

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. XCI

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NO. 6

“AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED”

Romans 11:26

By *JERRY L. CUTTER*

INTRODUCTION: The story of God’s People begins with Abraham and his two wives. Sarah, his first wife, was a free woman and the mother of Isaac. Hagar was a bondwoman, and she bore Ishmael, a son to Abraham, before Isaac was born of Sarah, the free woman.

GOD’S PEOPLE IDENTIFIED: (Romans 11:1-3): There was confusion in Abraham’s family as to whom was to be foremost of his two sons, and the Lord God Himself settled the matter. In Genesis 17: 18-19; 21: 12, “Abraham said to God, ‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’ Then God said: ‘No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant...” “And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3).

The OT describes how the Israelites and father Abraham’s descendants developed into the nation of Israel and what they did in fulfilling their part of the prophecy of Genesis 12:3. The coming of Jesus and the events in the NT fulfilled everything from the birth of Jesus to the end of the New Testament era (Matthew 1:21; 5:17-18; Romans 10:4.)

When Jesus came into the world, we discover that the nation, made up of Israelites or Abraham’s descendants, refused Him. Paul writes sadly: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.” They were seeking busily to establish their own righteousness, and “they would not submit to the righteousness of God” (Romans 10:1-3). They cast Jesus away. They mocked Him. They tortured Him and crucified Him, and even now they continue to refuse Him as their Savior. These are not the Israel that God promises to save and that Paul is referring to in Romans 11:26.

“And so all Israel,” or to all peoples who have obeyed the gospel (Romans 10:16) is salvation promised. For this is God’s Covenant with them, “When I take away their sins” (Romans 11:25-26). See March OPA). The covenant (NT) that would take away sins is promised through Jesus. The angel said to Joseph: “And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS: FOR HE SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS (Matthew 1:21). Also, see Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 59:20-21; Acts 13:38-39; Hebrews 8:6-13, and other scriptures and promises, which are fulfilled by Jesus’ coming into the world. Jesus said in Matthew 5:18: “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” In Romans 10:4, Paul wrote: “For Christ is the end (goal, aim) of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”

The Jews who refuse to “obey God” are not recognized by God as Abraham’s children. When it comes to sin, there is no difference between a Jew and a Gentile (Romans 3:22; 10: 16).

Paul bluntly wrote: “For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham ... “ (Romans 9:6). Again, Paul writes, “And as many as walk ACCORDING TO THIS RULE, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.” (Galatians 6:16). “So All Israel will be saved,” and this is prefaced with “as it is written.”

There are two Israels, the secular people of Israel, and the spiritual remnant of God’s people made up of spiritual Israelites, or all Christians. (Genesis 12:3; Mark 16:19-20). Those who refuse to “obey the gospel” by being baptized into Christ will be lost in eternity (II Thessalonians 1:5-10), regardless of who they are.

THE REMNANT WHOM GOD WILL SAVE (Isaiah 10:27; Romans 11:14): God will save ALL spiritual Israel, but none of the “disobedient and contrary people

continued on page 5

CONTENTS

Vol. XCI No. 6



ADVOCATE

And So All Israel Will Be Saved	1
Guest Editorial	2
Querist Column	3
The New Testament Priesthood	4
In Memory of J. Ervin Waters	4
Announcements.....	8
Our Departed.....	9
Field Reports	9
WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE.....	12

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Guest Editorial

ABUSE OF THE CHURCH TREASURY

By PAUL O. NICHOLS

Change usually comes slowly - almost imperceptibly. In most cases, at first digression comes into the church almost undetected. It often comes by degrees and slips in unnoticed. Because this is true we have to constantly reaffirm our understanding of truth as revealed in the Scriptures. The apostle Peter says, "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth" (2 Pet. 1:12).

One step into error leads to another. Generally speaking, we are not inclined to take a giant leap into digression. Even the most unwary and less spiritual might call that into question. However, it certainly is possible that we might inadvertently be led into practices for which there is absolutely no scriptural authority, unless we are constantly on guard.

The question is often asked by Christians who are less than spiritually minded "What's wrong with it?" Or they will try to justify some practice by using the excuse, "They do it at such and such place." This is, in spite of the fact, why the apostle Paul writes, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12). A practice is not justified just because someone or some other church is doing it. The word of God is our standard and nothing else.

In recent years we have developed a practice all over the brotherhood which has had a tendency to weaken congregations and encourage lack of study. The apostle Paul says, "For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted" (1 Cor. 14:31). To prophesy means "to speak forth the word of God by divine impulse". Although today we do not have teachers who are divinely inspired, we do have teachers in the church who are told, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 3: 11). We speak: that which is inspired by the Lord and revealed by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the principle is the same.

