

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

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NO. 5

PALS, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

BY GREG GAY

One hundred years ago, in 1910, Homer Gay and Homer King were baptized into Christ and began their service for the Lord. Once they met, they worked closely together for most of their years in the church. I have some of their correspondence where each of them addressed the other as their “Pal.” Indeed they were a team, a great team to which we owe a debt of gratitude for their life’s work.

The stories of their obedience to the gospel are in the books that chronicle their lives: “Sermons and Writings of Homer L King,” written by Bro. King before his passing, and “A Good Soldier, Sermons and Writings of Homer A. Gay,” by Ronny Wade. Short biographies of each can be found at: <<http://www.oldpathsadvocate.org>>.

Bro. King was born in 1892 and was 18 when he obeyed the gospel in Missouri near the congregation that is now known as Lee’s Summit, near Lebanon. Bro. Gay was born in 1894 and was 15 when he obeyed the gospel at Ft. McKavitt, Texas.

Their preaching careers were close to the same length even though they died many years apart. Bro. Gay died from heart problems in 1958. Bro. King lived till 1983, but his preaching virtually stopped in 1962 when he suffered a debilitating stroke.

By 1910, when they obeyed the gospel, the Restoration Movement, which had reached its pinnacle in the 1800’s, had splintered into groups that are identified as the Disciples of Christ, the Christian Church, and the Church of Christ.

In those days the Disciples of Christ was the most liberal group of the three, virtually indistinguishable from the denominations from which many members of the Restoration Movement came. The Christian Church was in the middle with their practices and the Church of Christ was the most conservative. There was much debate over what was appropriate to believe, practice, and where to draw lines of fellowship.

Early in their preaching years, Bro. King and Bro. Gay wrote for various Restoration religious journals. Eventually, Homer King took over publication of “The Truth” from H.C. Harper, renamed it the “Old Paths Advocate” (OPA), and published the first issue January 1, 1932. Bro. King was the owner and publisher and Bro. Gay was chosen as one of the editors.

Together, they and others shared the truth of what the Bible teaches about salvation, worship, and many other subjects. With the popularity of the OPA and their tireless preaching travels these men and their families sacrificed greatly to carve our brotherhood out of the midst of an ocean of Biblical error.

Once these brave brethren made the decision to take a stand of fellowship against those things that violate the pattern of the scriptures they also found it necessary to reject those who disagreed with them. As a result, within the Restoration Movement they rejected fellowship with the Disciples of Christ, the Christian church, and what we today call the digressive Church of Christ.

They drew lines of fellowship against innovations like missionary societies, multiple cups, multiple loaves, instrumental music in worship, women speakers, and Sunday Schools. That means they believed the brethren who practiced or countenanced these things need to be converted because they are lost. This is in keeping with the scripture: “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom 16:17-18).

At each bend of the road there were always detractors who wanted to continue to fellowship those who practiced error. It may appear that Bro. King and Bro. Gay seemed slow and reluctant to advise fellowship decisions. However, once a decision of fellowship was made, they did not go back.

Homer Gay wrote in the OPA in March 1934, in the midst of the battle when congregations were deciding for or against the innovations of the day:

continued on page five

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXXII No. 5



ADVOCATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS 8

Pals, One Hundred Years Ago..... 1

The Church and Change 2

The Querist Column 3

The Naked Truth 3

Preaching in Distant Lands..... 4

It's The Right Thing To Do 12

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Editorial

THE CHURCH & CHANGE

By *JOHNNY ELMORE*

It must be obvious to those who have lived on this earth for several decades that we live in a society that has changed and continues to change every day. And it is not only society that has changed. Religious institutions have been affected by the changes in our world. The old country churches that we once knew and loved are just about gone and the trend in denominational circles is to form mega-churches. An editorial in one of the religious papers had a headline this month that asked the question: "Will Facebook Kill the Church?" One university professor has stated that "instantaneous communication technology--from cell phones to wireless internet--has played a role in declining church attendance."

Such thoughts lead me to ask: What are the forces that shape the work and worship of the church today? What is it that makes the church different from other institutions? The answer that some have given is that the church must minister to the "felt needs" of the society around us. One pastor began a denominational body that grew to 20,000 members by going around in his community and asking the people what they would like to see in a church and whatever they said is what he implemented. Imagine that--going about town and asking sinners what they would like to see in a church! This pastor sees the mission of the church as what he calls "attacking the five global giants of poverty, disease, spiritual emptiness, self-serving leadership, and illiteracy."

Eradication of these five things may be a worthy goal but is that the mission of the church? Is that the reason that the church exists? Or aren't there already social institutions that have that as their goals? Aren't there institutions that offer friendship, child care, marriage and financial advice, and many other such things? If such things comprise the mission of the church, why not dispense with singing, Bible study, communion, and the sermons that seem to bore modern folks to death, and devote ourselves to community service?

continued on page seven

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is the Bible scientifically accurate?

