll Fly Away."...C. A. Smith

CLOUD- Today we are honored to share with you both some rejoicing and sadness. Early Wednesday morning, March 5, the angels came brilliantly and carried our dear friend and faithful brother, Randle Cloud, to a well-earned reward (Luke 16:22). Our brother's body had become worn and tired, but his heart never did. His heart was as giving at the end as it was at the beginning. But his departure reminds us of the words of the great apostle, when he tells us that our citizenship "is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Philippians 3:20-21). We are so glad that brother Randle - and we who devote our lives serving the Lord - could end an earthly walk that sometimes becomes difficult and that he could take his flight like a mighty eagle to walk with the Lord. In the world's eyes, Brother Randle performed few great deeds, but the overflowing crowd gathered to pay tribute to our friend on Saturday morning, March 8, told a different story. The tears we saw running down the face of Johnny Watson, who elegantly stood beside us to help tell his grand story- said something different, too. My wife Marilyn and I also witnessed his generosity and that of his wife Arlene and son Steve when we first crossed the Red River and took on this great work up and down those Oklahoma roads. Our work here - and all the blessings the Lord poured out to us - would not have been possible without the Clouds and their love for the church of our Lord. The apostle reminds us of the importance of those who help to encourage and support the preaching of the gospel. He commends Phebe, his "sister... a servant of the church" as well as the mother of Rufus, whom he calls "his mother and mine" (Romans 16:1,13). As great as the apostle was, he could not have preached the wonderful news of the gospel without those who stood behind him every step. That great crowd gathered in Purcell could not have known that without our brother's blessings and that of his family, the many seeds of the gospel that we and many others have sown in that red Oklahoma dirt could not have been spread. I am indebted to our good friend today. He lived with a cheerful love for all he met and for the church of the Lord of which he was a member. You could not ask for more. God bless Randle's son and our dear friend Steve today, and particularly may He bless Arlene, my "mother in the Lord." (This appeared previously in the Purcell Register, March 12, 2014) steven.bowen@redoakisd.org

SPRADLEY- Luvilla Gay Spradley was born July 1, 1923 in Eden, Texas the daughter of Homer A. and Susie (Hanley) Gay. She departed this life on May 1, 2014, being at the time of her passing ninety years of age. She was preceded in death by her parents, a brother "Sonny," a son Reginald and a daughter Cynthia Ann. Lou, as she was affectionately known, was married to John Spradley for sixty-eight years. Together they faced the challenges of life and enjoyed the blessings that come from a marriage established on the principles

revealed in the word of God. John has been her devoted care-giver during the long months of her extended illness, along with her daughter Jonette Parker. Lou grew up under the wonderful influence of both her mother and father whom she loved and respected. In many ways she was like her father. She had a ready smile and an infectious laugh. She seemed to never tire of reliving events of the past especially those that involved her parents. I had the privilege of knowing Lou for over fifty years. She inherited a physical weakness involving her heart that had troubled both her father and brother. She was determined, however, to overcome this problem, and to a great extent she did living longer than any of her family members. A large crowd of family and friends gathered in the afternoon of May 3, to pay their respects to her memory. Lou is survived by John, her husband, one daughter Jonette Parker and husband Larry, one son Dan Glen, and several grand and great-grandchildren. This writer and Brother Joe Norton conducted the memorial service. -Ronny F. Wade

Field Reports

Carl M. Johnson 1400 Northcrest Dr. Ada, OK 74820, cmjthebackpage@gmail.com May 10-We just closed a meeting with the Longwood congregation, near Orlando, Florida. We had great crowds at the meeting including some folks from the community and support from other congregations. We had a full house on Lord's Day morning and most of the crowd were just the regular Longwood members. The congregation seems to be doing very well. Phylis and I stayed with Dennis and Deneice Bumbalough, longtime friends who could not have been more gracious. Dennis is a highly-respected preacher who has a treasure-trove of Bible knowledge in his head. I always enjoy picking his brain when we are together. We were also involved in some excellent meetings at Piedmont, AL, Washington, OK, and Mountain Home, AR. Cullen Smith conducted our spring meeting here at home, baptizing a couple of young men. We had the best crowds at our meeting here than we have had in years. In fact, the attendance was unusually good in all of the meetings I have mentioned. It would be wonderful if an upswing in attendance is a trend nowadays across the board. Our next meetings are: Burkhart, MO (June 7-15), McGregor, TX (July 20-27), Killbuck, OH (July 31-Aug. 3), Odom, MO (Oct. 8-12), and Weatherford, TX (Oct. 17-19). Jerry Dickinson is scheduled for our fall meeting here at home. We ask for your continued prayers that God will bless us all.