When various speakers take their turn teaching in the

continued on page 6

QUERIST COLUMN

By CLINT DEFRANCE

1. What does Paul mean when he says that love is greater than faith or hope?

Response: This question refers to 1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love." Some Bible readers mistakenly interpret Paul to mean that love is of greater moral worth to Christianity than faith or hope, or any other virtue, as if to have love alone is sufficient - because it is the greatest - but this interpretation disregards the context in which the statement is made.

1 Corinthians 12-14 is a discussion about spiritual gifts and their proper function in the ancient Church. The Corinthian Christians were abusing spiritual gifts by using them to promote selfish ambition and pride. These gifts, designed to build up and help the infant church in its maturation, were being used childishly as a substitute for spiritual growth. 1 Corinthians 13, Paul's beautiful discourse on Christian love, is not a digression from this discussion - rather, it is the main argument!

In 13:1-7, Paul describes the indispensable function of love in Christianity - without it all other parts of the Christian life and program are impotent; then he defines the character and quality of the lofty, Christ-like love he has in mind, as well as the behavior such love will inevitably generate. This vital love was lacking at the church in Corinth, and instead of developing it, they were supplanting it with a fascination with spiritual gifts. Thus, beginning in verse 8, Paul says, "love never fails. (Paul does not mean that anything motivated by love is bound to be successful and good. The next verse explains his meaning) But whether there are prophecies, they will fail (again, this does not mean that prophecies made by the Spirit of God will not come to pass, rather, the word fail in this place means "to become unemployed" - thus prophecies will cease over time, and no longer be a part of the Christian life and program. However, love will always be a vital feature of Christianity. Paul further explains -); whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is [supernatural] knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and

we prophesy in part. But when that which is [complete] has come, then that which is in part will be done away."

Spiritual gifts were temporary - needful for the time when the revelation of truth - now contained in the New Testament - was only delivered in part, but when it was perfected or completed, spiritual gifts were destined to pass away into history. In verses 11-12, Paul gives two illustrations demonstrating how spiritual gifts would serve a purpose to the church unto the maturity of the Christian system, and then be taken away. This context sets the stage for the well-known exclamation of verse 13, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three..." When Paul says, 'And now abide' he means that in this life - in this temporal age - even after spiritual gifts have ceased and vanished away, these three virtues will abide as ever present necessities to the Christian: faith, hope and love. Indeed, in this life one cannot live spiritually apart from anyone of them! Without faith it is impossible to please God; without hope we are of all men most miserable; without love we are engaged in wasted efforts. The Corinthian Christians needed to focus on developing these qualities in their hearts.

Why then does Paul conclude by saying: "...but the greatest of these is love?" The answer is that while faith, hope, and love now abide, when now is over - when this life is ended - faith will end in sight, hope will end in satisfaction, but love will remain throughout eternity! Love is the greatest in its abiding permanency.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT PRIESTHOOD

By MELVIN BLALOCK

In previous articles we have established that God's people are no longer living under the old covenant. With the death of Jesus on the cross the old covenant came to an end. Jesus ratified the new covenant with his blood. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. "For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood," Heb 9:16-18. Jesus sealed the new covenant with the shedding of his own blood. We find the words of Jesus concerning the drink element in the Lord's Supper: "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matt 26:28. We find that He entered the Holy place with his own blood and not the blood of animals. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others," Heb 9:24-25. Under the new covenant Jesus is our high priest, and this is a significant difference from the old covenant with far reaching implications. Jesus could not have been a high priest under the old covenant, since he was of the tribe of Judah and those priests were from the tribe of Levi. A change of priesthood necessitated a change in the law. "Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood," Heb 7:11-14. Today, God's people have a different law and a different priesthood. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and every Christian is a priest of God. As a holy priesthood we can approach God directly and individually through our High Priest, Jesus Christ. We can approach the throne of God with great confidence because Jesus is our High Priest. "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but

was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," Heb 4:14-16. This means that a child of God, who enjoys the privileges of priesthood can approach God's throne with confidence through his High Priest, Jesus Christ. We do not have to seek out a confession booth and confess our sins to some man, for every Christian can approach God through his High Priest who is Jesus Christ. The separate priesthood of man has been abolished along with the old covenant. As priests of God we no longer offer animal sacrifices, but ours are spiritual sacrifices. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ," 1 Pet 2:5. Our singing, our worship and our giving constitute such spiritual sacrifices. "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased," Heb. 13:15-16. We are described as a kingdom of priests in Rev, 1:6; "And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." The New Testament priesthood is one of the great differences between the covenants.