Answer: The word science is from a Latin word meaning knowledge or what is known. Unfortunately many people believe everything a scientist says is scientific or factual, just because he said it. That is not necessarily the case. A scientist may express his opinion knowing that what he says is actually not a proven fact. The evolutionary hypothesis, for example, is often called science, but in reality is only a theory and nothing more. While the bible is not a textbook on science, it is nevertheless scientifically accurate. Modern science has never disproved the bible. The mind that directed the bible put into it many thoughts that were beyond the range of human comprehension and knowledge at the time they were written. The foes of the bible declare it to be antiquated, out of date and erroneous, a book that does not deserve serious consideration by modern man. The writers of the bible, on the other hand, claimed inspiration, 2Timothy 3:16-17. If their claims were false, there are two options open to us: (1) these men were deluded, that is they really thought what they wrote was inspired, but it was not. or (2) they were deceitful, they knew what they wrote was not inspired, and they lied. Which is correct? The only way to determine is to examine the evidence that either proves or disproves the claim. One way to test the claim of inspiration is to consider the scientific accuracy of the bible. In speaking of God Isaiah said "It is he who sitteth upon the circle of the earth" Isa. 40:22. The word "circle" is from a word that indicates a sphere that is round, as opposed to something flat, square or rectangular. For years man believed the earth was flat. Columbus believed that. Magellan, however, sailed to prove that the earth was spherical in shape. Long before Magellan sailed the bible had affirmed the rotundity of the earth. How did Isaiah know this before science proved it? Obviously, he knew it by inspiration. Another example of the bible's accuracy is found when Moses told the Israelites in Lev. 17:11-14 that "the life of the flesh is in the blood." He was correct. Life is possible because red blood cells carry oxygen (thanks to the hemoglobin found within those cells). In human red blood cells there are approximately 270,000,000 molecules of hemoglobin per cell. If there were any less, a person would not have enough residual oxygen to sustain life after an accident that knocks the breath out of them. Today we know that the "life of the flesh" is literally in the blood. Yet this was unknown as recently as George Washington's day. He died of "blood letting". That is his doctors "bled" him in an attempt to cure him of his illness. In stead of saving him, it actually led to his death. Moses knew what his doctors did not. In Gen. 17:12 God told Abraham that on the eighth day newborn Hebrew males were to be circumcised. But, why on the eighth day? Why not the fifth or third

day? The answer is found in the fact that Vitamin K is responsible for the production of prothrombin by the liver, and if this vitamin is not at proper levels there will be a prothrombin deficiency and hemorrhaging may occur i.e. the blood will not clot. However, it is only on the 5th-7th day of a newborn male's life that Vitamin K begins to be produced by the various bacteria in the intestinal tract. And on the eighth day the percent of prothrombin rises above 100% of normal. The only day in the entire life of a male that the bloodclotting element prothrombin is above 100% is day eight. The best day for circumcision. How did Moses know? Obviously only by inspiration. Moses also stated in Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24 that things reproduce "after their kind." That is no surprise to us today because we understand genetics and the laws of heredity. The buffalo never gives rise to a horse, a banana does not give rise to a tomato, a dog does not give rise to a cat. Things always reproduce after their own kind and even today that holds true. But how did Moses know that, long years before the science of genetics, which only began in earnest in 1900? The obvious answer is that God was the controlling mind behind it all. The items we have mentioned could be multiplied. They represent only a meager sampling. The men who wrote the bible were neither deluded nor deceitful, they were inspired. The bible is true historically, scientifically, geographically, spiritually and otherwise. It comes from God and not man. It is free of error and misrepresentation. It should be the guide of our lives, and the foundation upon which our faith is built. It will stand resolute and true to the end, and ultimately judge us in the last day. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net)

THE NAKED TRUTH

By JIM WINCHESTER

Every day we make choices. The clothes we wear may not seem all that important in the grand scheme of life to anyone other than ourselves. Our clothes, however, speak volumes about us. The adornment of our bodies can either reinforce or change a person's opinion about us, and can affect our relationship with God, so before we decide what type of clothes we should wear, let's consider what God has to say on the subject of modesty.

- Matthew 5:13-16- Christians are to be the "salt of the earth" and "light of the world."
- Romans 12:1-2 teaches we are not to "be conformed to this world."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:22 says that we are to "abstain from every form (appearance) of evil."
- 2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1 says that we are to "come out from their midst and be separate."

- Exodus 23:2 warns “you shall not follow a multitude to do evil.”
- Matthew 7:13-14 reminds us that “everybody is doing it” is no reason for doing something wrong.
- 1 John 2:15-17 admonishes, “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world.”

These passages serve to warn each of us of our responsibility to the world and other Christians and the way we live before them.

Early on in the Bible we have certain principles set forth that relate to the matter of human adornment, specifically clothing. After God placed Adam and Eve in the garden, the Scripture says, “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2:25). The clear implication is that at some future time they would be “naked and ashamed.” Throughout Scripture nakedness is connected with things not being what they should be. When Adam and Eve sinned they gained a knowledge of what is right and what is wrong. They realized that it was wrong (under usual circumstances) to be naked. So they sewed “fig leaves” together and made themselves aprons (Gen. 3:7). Evidently these aprons only partially covered their bodies, because when God came into the garden they tried to hide. God called out “Adam, where are you?” Trembling, Adam came into the presence of God and said, “I heard the sound of Thee in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself” (Gen. 3:10).

Even though Adam was wearing his girdle of fig leaves, he knew instinctively that this was inadequate and he was still naked. It is noteworthy that God did not deny that Adam was naked, but rather asked, “who told you that you were naked?” (Gen 3:11). After this, “The Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them” (Gen 3:21).

Inadequate clothing, in God’s sight, is the same as nakedness. Adam and Eve realized they were naked, even though they were wearing fig leaf girdles. God did not say, “Oh, no, you are not naked, because you have covered a few key spots on your body.” God acknowledged their nakedness by making them coats of skins.

In Ex 28:42 we find that God instructed the priests to wear linen trousers to cover their nakedness. These trousers were to cover from the waist to the thigh. In Isa 47:1-3 we find that a woman lifting her skirts and exposing her thighs to cross a river was exposing her nakedness. From these verses, we can see that according to God (not cultural customs of the day), the exposed thigh constitutes nakedness.