Douglas T. Hawkins 409 Worthington Pl. Richmond, KY 40475 (859) 353-2538 douglast69@bellsouth.net - May 9, 2014 - I'm currently helping the congregation in Avon, IN over the course of this year by doing a

leadership study. We had our first on-site meeting the last weekend in April. I'm very pleased with the interest and the participation from the brethren there. I'm planning to be with the congregation in Galey, OK June 15-22 and with the congregation in Napoleon, AL in August. I'll be looking forward to those meetings. If you are able to be with us, we would be delighted to see you. Lord bless you in his service.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, May 13, e-mail old_paths@juno.com The church here is at peace and enjoying it. We look forward to moving into a new building in a few months. The foundation is under way now. It was my pleasure to speak to a nice crowd here last Lord's Day with one confession of faults. Lord willing, we will hold a gospel meeting at the Planz Road congregation in Bakersfield, CA June 8-15. It has been a while since we were there and we look forward to seeing many of you there. The next Lord's Day after the meeting closes we are to be at Yuba City, CA for both services. We always enjoy that. The Turlock congregation will soon hold their annual Memorial Day meeting, this year with Nathan Battey and we look forward to having Rick and Jane Martin visit and attend that with us. Rick is scheduled to preach for the Livermore congregation the Lord's Day morning of that meeting. It won't be long now before it will be time to go to the 4th of July meeting which is always a treat. Whichever meeting you choose to attend, travel safe and enjoy the singing and preaching. We continue to ask your prayers for us.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, May 1 -- Beginning tomorrow, I will be at Montreal, MO for the weekend. My first one of the year was with Manteca, CA back in March. It was a delight to stay in the home of Melvin and Lynette Lee, long-time friends whose home is always open to preachers, and I enjoyed their hospitality more than I can say. This meeting started on Friday and lasted through two Sundays, a long one by today's standard, but it passed by quickly. We had large crowds at each service, great cooperation from sister congregations, and extra chairs had to be utilized on that second Friday night. Greg Cardosa works with the congregation and it was a joy to visit with him, getting to know him better. I admire men who excel in personal work as Greg so ably does. My next meeting was at Joplin, MO (Leawood Village) in April. Ending with three baptisms, this was one of those meetings that I will never forget. Jamie Lankford baptized his daughter, Proctor, on that Wednesday night and I

baptized my two granddaughters, Kara and Kaelyn Middick, the next evening. To God be the glory! This congregation has a large group of young people who love the Lord and I anticipate that others will soon obey the gospel, if time permits. Thank you, Leawood Village, for inviting me to return and for your gracious hospitality. My remaining schedule for the year is as follows: July 19-20 at Moore, OK (assigned to teach on church discipline that Saturday night & preach on Sunday); Aug. 8-10 at Bolivar, MO; Aug. 27-31 at Bedford, IN (Eastern Labor Day Meeting); Sept. 26-28 at Ratliff City, OK; Oct. 22-26 at Cable Ridge, MO; Nov. 7-9 at Shawnee, KS Please pray that the Lord will bless all these efforts.

Eric J. Stone, 94-371 Ikepono Street, Waipahu, HI 96797, ericstone101@yahoo.com April 29 Warmest Aloha to our Brothers and Sisters in Christ. It is an honor and blessing for our family to serve the Lord and be a part of the congregation in Hawaii. Every time I take a few minutes to stop and reflect on where we were just a few short years ago, I'm amazed just how far the Lord has carried us. I would love to report that there has been nothing but peace and perfect weather ...but I suppose that's not real life. Having served here for three years now, I have a deeper respect for our elders and men who take on leadership roles in the congregations of the Lord's Church. They deal with so much, and those who do it out of a love for the Lord, His Church, and for the brethren are to be commended. All of that being said, we do have some wonderful news. I am exceedingly happy to report that our beloved sister has returned to duty after being out of fellowship for about two years, and it has been a pleasure to have her back. However, it has been a real struggle to keep some brethren positive. There seems to be a root of bitterness that has sprung up due to some old wounds that have not been dealt with properly. We're very thankful that Bro. Don and Sis. Pat King have been so helpful with this and many other things. In fact, they have been a huge help to my entire family for the duration of our work here in Hawaii. I'm very thankful to have been given the opportunity to lean on his wisdom and experience several times. Sis. Pat, likewise, has taught us quite a bit and we love both of them very much! This congregation has come a long way but please don't neglect to continue to pray for all of us. If you have been contemplating a visit to Hawaii I would say there is never a bad time of year to travel, but you may want to make plans to be with us during one of our next two gospel meetings. (Nathan Battey, May 30-June 1, or Clint De France, August 20-24) The congregation of the Lord's Church in Hawaii salutes you all!