IN MEMORY OF J. ERVIN WATERS

By RONNY F. WADE

It was my privilege to know Ervin Waters for the greater part of my life. When I was fifteen years of age I made a talk at the young speakers meeting in Sulphur, Oklahoma, after which Ervin asked me to travel with him in order to study and become equipped as a gospel preacher. I gladly accepted the invitation and from that point forward we became close friends. Traveling with Ervin was a learning experience in itself. He was a self-disciplined individual both physically and spiritually. Rising early he exercised physically and studied diligently to improve his spirituality. I never heard him preach that I didn't learn something. There were times when both Bennie Cryer and I traveled together with him. He was in such demand that often his meetings would overlap. When this happened he would send one of us ahead to begin the next meeting while he closed the one where we had been. He then would come and join us there. Or there were times when one of us would stay at a place and close that meeting while he went ahead to start another one. Ervin was involved in mission work in both California and Missouri during

the 1940's and 50's. A number of churches were established in both states as a result of these efforts. During this time frame he also engaged in a number of public debates on various subjects. When discussions over individual cups in the communion and Sunday school classes as a method of teaching arose in an area he was usually called to defend the brethren of that area in a public debate. He was soon recognized by the opposition as someone with whom to be reckoned. As one preacher said "if you meet Ervin Waters in debate, you better know your lesson." As the years passed various personal situations had an impact on Ervin. In my book [The Sun Will Shine Again Someday](#) I address these situations in detail. Both time and events change people, and there is no doubt that Ervin changed in a number of ways. He was no longer the old war-horse of previous years. Unfortunately there were some who took pleasure in his decline. With all the dignity of which he was characterized he pushed ahead regardless of what others were saying. In later years after revising some of his views on "fellowship issues" he moved back to his old home Temple, Texas where he spent some of the happiest years of his life. He enjoyed the benefit of a loving family who supported and cared for him during his physical decline. I always tried to call him on his birthday, and in one of our conversations when he was in his late nineties I said "Ervin, you may make it to one hundred" his reply was "oh, I hope to make it at least to one hundred and four." He did make to one hundred and one. I talked with him briefly on his last birthday. I realized then that he would not be around much longer. To those of us who are older we remember his monthly articles that appeared in this journal every month throughout the forties and fifties. I personally felt it only proper that we recognize the impact that he had on our brotherhood in years gone by this brief notice of his demise.

AND SO ALL ISRAEL....continued from page one

of National Israel" will be saved (Romans 11:5, 14). Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, "The remnant will be saved."

The Lord will return suddenly to conduct the final judgment (II Thessalonians 1:5-10), "and we know that the judgment of God is according to truth..." (Romans 2:2). The nation of Israel has had an equal or better opportunity to be saved than most Gentiles have ever

had. And so, contrary to what many believe, the Lord will not return suddenly to this world and sit and rule over national Israel or any other nation for 1000 years. The Lord will come and take the faithful few to heaven. In Romans 10:1-3, 19-21, and 11:5-10, Paul prayed for the Jews with a broken heart. His "prayer to God for Israel was that they may be saved (Romans 10: 1)" They are "a disobedient and contrary people," and refuse to be "God's People." Isaiah wrote that "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." The prophet wrote: "They bowed down their backs always" (Romans 10:21).

In Romans 11:2-3, Elijah pleads "with God against Israel," believing that he alone had remained faithful to God. He felt that the whole nation of Israel had deserted God, evidently not knowing of any individuals within the Jewish nation who had not bowed the knee to Baal (11:4), although there were 7000 who had not.

The Jews are in a "stupor (slumber)..." Romans 11:8. Stupor is "A spirit of stupor, which renders their souls torpid, i.e. so insensible that they are not affected at all by the offer made them of salvation through the Messiah, Ro. 11:8" (Thayer, p. 334). As a result of this spiritual failure, they continue rebellious, with unseeing spiritual eyes and deaf ears (Isaiah 6:9-10). They are refusing to see or hear, and obey the gospel (Matthew 13:13-15; II Thessalonians 2:11-12). "Their table" is not God's spiritual table, but their own (Romans 10:2-3). As a result, they will "Bow down their back always" (psalms 69:22-23; Romans 11:10).

Israelites may be saved. In Romans 11:1, Paul shows by his own conversion that Israelites, as individuals, were being saved. "I also am an Israelite," he wrote. However, he was not saved because he was an Israelite. He was saved when he was baptized in order to "wash away his sins (Acts 22:16).

In Romans 8:16: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." In Romans 11:29: "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable," or they will always be exactly as revealed.

Paul wrote: For "The Deliverer (or Jesus) will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Israel); For this is my Covenant with them, When I take away their sins" (Romans 11:26-27; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 59:20-21; Hebrews 8:6-18).

"And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written...For

this is my Covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” “So” is an adverb of manner, describing the only circumstance or way under which anyone can ever hope to be saved. “Search the Scriptures” (John 5:39; Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; I Peter 3:21).

Furthermore, Paul writes: “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outwardly.” - “but he is a Jew who is one inwardly” (Romans 28-29; 9:8). “And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written” (Romans 11 :26; Galatians 6:16). But remember, this saving excludes everyone, Jew or Gentile, who refuses to obey the gospel of Christ (Romans 10:16). No one is saved “according to the flesh” (Romans 9:3-4,8), and Jesus said, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham” (John 8:39). “For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, in Isaac your seed shall be called”- that is, through faith in Jesus, the PROMISED ONE (Matthew 1:21; Romans 9:6).