Immodest dress can take in a variety of styles. In immediate context of I Tim 2:9 and 1 Peter 3:1-6 the

writers are concerned with overdressing, i.e., being ostentatious in dress and appearance. Immodest clothing can be too tight, too low, too thin, too revealing, too short, too little, too costly, too ostentatious, or too anything that calls attention to oneself in the wrong way.

Another principle that women specifically need to take to heart is given in Matthew 5:28 where we learn that it is a sin for a man to lust after a woman in his heart. 2 John 11 teaches that if one encourages sin, he/she becomes a partaker in that sin. If the way that a woman (or man) dresses encourages someone of the opposite gender to sin, they are just as guilty as the person who lusts. Romans 14:13 warns us “not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way.”

It is easy to see that over time, society’s standards on modesty or “nakedness” have changed but regardless of the social customs, our location, or societies expectations, we as Christians have a responsibility to follow God’s guidelines and dress modestly. Minimally, we know that exposing the thigh is considered by God to be naked. We also know that if we wear anything that encourages others to lust, we are immodestly dressed. If our clothes are too short, too tight, too low cut, too sheer etc... they are not modest.

Some questions that we should ask ourselves include...

1. Do my clothes expose parts of my body that make me naked in the eyes of God?
2. Do my clothes represent a person professing Godliness?
3. Do my clothes encourage others to lust?
If you are not sure, why not err on the side of caution?

PREACHING IN DISTANT LANDS

BY DUANE PERMENTER

Introduction

The first Century church in Jerusalem was reluctant to move out from the teaching of the Apostles. The people who were displaced stayed in Jerusalem longer than they planned when they came there. The obvious reason for this was that the apostles were the only source of spiritual guidance at this time. According to Acts chapter 8 a great persecution arose against the church. God’s people were scattered out from Jerusalem the place of beginning. What happened was the people who originally came to Jerusalem to worship on Pentecost were now going home after years of prolonged stay in Jerusalem. We have an example of Philip the evangelist leaving to reach Caesarea although his journey was

delayed by the work he did. Years later we find Philip still in Caesarea and Paul staying in his home (Acts 21:8).

The Island of Crete

According to Acts chapter 2:11 the Cretans were a part of the new beginning in Jerusalem. The Cretans evidently went home and established congregations on the island. Many years pass by, and we find Paul traveling to Crete to work among the congregations. One of the interesting things about these congregations is they have been in existence for years and evidently never developed the eldership. One thing that we learn from this work and letter is, to develop scriptural leadership it is important as a congregation to have an evangelist working closely with them. Not necessarily living at the place but advising and encouraging them to develop Biblical leadership. Scripturally ordained leadership is something that should happen and an experienced evangelist is required in working toward that end.

Approximate Dates

We know that the corrected date for the start of the church is A. D. 30 and the Reference Passage Bible dates the persecution as A.D. 36 or 37. Adam Clarke says in his introduction to Titus that it was about 62 A.D. when Paul and Titus worked together on the island. Not having the time to complete the work that needed to be done he then left Titus to continue the work after his departure probably early 64. We can see that some of these Christians had been in the church for more than 30 years. It is appropriate to surmise that the congregations were not able to reach their potential without some training and help from experienced evangelists. This was surely the reason that Paul left Titus there to work.

What Titus Did

Paul wrote in the book to Titus; "For this reason I Left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are tacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you" (Titus 1:5). NKJV We understand from this single passage Titus had an immense job ahead of him. This job was among many congregations, and he had the responsibility of teaching, correcting, and training these various leaders from the congregations to bring them to maturity. Notice, in particular, that Paul gave Titus words of authority to complete the work he left him to accomplish. Yet, he never mentioned that his job description included putting a bunch of his trainee's on the payroll of Jerusalem, Antioch or any other area. He never included funding of church buildings. Paul did not tell Titus that his work was to disperse funds or means of any kind. He was to preach, train, and correct the churches as he saw the need. The book of Titus outlines what the work should be. Paul told Timothy, another young preacher he had trained and prepared for the work; "And the things that you have heard from

me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim 2:2). NKJV

Poverty Can Lead Us

Don't allow the poverty in a developing country to overwhelm you. This is easier said than practiced; nevertheless, we cannot raise their standard of living. We are not there for the purpose of making their physical life better. Our function is to preach the gospel and to train them to do their own work. We should always keep in mind that we are working ourselves out of a job. We should always have it in the forefront of our minds that they must learn to do their own work. This means that even some financial responsibility must fall upon them. This is difficult-when we arrive in a place like Zambia, we are used to so much and they have so little that we naturally feel sorrow for their condition. This cannot be what drives us, and we must keep the reason we are there ever before our eyes!

Some Financial Assistance

Some financial assistance will be needed for they just do not have the means in many cases to do what needs to be done. For example, we need to sometimes help a new work get registered with the government as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Before this was done, some were arrested and put in jail for worshipping. It cost \$2000 US dollars to get them registered with the government. The contributions collected by congregations in Lusaka, Zambia would require many months to raise that much money. The point being--we may always need to help in some ways financially. We must be vigilant when putting money into a work for we can easily create a dependency. We must keep in mind that any amount of money in a developing country can be a big amount. It is possible, through good motives to create a bad situation that actually hinders the work rather than helping it.