Roger L. Owens Neosho Missouri. Greetings to all. The past few weeks have found us busy in Brumley Missouri, Casper Wyoming, Riverton Wyoming, & Neosho Missouri. The work at Freeman Road is doing well despite the death of brother Roscoe Lawson. We are glad to see the warmer weather in prayerful hope that much sickness may depart our cause. We have assisted brethren in Eldon, Montreal, and Brumley Missouri with home visits and studies when possible. I have 40 contacts in the Brumley and Montreal areas at the current time. While in Casper we made some new contacts and have signed up 9 on the free correspondence courses. I just received another correspondence reply from Richland, Missouri and sent it off last week. I will be in Brumley May 7 through May 11 being the first full week of the month. Freeman Road will host a Wed. through Sunday meeting with Johnny Elmore this month, May as well. Thanks to brethren from a number of congregations we have been able to achieve many good things for the cause of Christ. I sent out 25 new O. P. A. papers this month to folks on my mailing list. I try to send them out to everyone taking the correspondence course as a support and help of encouragement. I also send out many other articles written by our brethren when I see the need. I plan a mission trip in August this year in the Riverton Wyoming area. I currently have a short newspaper article in their local paper. As I grow older I and so thankful for my good health and the ability to for the Lord more than ever before in my life. The fields are standing with brethren in many places but we must be willing and ready to go when called upon. I suggest we all pray for laborers and opportunity this summer to increase God's glorious Kingdom. I believe we can baptize 1000 new souls this year if we fast and pray and get busy doing. I believe it only takes one to motivate the many. Are you that one? Have you been called to the kingdom for such a time as this?

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THE BACK PAGE...

PRAYER IN THE MARKETPLACE

By *CARL M. JOHNSON*

I have given the invocation and benediction at the spring commencement exercises at East Central University on three occasions. Prior to the second occasion a couple of faculty members went to university president Bill Cole and protested the planned prayers. They explained they were atheists and prayers at commencement would be a violation of their civil liberties. They demanded the president cancel the prayers or excuse them from having to attend the ceremonies. President Cole did not flinch. He told the two professors in no uncertain terms that there would be prayer at the ceremonies and that the two professors would NOT be excused from attending.

Ten years ago a similar dispute arose in the town of Greece, New York, a suburb of Rochester. The town council began its sessions with a prayer led by preachers from the community who were invited on a rotating basis. The board did not review the prayers in advance, but along with others in attendance heard each prayer for the first time at the start of the meeting. Two local citizens who attended numerous board meetings filed a complaint against the prayers, and their lawsuit eventually reached the U.S. Supreme Court who rendered its decision on Monday of this week (June 5, 2014).

The court ruled the Constitution allows town boards to start their sessions with prayers. The decision built on one from 1983 that allows prayers at the start of legislative sessions. Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, writing for the majority, said both settings were “meant to lend gravity to the occasion and reflect values long part of the nation’s heritage.” Kennedy added that the first Congress supported the constitutionality of ceremonial prayers at the start of legislative sessions and it is a practice that has withstood the critical scrutiny of time and political change.

Kennedy’s observations are correct. In the mid-1900’s an increasing number of business, professional, and other secular organizations began adopting the practice of opening, and sometimes closing, their meetings with prayer, ostensibly yearning for God’s divine blessing. Liberal elements in America today, however, are pushing our society away from religion and toward complete secularism. I am therefore surprised at the court’s decision, but pleased, and I shall look for opportunities to make secular audiences aware of God’s presence and purpose.

I do have mixed feelings about prayer in the marketplace, however. Only faithful Christians, members of a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9), have the privilege of offering acceptable prayers to God. The prayers of the wicked are an abomination (Prov. 15:29; 28:9). Therefore, if the one leading the prayer is not a child of God, the practice is an exercise in futility and a waste of time, if not worse. It could be construed as a type of hypocrisy in which responsible church leaders would be better off not to be involved.

However, if a faithful child of God is asked to call upon God in prayer there are secular settings where his prayer can be proper and beneficial. Our hearts must be right with God and we need to be prepared to pray not simply to please people (as the Pharisees did Mt. 6:5), or to fulfill a mere religious formality.

Paul says, “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:1-4).

Paul commands all sorts of prayer for all sorts of people including those in secular positions such as kings and others in authority. The idea of praying for kings has a twofold emphasis. First, it is a specific way to pray for all men, because the actions of a king affect society as a whole. Second, it reminds believers that God is the ultimate Sovereign. He is in control, and our prayers affect decisions at the highest level.

Paul says such prayers please God. In contrast, the Pharisees prayed to be praised by men (Mt. 6:5) and to impress other worshipers (Lk. 18:9-14). Our prayers must also be according to His will (Cf. Jas. 4:1-10; 1 in. 5:14-15). The purpose of prayer is not to get our will done in heaven, but to get God’s will done on earth, that all men might be saved.

When Dr. Cole retired as president of East Central University a few years ago, the school ended its tradition of prayers at commencement. I have just learned, however, that they may reinstate the practice since the Supreme Court’s ruling. If so, and the school calls upon me again, I shall accept the opportunity “to pray for all men,” and cause thousands of people to see the graduates’ accomplishments within the larger picture of life that includes the presence, purpose and judgment of God. Such should be the goal of every marketplace prayer. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com