Romans 2:5-11; 2:28-29: All those who have loved God and have obeyed Him have always been “His children” or of “the remnant” (Romans 11:5).

CONCLUSION: “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew, slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:26-29).

A Note: Early on, when Paul first began preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, he made a very definitive statement: “Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this man (Jesus) is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39).

Finally, “And thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.’ ‘AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.’” Romans 11:26-27 (NAS).

(For additional notes on Romans 11, contact [lindacutter@yahoo.com].

ABUSE...continued from page two

assemblies of a congregation we do so “one by one that all may learn and all may be comforted”. In this way all in the congregation are learning together and all are growing together as a congregation. In Acts 13:1, we are told, “Now there were in the church which was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers...” Paul and Barnabas were two that were named. Apparently there were several that did the teaching in the congregation, some inspired and some not. They all used their talents and abilities to instruct and encourage the other members of that church.

There is a difference in local teachers and preachers of the gospel. The apostle Paul said he was ordained an apostle and a preacher and a teacher (2 Tim. 1:11). All apostles were teachers. All preachers are teachers, but all teachers are not preachers. There are preachers of the gospel called evangelists, and there are local congregational teachers. The field of an evangelist is the whole world. The responsibilities of a local teacher are in the congregation where he claims to be a member. This is the rule. There may be exceptions to the rule. However, where is a scripture that will justify a local teacher making regular speaking appointments with as many churches as he can so as to use the church as a source of a second income? This practice relieves congregations of the responsibility of developing their own teachers. Some brethren are too lazy to study so they can teach a decent lesson. It is easier to get others to come in and do the teaching and then just pay them out of the church treasury. If they had to pay these teachers out of their own pockets, likely the practice would soon cease.

Certainly there are small struggling churches which need help until they can develop their own talents and shoulder their own responsibilities as a congregation. But unless they are encouraged to do that, they will likely continue to depend on others. Instead of their having to study and get the experience of teaching, they may be crippled by well-meaning brethren. If they have others doing what they should be doing, they will never study the scriptures and learn to teach, as they should. Of course, all are not teachers and some will never be. But if there are men in congregations who could become teachers, they are certainly not encouraged to develop their talents if others will come in and relieve them of the responsibility. Some are just naturally lazy and will not study. Of course, it is much easier for them to ask

others to do the teaching. If a person will not study he can never make a teacher, because he has nothing to teach.

Brethren would be hard pressed to find scripture to justify our using the church treasury to pay every Tom, Dick, and Harry every time one gets in the pulpit. The apostle Paul says, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). If a person will scrutinize the context, it is not difficult to see that by inspiration the apostle means that those who make preaching their life's work need to be supported just as the Levite priests were supported to give themselves to the work of the Lord. The twelve tribes of Israel received property on which to make a living when the land was divided up in Canaan after the long journey from Egypt. The only tribe that did not receive a large amount of property was the tribe of Levi. The Lord did not want the priests encumbered with other work; He wanted them to give themselves entirely to their duties as priests. He did not want them to be part time priests. And when Paul wrote to Timothy, an evangelist, he said, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim. 4:13-15). Timothy was a full time evangelist.

There is no use of one's making the argument that the apostle Paul made tents. He did that to support himself and others with him when they had not adequate support from the churches. That was in order to survive. That was not because they could make more money in secular things, working toward a big retirement and just preach on the side for a second income. It takes lots more faith in the Lord and in the brethren for a person to make preaching a life's work. There are many more sacrifices and privations in life to be suffered by those men who give themselves wholly to the preaching of the gospel. It is true that full time preachers do not have retirement provided by brethren to rely on when they are no longer able to do the work. In fact, there is no such thing as retirement for him. Yes, such men have to "walk by faith and not by sight". When one preacher who had spent his lifetime preaching the gospel had a stroke and could no longer do the work, his wife was told that the church was going to discontinue his support and she would have to get a job. Yes, brethren sometimes are thoughtless and uncaring, but such does not change the scriptures. It is true, we have to buy our own cars for transportation, pay for car repairs and buy tires, pay our

rent or mortgage, pay our taxes; by law, pay our own social security (15.3 percent of our income), pay for health insurance ourselves, do our Christian duty and give to the Lord as we are prospered, ad infinitum. And at the end of a life of preaching, the brethren often turn the "preacher out to pasture". This kind of treatment does discourage men from making full time preaching their life's work, but full support belongs to such men who are willing to walk by faith and make the sacrifices as are necessary (1 Cor. 9:14).



Character -

"Character is like a tree," said Abraham Lincoln, "and reputation like its shadow. The shadow is what we think of it: the tree is the real thing."