I plan to continue this line of thinking in the next article. I hope that you have benefitted and most of all this material will encourage you to get more involved in the work of our Lord. God bless the faithful. Duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com

PALS, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.....continued from page one

"Now, with all this before us let me insist that the leaders begin to watch for approaching dangers and warn against them. Our past experience has, or should have been a great lesson to us. In the fight over the instrumental music, the leaders saw no danger in using the digressive preachers for the meetings "just so long as they kept quiet on it," and they did not see what was going on until their flock was all torn and divided. The same way with the Sunday School folks; the leaders saw no danger in using the S.S. preachers. They said nothing about

it in the pulpit and were good preachers and good mixers and thus they allowed the “wolf” to come in and scatter their flock, and sometimes take the whole flock.

We can now look back, with regret and see those mistakes, but are we farsighted enough to see the danger now of using unsound preachers? When loyal congregations use and support unsound preachers, those who endorse and use two or more cups in the worship, or anything else not taught in the scriptures, they are allowing the “wolf” into their flock. But, they say nothing about it. Sure, they don’t. They are waiting until they can capture enough of the members, privately, to have the majority, and then you will hear them say, and they always say, “if you don’t like it, get out.”

The church leaders can know who are loyal preachers and who are not, if they will try to find out. And loyal congregations should realize that every time you use and support a man who advocates and practices things at other places that you do not believe in, that you are helping and supporting, and encouraging your enemy, and robbing true and loyal preachers of the work and support that justly belongs to them. Surely, we should be able to see the fallacy of the “keep quiet” argument by now.

Nearly three decades later, Homer King wrote in the OPA in January 1962, reflecting on the 30 year history of the paper at that time. He said:

“As I pause long enough to review briefly some of the past, I am filled with memories mixed with sadness and gladness; events producing pleasure and displeasure; people bringing us joy and disappointments; brethren, stalwart, faithful, trustworthy, while a few proved untrustworthy, disappointments, betrayers; some (thank God) in the manner and character of Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and some reminders of Hymenaeus, Philetus and Demas. We look back with grief at the passing of such true and tried men as H.C. Harper, Homer A. Gay, and others; but, perhaps my greatest sorrow is the mention and thought of some who swerved from the right way, thereby wasting their influence for good and their labor of love.”

Today, anyone who looks back on the lives of Bro. Gay and Bro. King to say they were all about embracing any and all of the various beliefs that anyone in our fellowship might hold is really missing the point of their lives. They lived during times when church buildings were taken over by brethren who insisted that innovations were going to be used and when the vast majority of members and preachers in the Church of Christ accepted and embraced the innovations of the day.

Bro. King and Bro. Gay dedicated their lives to keeping our brotherhood intact. They were quick to see the potential for problems and did not hesitate to warn everyone through their sermons and the OPA.

When we fast forward 100 years from the time of Bro. Gay and Bro. King’s baptisms, sadly, we are seeing some of the same old issues raise their ugly heads. We have brethren who want to unsettle things that have been settled long ago. We have brethren among us, young and old, even preachers, who have no problem defending brethren in practices they themselves will not practice at their home congregations, antics that lead straight away from God’s truths in salvation and worship. They too are in the process of “wasting their influence for good and their labor of love.” Please beware of anyone, whether preacher or not, who says the only thing that matters is how a congregation worships to determine if they are faithful.

There are brethren who appear to worship as we do, but at times have added things like men and women reciting scriptures during worship, teaching during the passing of the Lord’s Supper, using men from the digressive church, using men from congregations who use men from the digressive church, and using a video during the sermon showing a digressive church service where men, women, and children teach by flashing cardboard signs. No matter the flowery nature of any message saying these brethren are just like us, they are not, and those who practice and defend such things are not seeking accord.

In the words of Bro. Gay: “loyal congregations should realize that every time you use and support a man who advocates and practices things at other places that you do not believe in, that you are helping and supporting, and encouraging your enemy...”

There were areas of the scriptures where Bro. Gay and Bro. King did not agree, but in the areas of salvation’s pattern, the work and worship of the church, and many others, they had total agreement.

Today, we continue to have disagreement in our fellowship in areas like divorce and remarriage, how the Holy Spirit indwells, the observance of holidays, the order of worship and other subjects. Notice that nothing listed here affects our unity in the items of worship or the steps of salvation. Please do not make the mistake of thinking our on-going study in areas where we have disagreement implies we are willing to accept any and all beliefs in areas where we have drawn lines of fellowship long ago.

May the next 100 years, unless the Lord’s coming prevents, be filled with brethren who have the courage of their convictions like Bro. King and Bro. Gay, brethren who will learn the truth and defend it faithfully all of their days. May we have brethren with the

courage to draw lines of fellowship in keeping with the ancient truths of salvation and worship. May we also have the compassion and patience to continue to study the scriptures where we disagree with the goal of understanding God's word alike, and may we strive to avoid further disintegration of the fellowship we enjoy.

As Paul wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747 papagreg@aol.com

THE CHURCH & CHANGEcontinued from page two

There may be changes that need to be made and if that is the case, we need to be changed by the Bible and not by the worldly society around us. The apostle Paul instructed the Roman Christians to "be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). He stated that "the world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. 1:21), and that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2 Cor. 4:4). Paul taught that our Lord "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4).

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia states the word for "world" in this usage refers to "age," and "it passes into the thought of forces and influences tending against faith and holiness." The godless, immoral society around us is not to be our teacher in the things of God. God speaks to us and makes known his will in his holy word. In the church we are to approach the Scriptures with the conviction that the Bible is capable of changing us into what God wants us to be. When we encounter a conflict between our thinking and Bible teaching, we must know that the Bible is right. And any way of reading or studying the Bible that does not demand of us a possibility of conversion or change is not the right approach.