Too many people are more concerned about their reputation - what people think - rather than their character. Many a godly person has been falsely accused and his reputation blackened. They called Christ "a glutton and a wine-bibber" and a friend of publicans and sinners.

Major on character - what God sees - and everything else will be alright. To pretend to be what we are not is to rot away at the heart. But to strive to be what God want us to be is to build a life for His glory.

People can ruin your reputation. Only you can ruin your Character.



Now is the time -

The time to protect against the electric chair is while the baby is in the high chair.

The time to teach obedience to authority is in the play pen instead of the state pen.

The time to teach the Bible truth about divorce is before they marry.

The time to be a friend is before someone dies - not after. You are not of much value to the deceased.



"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap. if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:9, 10).

Announcement

To Whom It May Concern:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4/29/2019

Gavin Drake Harris
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Overland Park, KS 66212

WHEN YOU THOUGHT I WASN'T LOOKING

When you thought I wasn't looking
You hung my first painting on the refrigerator
And I wanted to paint another.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You fed a stray cat
And I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You baked a birthday cake just for me
And I knew that little things were special things.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You said a prayer
And I believed there was a God that I could
always talk to.

When you thought I wasn't looking
You kissed me good-night
And I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't looking
I saw tears come from your eyes
And I learned that sometimes things hurt
But that it's alright to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking...
I looked at you and wanted to say,
"Thanks for all the things I saw when you
thought I wasn't looking."

Sent to us by Carl Elliot —DLK

THANK YOU - We would like to express our sincerest thanks for everything that everyone has done for us the last couple of months with the loss of Barney. The prayers, flowers, phone calls, cards, letters, messages, personal visits, financial assistance, and the untold amount of food, mean so very much and helped out tremendously. It only reaffirms the thought that our Brotherhood is made up of the greatest people in the world. We especially want to thank Brother Rick Martin and Brother William St. John for the kind words they said and the way they said those words during the memorial service. They took a lot of time out of their busy schedules to travel a great distance and it meant a great deal to us. We also want to express our thanks to Brother Bobby Anderson for leading the congregational singing. He, as always, did an excellent job. There are so many to thank and we wish our memory and space would allow us to mention everyone individually that came to the viewing and the service. Please know,

if you were there, we were very honored by your presence, and if you were unable to make it but were thinking of and praying for us, we thank you as well. If counted correctly, there were 11 different states that were represented. We, of course, still struggle with the loss, but we continue to live with the hope of seeing him again. —Bea Owens and family (submitted by Stan Owens)

Our Departed

VAN STAVERN - Cora Roberta Van Stavern, daughter of Guy and Martha Brandon, was born on Jan. 25, 1929 in Waynesville, MO and passed away on April 2, 2019 at the age of 90. She was a loving and faithful wife to her husband, Glenn, for 65 years, managing well her household with warmth and hospitality (1 Tim. 5:14), and often providing preachers a place to stay when they were in the area. She obeyed the gospel way back in 1947 (72 years ago) and was a faithful member of the Lord's church all of those years. In fact, she was a "charter member" of three congregations, helping to establish the old Benton Avenue congregation in Springfield, and later on congregations in north Springfield and in Bolivar, MO. Marc Allie, her grandson, paid tribute to her during the funeral service, taking us down memory lane (as only a family member can do), and with personal stories and anecdotes he captured the dignity and sweetness of her life as a woman of deep faith in God. However, Sis. Roberta had requested of us not to spend all our time talking about her, but to talk more about Jesus, His gospel and the church. I did my best to honor that request. Indeed, that was easy to do because it was impossible to talk about her without talking about Jesus and making preparation for eternity! She left a wonderful legacy behind, proving that she agreed with Paul's assessment in Phil. 1 :21 - "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Our dear sister will be missed by all who knew her, especially the family and brethren in the Springfield area. She is survived by 3 children: David Van Stavern of Willard, MO, Jana Allie of Springfield, MO and Lisa Leonard of Kenova, West Virginia. She is also survived by 3 sisters, 5 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. A good crowd was present for the service and the beautiful congregational singing was led by Mark Tripplett. Interment was in Greenlawn Memorial Gardens on the north side of Springfield. With the hope we have for her in Christ, we expect to see her again "in the resurrection at the last day" (John 11 :24). May the Lord bless us all, especially the family, as we find comfort in knowing that she is now "safe in the arms of Jesus" (as the old