We are to be a people of the Book. We can expect technology to expand and grow. We have probably only seen the tip of the iceberg when it comes to change in society but the basic mission of the church must remain the same--to let the Word of God change us into the image of his Son and to cause us to carry out the marching orders of our King. --419 K SW Ardmore, OK 73401 johnnyelmore@att.net

Our Departed

ERVIN- Lee Ervin was born November 25, 1925 near Phillipsburg, Missouri. His earthly life ended January 10, 2010 at Lebanon, Missouri. Lee was 84. Don Pruitt conducted his funeral, and burial took place at Mount Rose Memorial Park. On May 1, 1952 he was united in marriage to Bonnie B. Buck and to this union one son, Mike, and a daughter Teresa, were born. He was preceded in death by his parents; a brother and four sisters. His wife, Bonnie survives him after a marriage of fifty-seven years. He was a journeyman carpenter, having learned the trade from his father and had worked in automobile sales for many years later in life. Lee was a faithful member of the church of Christ, which meets on Hayes Street in Lebanon.

Lee was a favorite uncle of mine and while many good things could be written it perhaps sums it up to simply say he was a Christian man who loved his family, the church, his Country, and music. In return, he was also loved. He had a dry sense of humor and was one of the most enjoyable fellows anywhere to spend time with. Unfortunately, I was in the Philippines when he passed away but we had fortunately enjoyed a few hours visiting during a meeting I held in Jamesville some time earlier. He was a man who left the world a better place than he found it. Our deepest sympathies go out to Bonnie, Mike, Teresa and all the family. --Don L. King

BLACKBURN - Beulah Vera Blackburn was born September 1, 1911 at Clemscot, OK and departed this life February 9, 2010 at the age of 98 years. She was married to Elmer Blevins in 1932 and to this union three children were born: Betty Joyce, Billy Doyle, and Tommy Milton. After Elmer's death several years ago, she was married to Aud Blackburn until his death in 1997. Early in life, Vera was a member of the old Bit Shop congregation north of Healdton, OK and later met at Graham and Healdton congregations until her health declined following an auto accident in 2002. She is survived by a son, Billy Blevins, six grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren. It seems I have known Vera all of my life and I knew her to be loyal to the church, faithful to the Lord, and devoted to her family. The funeral was from the church in Healdton. Bob Elmore led congregational singing and the writer spoke. -- Johnny Elmore

Announcements

NEW SONGBOOK

The new songbook "Glory Echoes" is set to be released by this May. The book will be attractively bound with entirely new type-setting and music engraving which will make the book uniform in its appearance and very legible. It will contain a blend of old and new songs I am presently taking pre-orders. There is no need to send money now. Provide me with your name, address and order and the items will ship as soon as they are printed. You may then add the shipping expense to the purchase price. The book will be \$5 and a companion CD will be available for \$10. I have attempted to conform to the style and format used by Bro. Lynwood Smith over the years. I humbly approach such a task. If you would like to order books or CDs, you may contact me at legacymusicpublishing@gmail.com or you may write to P.O. Box 1001, Brookhaven, MS 39601. More information can be found at www.legacymusicpublishing.com. - Kevin Presley

PUBLIC BIBLE DISCUSSION

Seminole, OK 3511 Hwy 99 May 8, 2010 @ 6:00 p.m. Does God continue to reveal things to mankind? Jim Choate (Mormon Bishop) - Affirms George Battey - Denies (Previous discussions posted on www.WillOfTheLord.com)

ANNUAL MISSOURI 4TH OF JULY MEETING

The annual 4th of July Gospel meeting will be hosted by the Mission Hills Church of Christ in Springfield Missouri again this year. Jerry Dickinson will conduct the meeting which will begin Sunday, June 27, 2010 at 2 p.m. at the Mission Hills building. Services will again be held at the Mission Hills building at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, June 28th. Morning and evenings services will begin at the Remington's building, where it was held last year, beginning Tuesday, June 29th. Morning services will be at 10 a.m. and at 7:30 p.m. each evening, with the exception of the last service on Saturday, July 3rd, which will be at 6:00 p.m. to better accomodate effectual worship on the Lord's day. If you have any questions, or need assistance you may contact Larry Ford at 417-725-4463 or Kendall Cook at 417-838-7171 or by email at ck-truth@hotmail.com.

Field Reports

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Drive, Ada, OK 74820 carlmj@cableone.net April 9--Our 34th annual March Meeting was a good one. Friday night's crowd may have been the largest Friday night crowd ever. We had visitors from many different states with our largest crowd estimated at 350 people. Our singing was beautiful and the seven young speakers did a good job with their assigned subjects dealing with spiritual growth. John Strain did an excellent job coordinating the meeting. Lord willing, Kevin Presley will begin a meeting for us next week (April 18-25). My next meetings are in Flemington, PA (May 12-16) and Galey, OK (June 20-27). Please pray for us as we pray for you. May God bless us all.

Alan Bonifay, 522 Perlegos Way, Lodi, CA 95240; Our year at the congregation in Lodi began on a high note. Johnny Elmore returned for a second time to hold our annual New Year's meeting. Johnny did an excellent job-- both his preaching and his direction of the meeting were flawless. We had good crowds which measured up to our normal attendance for this meeting. We enjoyed the preaching of Greg Cardosa, Greg Gay, Bennie Cryer and Don King also during the meeting. We also enjoyed having Richard DeGough and Frank Brancato in attendance. We look forward to Johnny's return this coming New Year's as well. I understand he is working on something special for us to enjoy on New Year's eve. Right after the first of January Greg Cardosa and I set off for the Philippines. We met Don King and Frank Brancato and Virgilio and Eduardo Danao on the island of Palawan. Our work there continues to grow despite problems from without caused by "no-exception" brethren and from within due to immaturity. From there we went on to Mindoro where the work has made significant gains over the previous year when several of our preachers had departed from the faith. From the one remaining faithful congregation the work had grown to 6 or 7 faithful churches. Bro. Sungcang has acquitted himself well. Also Bro. Philip Labagan joined with us in the work. From Mindoro we went on to Dipolog City in northern Mindanao where Bro. Libertino had experienced a break through as well. In the past year the work there grew from 4 faithful congregations to 8. Several preachers from the premillennial churches of Christ took their stand with us. Overall there were 110 that were baptized or restored on our trip which is in addition to the 108 converted on Luzon by the work of Bro. King

and Bro. Brancato. We appreciate the support of all those brethren and congregations involved in the work in the Philippines.