hymn puts it). It was my honor to help conduct the service. —Billy D. Dickinson

HOLT - Vicky Elaine Holt was born September 8, 1949, in Lebanon, Missouri, to Homer A. (Sonny) and Nona Maxine Deems Gay. She passed away peacefully on April 26, 2019 at her home. She grew up in Phillipsburg, Missouri, and graduated from Conway High School. She was baptized at the age of 12 and was a lifelong member of the Lord's church. She attended college at Southwest Baptist University in Missouri and the University of Texas at Arlington. She married the love of her life, Wallace Dean Holt, in 1970 and moved to Texas. Vicky was very talented in many things. She was an excellent cook, making everyone's birthday dinners a special occasion. She loved to sew and crochet and made items for many people. She had a beautiful alto voice which was a blessing to our congregation's singing, and she also sang in BASIC, an a cappella quartet. She wrote many beautiful songs that were published in M. Lynwood Smith and Kevin Presley's songbooks. She passed her love of music on to her children and grandchildren. She was a school teacher and then a principal for a small private school in Dallas. She worked for Southwest Airlines until she and Dean moved to Ada, Oklahoma in 2004. She worked for Legal Shield in Ada for 10 years, retiring in 2014. She made many friends at both Southwest Airlines and Legal Shield who loved her dearly. Vicky was most proud of her family. She reared her children to love the Lord and influenced her grandchildren to have that same love. She had a wonderful sense of humor that lasted to the end of her life. She is survived by her husband Dean; son Brandon Holt and wife Deborah of Ada; daughter Betsy Little and her husband Danny of Ada; and grandchildren Hudson and Shelby Little of Ada; her mother Maxine Gum and Stepfather Bill, of Ada; brother Greg Gay and wife Cassie of Edmond, Oklahoma, and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends. Joe Hisle and I officiated the funeral service before a large crowd. Greg Gay led the congregational singing and added a beautiful eulogy of Vicky, his older sister." —Carl M. Johnson

Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old_paths@juno.com, May 14. The church at home is at peace and still involved in a number of works which we constantly pray for. The Philippines seem to be doing well and they are still growing. Last Lord's Day we were happy to have Brother Karl Modgling preach for us in

the morning. He did a fine job and we were better for his having been there. We look forward to the Summer and pray God's blessings on the meetings which are to take place everywhere. Lord willing, we hope to be able to attend the 4th of July meeting at Springfield, MO and be with so many we have not seen in a while. I am scheduled to preach at Stockton in early June and we look forward to that. Preachers, we need your articles and reports for the paper. Brethren report that they enjoy the field reports and we hope more and more will begin sending a brief report very soon. Please see that we have them in our office by about the 13th or 14th of every month as we try to mail the copy to the printers on the 15th. Lord bless the work.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, May, 8. We just closed a very good meeting at Mountain Home, Arkansas. Phyllis and I enjoyed the hospitality of longtime friends Darryl and Lucy Haun. John Flowers deacon/preacher of the large College Street Church of Christ (cups and classes), attended the meeting Wednesday and Friday nights. He has been studying our position on the communion with brother David Dover and has read and studied every booklet and pamphlet David could provide. He is very scholarly, studied the Greek language in college and now teaches classes in Greek. He was anxious to sit down with me and discuss his position. We met at his building on Saturday. We discussed the bread first - how many loaves and how to break the bread. We then moved on to the cup. He made several concessions to our beliefs that I have not heard any of his preaching brethren make, but he was certain he had found proof in the English Standard Version's translation of Luke 22:20 that the Lord used individual cups when instituting the communion. I have no problem with the English Standard Version's translation of the verse, ("This cup that is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood") but Flowers argues that the verse is not describing Jesus' blood being poured out in death and thus sealing the New Covenant, but rather that it is describing the disciples pouring the fruit of the vine out of the cup of blessing into their own individual cups. Even the commentary in the English Standard Version Study Bible will not allow his conclusion (p. 2005). I felt good about the overall study. When it was over we shook hands and nobody was mad. In fact, he asked if he could have the outlines of the two sermons he had heard me preach that week. Frank Brancato is presently conducting a meeting here at home, and he is doing an excellent job of preaching. Our next meetings are in Hillcrest, MS (June 2-9), and Pleasant View, MO (June 16-23). Please pray for us.

Irvin Barnes, 3218 East Farm Road 88, Springfield, MO 65803, May 12, 2019. I reported in the April issue of the OPA concerning Bro. Kent May's struggle with health problems. He has developed lacerations on both feet as a result of diabetes and poor circulation. He is undergoing tests and treatment for this and the ongoing heart problems. We solicit your prayers for him. He has missed very few worship services since the health problems started. I also solicit your prayers for my own health problems. I had 6 by-passes 14 years ago. Since then I have had 3 stents and 2 pace makers installed which have served me well until a few weeks ago. Drs. have determined that one of the grafts has closed and cannot be opened. I lost about 14% of the heart muscle as a result. Drs. are treating my symptoms with time release nitro tablets. So far, there is very little improvement. I fear I have reached a "new normal" and will have to learn to put up with the shortness of breath and fatigue. Bro. David Griffin preached for us last Lord's day. It is always a joy to have him with us. He is an excellent preacher. He always has a lot to offer in a very palatable way. I would like to encourage churches to use him. His lifestyle is above reproach. Our love to the brotherhood! Irvin Barnes@aol.com.

Melvin Blalock, 214 Pearl St., Cleburne, TX 76031, April 15, 2019. We were privileged to have Brother Daniel Rodriguez and his family with us at Cleburne for a gospel meeting in March. Daniel did a great job with his preaching, as well as doing personal work in our community. His wife Joanna is an asset in his personal work efforts. Our goal was to reach out to the Hispanic community, as well as others in our community. We conducted bilingual services in the meeting to accommodate our non-English speaking visitors. We did have some Hispanic visitors, and when they were present we would conduct the services in both Spanish and English. We had one Hispanic lady attend several times after the meeting ended. It remains to be seen what will be the results from this effort. We are very appreciative of Brother Daniel's work. The area congregations were great to support the meeting furnishing us with large crowds. It has been my privilege to hear Brother Philip Scott in a gospel meeting at the Hoyte congregation near Cameron, Texas. The following week we were able to hear Brother Joe Hisle in a meeting at McGregor, and then Brother Bruce Roebuck at Weatherford. All of these men did a great job of declaring the gospel message. I recently preached for the congregation at San Angelo, Texas. These brethren are dear to us. We have been supported by this congregation for over thirty years in our efforts at evangelism. We have preached there

many times over the years and established some great friendships. We continue to preach regularly for the congregations at Cleburne, Weatherford, Mineral Wells, and Duncanville, all congregations nearby. We also continue to publish religious articles in the local papers in most of these communities. We also post the same article on our facebook page on a weekly basis. We are sending out Bible correspondence courses locally and in far flung places, largely due to our webpage for the Cleburne church. We solicit your prayers for our work. It is our prayer that God will bless our faithful brethren everywhere.

Paul O. Nichols, 14211 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221, May 3, 2019. Here at the Stony Point congregation in Kansas City for our spring meeting we had excellent preaching by Bro. Jimmy Cating. We had great attendance and cooperation by sister congregations. We were well pleased with his job of delivering the saving plan of salvation. He stayed with the Scriptures and we can certainly commend him for a job well done. In this part of the country we have had snow and ice and dangerous driving conditions, but thankfully this is over. Since then we have had devastating rain and some serious flooding in areas of the city. Fortunately, warnings of tornado threats and other serious weather, are constantly announced over radio and television. And all houses built in this area include basements which act as storm shelters for safety in time of serious weather threats. One learns to live with these conditions, and life goes on. Since our spring meeting we have had two confessions of faults. This is an indication of tender consciences which can be appealed to. The members here are not ashamed to admit it when they realize that they have made a mistake and sinned. It is wonderful to work with members like that. In Malawi because of the destructive rain storms, some of our fellow Christians have suffered houses destroyed and crops wiped out, and hunger as a result. The congregation here helps support several of the African preachers and we have gotten the sad news of the conditions that have occurred there. The apostle Paul told the Christians at Galatia, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10), And we have sent several thousands of dollars to help relieve members of the church who are suffering. Other congregations in this country could do the same. The situation is serious. Think about it. The Lord bless all the faithful everywhere.

Roger L. Owens, PO Box 239, Neosho, MO 64850, 417-766-8969, rowens700@yahoo.com. I am thrilled to know that our brotherhood seems to be more zealous

than ever to spread the word, sowing the power of God's salvation in Christ unto the lost. The work in the North Western United States is moving forward with new leads coming faster than we can follow up. With computer technology new inroads that before were closed to us have opened. The TV program now can be viewed on computer where TV can't get to or reach otherwise. We have been using brother Kevin Presley's program and getting many new leads. It is so wonderful and refreshing to watch as new converts began to desire and take in the sincere milk of the word while growing with a hungering spiritual appetite desiring to do more for the Lord. Many congregations have sent once and again to support this effort, as well as to the congregation in Scottsbluff, Nebraska which is now moving into its third year. The congregation in Scottsbluff is growing as brother Mark Whittaker continues that work, beginning in January overseeing the effort. He needs your support and help to carry out his duties. We visit them often to support that work. Brother Thaddeus Young is doing new mission efforts in southern Colorado with new leads coming to him from that region. Both these men live in their respective areas and so they are a blessing to the fields of harvest. There is also a new work getting ready to take place in Riverton, Wyoming. Brother Matt Usery and his family will be moving there in August establishing a new congregation in their home. Matt and his oldest have already moved to Casper until the rest of the family comes in August. They plan to worship there until the Riverton work can be established. There are a number of folks in the Riverton area that I have studied with who are ready to come and learn more about Christ and the church. I just received another inquiry for the Bible Correspondence Course from a lady who lives in that area. For too many years we have not sought these souls but now the doors stand wide open. I invite you to check on each of these works. I hope you decide to give your support to these efforts. I have no less than 20 or more individuals that need to be visited right now, but funds will be required to make that happen. Little given means little produced. While much given means a greater harvest within this mission field and spiritual effort for the Lord. I thank God every day for the opportunities that have come our way to do what has been done and now is spreading. Brother Bill joined the effort about 3 years back, what a blessing he has been and continues to be. If you are an interested congregation please contact us to learn more about this effort. Please pray for the work, invest in the work and become a part of the work. It's what the church is commanded to do. Matthew 28:19-20 We will have more to say as the year progresses and new doors are opened unto us.