At Lodi our work continues apace. We look forward to Allen Bailey's meeting here in early November. I am looking forward to being with the church in Frisco, TX May 19-23.

Johnny Elmore, 419 K SW, Ardmore, OK 73401, johnnyelmore@att.net, April 8 -- I have been at home mostly since the first of the year. We had a wonderful singing on the 4th Saturday night in January and another last month on the 4th Saturday. Our next singing here is planned for June 26, when we hope to have the new song books. We have had our share of sickness and infirmity due to age, but we continue to work as God gives us strength. We enjoy the help that Sean McCallister gives since moving here and we are presently engaged in a personal work effort with good congregational support. I expect to be at Norman, OK April 23-25 and at Houston, MO May 23-30.

Greg Gay, April 13, 2010. I was in a meeting at Garretts Creek, near Wayne, West Virginia March 27 - April 4. Crowds were good with excellent support from most area congregations. We stayed with my brother-in-law Wyn Baker who works with the congregation and were given royal treatment by his family and others who were very hospitable. The meeting closed with one confession of fault. My work continues here in Sacramento with the 64th St. congregation and preaching at area congregations. We recently had Greg Cardosa for a weekend meeting and really enjoyed his preaching. 1820 Casterbridge Dr., Roseville, CA 95747, papagreg@aol.com.

Darrell Crawford 208 E Baldwin Rd unit S Panama City, Fl.32405 bugz1955@hotmail.com Greetings brethren, We are still getting settled here in Panama City. We are enjoying the work here very much. We are currently conducting studies here. We have visited with some of our digressive brethren and are planning studies with them too. We are thankful for the support of all the brethren, especially Cyrus Thompson and Phillip Prince who has been coming once a month to help with the work. We just returned from visiting the cong. at Birmingham, AL. where Billy Dickinson was doing the preaching, we also saw Paul Nichols, it had been such a long time since we had seen Bro. Paul.

In addition to speaking here at home, were recently privileged to speak at Collins, MS. The brethren there treated us far better than we deserved. We

were also able to speak at Ratliff City, OK. We had not been there in such a long time. The brethren there are very special and are working hard in the Lord's vineyard. After the month of July, I will be available for 5-6 meetings a year, also I will be available to be away 1 weekend a month to make preaching appointments. Please keep the work in Panama City in your prayers, Pray for the church every where, and may the Lord bless His church everywhere.

Michael S. Conley, 836 Aster Ct. Richmond, Ky. 40475. msconley0517@aol.com. April 4, 2010. A great deal of time has passed since my last OPA field report. First I want to say, we are in our new building and location. Our current address is 6407 Athens-Boonesboro Rd. Lexington, KY. 40509. We have a beautiful building in a nice location just off I-75. On behalf of the congregation, I want to thank everyone who contributed to this blessing. I have been here for 6 years now, and it has been a prosperous time. Since I have been here, I have baptized 9 souls into Christ and converted 2 out of digression. Sadly to say, 2 have fallen away, but we have grown. I am endeavoring to use some door hangers to advertise correspondence courses, and our new website Greg Jordan and I have been working on (www.churchofchristofathens.org). I continue to pass out pamphlets or booklets in all neighborhoods of Lexington. The men here do all they can. I believe I have taught them all I know so they can be leaders for the church. Our Sisters are wonderful in helping in any capacity they are asked. The young men, who have been baptized, have a bright future for the church in Lexington. I have been working with three of them. Last weekend, we worked by passing out fliers. We passed out over 200 pieces of church materials. Also, we discussed the idea of rightly dividing the word to help prepare lessons. The zeal at Lexington is exciting. My summer meeting schedule starts April 11-17 in Springfield, MO. (Mission Hills), May 19-23 in Indianapolis, IN., and June 23-27 in St. Albans, WV. If you are near come and be with us. Please pray for the work the world over.

Kevin W. Presley, 94 Sandalwood Trail, Brookhaven, MS 39601, April 6, 2010 The month of March took us to Edmond, OK and Neosho, MO (Hwy. 60) for meetings. The church at Edmond is a zealous group of Christians who are evangelistic minded. They have a host of young families and they are working hard to reach the lost. They were very gracious to me and my family during our time there. The meeting at Neosho was also

enjoyable and I hope profitable. It had been several years since I had the privilege of being at Neosho and found the church to be enjoying peace and stability. This is a wonderful group of people who are striving to hold forth the word of life in that community. Crowds were large every night thanks to the interest of the congregation and community there but also neighboring churches. Thanks to all who supported both meetings in Edmond and Neosho. My next meeting will be in Ada, OK at the end of April. My thanks to the church here at Highway 84 in Brookhaven for their loyalty and support. I enjoy living among and working with them. They are some of the Lord's finest people. The new songbook is in the final stages of printing and binding. If you haven't ordered I hope you will soon. I think it's a good compilation of old and new songs that the brotherhood will enjoy singing! More information can be found elsewhere in this issue of the OPA. The Northside congregation in Springfield, MO is planning a big singing June 19-20 to get acquainted with the new book. It promises to be a grand event. Make your plans to come be with us.