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WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE...

NAKED

By JERRY DICKINSON

“Then they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And when He stepped out on the land, there met Him a certain man from the city who had demons for a long time. And he wore no clothes, nor did he live in a house but in the tombs.” (Luke 8:26,27) In other words, the man was naked. Jesus, of course, cast the demons out and when the people from the city arrived on the scene the Bible says that Legion “was clothed and in his right mind.” The first thing the man did after he was restored to his right mind is put his clothes on!

Recently I was visiting with my dad who turned 95 on April 16. Not long ago he had to have surgery done on his arm. They gave him local anesthesia and as the doctor was finishing up the procedure, he asked my dad a question. “Mr. Dickinson, you are 95 and have seen some remarkable changes in your long life no doubt. What have you seen that has surprised you the most in your 95 years?” This may be a question this doctor has asked many of his older patients and I am sure he expected to receive the same kind of answer he had received every time previously, but he obviously did not know my dad. Before answering, my dad says he looked around the room and there were several female nurses so dad gave a startling answer. “Well, setting aside advances in medicine and technology - Women!” my dad answered. The doctor was indeed startled, and the nurses turned to look at my dad as well. “What do you mean by that?” asked the doctor. “Well, I have never seen so many naked women in my life!” I can only imagine what the doctor and the nurses thought. It was certainly not the answer they expected.

I told dad (after I stopped laughing) he gave the perfect answer. There have been great changes in in the past 95 years in technology, medicine, etc., but there has also been a drastic change in our culture, especially when it comes to nakedness. The Greek word for naked in the New Testament is “gurnnos” and W. E Vine says the word signifies: (a) unclothed; (b) scantily or poorly clad; (c) clad in the undergarment only (the outer being laid aside). Nakedness, then, is to be completely unclothed, to be scantily clothed, or to have on only under-clothes or underwear. The latter two forms of nakedness are no doubt what dad was referring to.

In Exodus 32:25 the KJV declares that the people were naked as they danced around the golden calf. The word does not necessarily mean they were nude, but they were unrestrained and had removed their outer garments. They were wearing little clothing and were immodestly and shamefully exposing themselves. They were naked! The old Jewish expositors say that Xerxes wanted Queen Vashti to appear before his drunken lords and expose her beauty or nakedness. To her credit she refused. We know virtually nothing about Vashti but we admire her sense of decency and modesty, and her courage to risk her position rather than appear naked before the king and his lords.

Interestingly, the first thing Legion did when Jesus cast the demons out and he was back in his right mind was put his clothes on. This indicates that not only women but men today have lost their minds! I agree with my dad’s answer to his doctor. Everywhere you look you see naked women and men. No, not nude, but scantily clad and in their underwear. You cannot go to the store or the mall, or even step outside your own house without seeing nakedness. People have lost their minds! I do not mean they are certifiably insane (necessarily) but people have lost their sense of decency and propriety. Men and women in our culture need to get their minds right, and when they do the first thing they will do is put their clothes on.

Several years ago I was in a meeting and I preached on the story of Legion and made the point that when people get their minds right they put their clothes on and a young lady approached me after the service. She told me she had not been raised in a Christian home and had only recently been baptized. Before becoming a Christian she wore shorts, went to the public pool in her swimming suit, and wore all kinds of immodest clothes. After obeying the gospel, however, she stopped wearing her immodest apparel. The point she really wanted to make, however, is that no one had told her the apparel was immodest. In fact, she said, at that point she did not even know the Bible taught in I Timothy 2:9,10 that women are to adorn themselves in modest apparel. She had never read that scripture before! She just knew, she told me, that now that she was a Christian she could not wear her shorts, swimsuit to the public pool, etc. She just knew because she had made up her mind to be a Christian. That is absolutely right! When someone really makes up their mind to follow the Lord, one of the first things they do is put their clothes on.

Paul declares in I Timothy 2:9,10 that women are to adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety. Shamefacedness refers to the ability to show shame and blush. Sobriety simply mean having a sound mind - getting your mind right! When women, and men, appear in public with scanty clothing and even wearing what is essentially underwear it displays a shameful lack of propriety, modesty, and common sense. We live, lamentably, in an age of nakedness. As Christian men and women may we stand out in our words, our actions, and our dress. I am thankful my dad was wise enough to share with that doctor and those nurses the stark truth our culture needs to hear. May we have the wisdom and courage to be in our daily lives a conscience to a world that has lost its mind!