P. Duane Permenter, P.O. Box 37073, Lusaka, Zambia, Feb 1-The work continues in the south central part of the continent of Africa with good success. During the course of the last year hundreds have been added to the Lord and to God be all the glory. It is not mine to take for God gives the increase. One of the reasons we have had such good success in this work of Zambia is we have so many good people working together to develop and promote the cause of Jesus. We appreciate all the help and support that has been given through the years of our efforts. Many good brethren and congregations have contributed and without that support and trust the work could never be done. Especially, do we send out our thanks to the brethren at Edmond who have sponsored this work for over 20 years. They have sacrificed and used their strength to support the work in Zambia in many ways and we praise them for all they have done. Please continue to pray for us. God bless the faithful everywhere. We love you and miss you. duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com. Our telephone number is 011-260-1-285203 and our cell number is 011-260-955-837135. – *This was inadvertently left out - our apologies- DLK.*

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550 April 13, old_paths@juno.com Other than some that are under the weather here the church is doing very well. We are enjoying visitors from time to time and all have a good spirit. It has been my

pleasure to preach here three times recently to good crowds. We have also been with the church at Yuba City for two services recently. Lord willing, we plan to be with the brethren at LaGrange, GA June 5-13 for a series of meetings. We look forward to that. We had also planned to leave today for a three-week stay in Zambia, Africa with Duane Permenter. However, due to some logistical problems that trip has been postponed until October of this year. It was necessary for him to return home for a short time, and we enjoyed a good visit with Duane and Lori a few days ago. When we return home from Africa, we will submit a report of that work. Also, we are hearing good reports from the Philippines, and we thank the Lord for that. Increases in the number of new subscribers to Old Paths Advocate as well as those who are renewing have encouraged us. The paper needs your help in every way you can manage. Please, talk to your friends and brethren and offer to send in a subscription for them right away. We have new things planned for the paper very soon, and we hope to be able to be more specific by the next issue. We appreciate several brethren including Rick Martin, Philip Prince, Kevin Presley and many others who have recently been responsible for new subscriptions coming in. May we encourage preachers and brethren everywhere to send reports and articles to us for the paper? We look forward to hearing from you. Pray for us in the work.

Rick Martin, 300 Clubview Terrace, Woodstock, GA 30189 Greetings to all. The congregation here at Marietta is doing well. We now have five men who are capable teachers. Brothers Dan Stubblefield and Eric Cannady have now started helping with the teaching. Being in a large metropolitan area is somewhat a problem at mid-week services, but we usually have good attendance on Sundays. Getting around in the traffic can sometimes be a problem for some. We recently concluded a good meeting with Bruce Roebuck. Bruce did an excellent job and the congregation was strengthened by his teaching. I recently held an enjoyable meeting in Fremont, CA. Due to our flight being canceled I was not able to start the meeting until Monday night. Then on Monday night I became ill. The congregation was very understandable, kind and concerned. I appreciated this very much. We enjoyed the hospitality of our dear friends Don and Patsy King. A special thanks goes to Don for taking me back and forth to the doctor during the week. Preachers who attended the meeting were, Greg Cardoza, Alan Bonifay, Richard DeGough and Don King. I also want to thank Gail and Darrell Brewer and

Jack and Jean Jackson for coming and spending a couple of days during the meeting. Carl Johnson will be holding our summer meeting, July 11-18. Kevin Presley will be here August 14-15 for our annual singing. By that time the new songbook will be out. I want to encourage people to buy the new songbook. We need to make sure that we continue to improve our singing. If you can make either of these we would be happy to have you. Preachers don't forget to send me your meeting dates and I will post them on the website. Please continue to pray for me and the work here in Marietta.

Dario Estavillo, dar.estavillo@yahoo.com The last week of March 1 with brother Greg Maluga and Roger Rivera attended the monthly Bible study at Eva Garden, Calanasan, Apayao. They have a study every last Friday of the week for them to learn more about the doctrines of the church or the teachings of Jesus. As usual, we enjoyed to be with the brethren in the area who is growing in number and in faith. Brother Greg taught about giving. In the morning of the 27th, we walk for an hour and a half for me to solemnize a marriage. Brother, they are members of a Pentecostal group but they choose me to do the ceremony. I don't know the reason but I have in mind that they were able to witness the ceremony that I did in previous times in the place. They were happy to have us and they really appreciate our efforts. What was good thing that happened was that those who get married wanted to study with us. One of their relative who refused at first for me to solemnize the marriage changed her position after the wedding. She entertained us very well and even told for us to know that she is now willing to have Bible study with us. I am hoping that more of their relatives and neighbors have the same feelings. I asked brother Joel to make the necessary follow ups and we will visit them again in the coming days. In the evening we moved to Salungsong. As usual we went through the hard way due to bad road condition. I got nervous so with all my companions to that high mountain to be climbed by my old car. We were safe by the way. We had a Bible study with a very encouraging attendance. Brother Bayaca preached and when the invitation song was rendered, two precious souls came forward and made confessions of their faith in Jesus. We continue answering their questions up to 11:00PM even without electricity. In the morning of April 2, they were baptized. Immediately we moved to a near place with a 30-minute walk. We were met by dear friends who welcomed us very well. Once they invited Joseph Aclin to preach in that place. I did the preaching. We then answered all

their questions up to 12:00 noon. Though there was no baptism, the oldest of them whom I understand the father of the family, told us that he will talk the matter to all his children and his son and daughter in laws where they will all and at the same time obey the Gospel. I see him to be sincere and we promised them that we will be there again if they will decide to obey the Gospel. After eating lunch with the brethren beside the very clear and cold river, we left and visited the brethren in Patong also in Tanglagan. We then moved to Parina and in the evening we had a service and brother Roger Rivera did the preaching. We went home early today with joys in our hearts. We will rest for this week in preparation to the Annual Fellowship on the 12th through the 15th. Please continue to pray for us. God Bless!

Roger L. Owens P.O. BOX 239 Neosho, MO. 64850 Greeting to the Brotherhood. I have a new mailing address and new e-mail address. Mail: P. O. Box 239 Neosho, MO. 64850 My new E-MAIL is (rowens700@att.net) The work is going well as winter passes and spring is now here. The congregation continues to grow and prosper. We recently had a woman take her stand with us who had worshipped in error for years using cups and classes. Dorthy Casey is our new sisters name. We had 2 move to Kansas for work reasons. Cliff and Heither were married this past month and they are the two that recently moved. The McNeills and Dotsons recently returned to worship with the West Highway 60 congregation. We miss them but we continue to press forward with good results. We have chapter studies on Wednesday and Bible overviews on Sunday evenings. The members are learning more than ever before. As a congregation we are growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. We have scheduled the Missouri Labor Day 2010 and have a summer meeting with Smith Bibens over Revelation. If you are in the area we would be delighted to have you stop in and worship with us. We have a short meeting this year with Ronny Wade in September. We are attempting to do more in reaching the local area. We are excited to have the new T. V. programing thanks to the Leawood congregation Joplin Missouri. As you can see many things have changed but we are more determined than ever to keep the light burning in Neosho Missouri. Thanks for everyone's support and please continue to pray for us.

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THE BACK PAGE...

IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

The late Fred Kirbo told in a sermon years ago about a contentious religious discussion between a teacher and a schoolgirl. The teacher was a member of a denomination that does not believe baptism is essential to salvation, but the girl was a member of the Lord's church. As they discussed their conflicting beliefs about the purpose of baptism, the subject of Jesus' baptism came up and the teacher asked the girl, "Why was Jesus baptized?" The girl responded, "He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness." The teacher sarcastically retorted, "Since you are a member of the Church of Christ, it's a wonder you didn't say he was baptized for the remission of sins." The girl countered, "Yes, and it's a wonder you didn't call Jesus a 'Campbellite' because He was baptized!"

While it is unlikely that such a conversation between a teacher and a student could take place in a public school environment today, there are a lot of people who are still uncertain as to why Jesus was baptized. John the Baptist, himself, was puzzled by the prospect. When Jesus comes to John requesting baptism, John is perplexed and unwilling to baptize Him (Mt. 3:13-15). It is inconceivable to John that Jesus needs baptism because John's baptism is predicated upon repentance and it is administered to sinners for the remission of sins (Lk. 3:3). However, John knows Jesus' identity as the "mightier" one who will bring a superior baptism, and that He is the Lamb of God who is without sin (Mt. 3:11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26). It does not seem logical to John at all that his baptism would apply to Jesus.

Jesus insists upon being baptized, however, by saying, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Mt. 3:15 NKJV). In other words, "it is fitting for us to perform completely whatever is right" (thayer). In short, Jesus is telling John, "It's the right thing to do."

Jesus' baptism is the right thing to do for several reasons. One reason is that it serves as the occasion of the formal beginning of His earthly ministry. Jesus says, "Permit it now." The word "now" refers to this moment when Jesus is about to assume His office. Sufficient reason for the baptism of Jesus exists only "now" and could not exist at any other time in His life. This truth is verified after Jesus' baptism when He receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit together with God's endorsement, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt. 3:16-17). All of this is in keeping with the will of God, who will now bring salvation to the world.

The apostle John agrees that Jesus began His ministry with His baptism. He says, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood" (1 Jn. 5:6). Bible scholars agree that John is describing the identifying marks of Jesus' earthly ministry. He begins His earthly ministry with water (His baptism) and He ends His ministry climatically with blood (His crucifixion).

Jesus' baptism is the right thing to do also because in so doing, He endorses John's ministry and links His mission to John's. Heaven authorized both men to preach the gospel of the kingdom and baptize sinners, and the baptisms administered by both men are essentially the same (Mk. 11:30; Jn. 3:26-27; 4:1-2). John's baptism made followers of the Christ who is about to come, while Jesus' baptism made followers of Himself after He came. Also, the baptisms administered by both men are for the remission of sins (Lk. 3:3; Acts 2:38; 22:16). The difference is that the baptism of John is preparatory for Israel alone, while Christ's baptism is permanent for all nations. In this way the one makes ready for and gives way to the other.

Since Jesus began His ministry at His baptism it should not surprise us that He commands us to be baptized to begin our spiritual journey (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Jn. 3:3-5). By the design of God, it is in the waters of baptism that we are born anew, regenerated, and made to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Tit. 3:5). Baptism is also the means by which we are united with Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27), and it is in that union that we obtain all spiritual blessings including the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:3, 7).

In Jesus' day everyone knew baptism was for sinners. That is why John was reluctant to baptize Jesus. He was the sinless exception who still needed to be baptized, but not for the remission of sins. Baptism is still the rule for sinners, but there are no responsible persons today who are sinless exceptions to the rule (Rom. 3:23). We must, therefore, repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). It is not an option. Again, it is the right thing to do. carlmj@cableone.net