

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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## THE COLLECTION

By SEAN S. McCALLISTER

The first time we see the command for a collection is found in 1 Corinthians 16:12 “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

This passage indicates that the Apostle Paul had previously given a command for this activity, the collecting of money. Paul tells the Corinthians that he has already given the order to the congregations in another region, namely Galatia. His command was not optional because he plainly says, “So you must also do.” Then Paul proceeds to give the order as to when this collection must take place, specifically, “On the first day of the week.” Also, we can deduce from this passage that every person, who was at all prosperous, was responsible to give a portion toward this collection. As well, the idea was reinforced that small increments were to be saved at a time so that there was neither a great burden put upon them nor a scrambled effort to gather the funds at the last minute (decently and in order, 1 Cor 14:40).

The “storing up as he may prosper,” or “lay by him in store” (KJV) literally means to place the funds into a treasury in order to amass the wealth for future use. It also stands to reason that this collection was done weekly during the normal assembly every first day of the week.

We can see from New Testament history that the early church had a giving nature to assist those in need. For example: Acts 2:44-45 “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” Acts 4:32-37, the believers

seemed eager to help those in need and did some drastic things such as sell their homes and lands. Acts 11:28-30, brethren sent relief to the saints of Judea that were facing famine during the reign of Claudius Caesar. Paul set this generosity into order by giving the command for a weekly collection as he explains in 2 Corinthians 8:13-14 “For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack—that there may be equality.”

The first and obvious need for this collection is for “poor and needy saints.” We have seen previous examples of this and it seems that what qualifies as poor and needy is determined by the “normal” standards of living for that region. (Wages that render one homeless in one region might be considered ample wealth in another based upon the economic climate.)

Another example of the collection’s use is to provide for the widows. Paul is quite explicit as to the rules of the widow’s qualifications if she is to be given a regular supporting income from the church (“taken into the number”). 1 Timothy 5:3-10 “Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. And these things command, that they may be blameless. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet,

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Editorial

THE CHURCH IN IRVING, TEXAS

By RONNY F. WADE

I have had a number of people ask me about the church in Irving, Texas. Those who inquire are concerned about some of the things they have heard. As is generally the case one can't believe everything he hears. Sometimes information is passed along that "came from a good source" but is not necessarily accurate. This is not to suggest that people purposefully tell things that are not true. However information passed from one to another can unintentionally be distorted. In view of this, if you are interested in knowing exactly where the Irving church stands I would suggest that you go to their web-site and listen to a sermon recently preached by their preacher Jim Crouch. The sermon is titled "Where Are We Going?" and is described as a visionary vision. To access the site on your computer type in [www.irvingchurchofchrist.org](http://www.irvingchurchofchrist.org) then click "Resources" and next "Sermons" scroll down the sermons until you come to sermon number 20100919A by Jim Crouch. You can then click on the sermon and listen to it. By so doing you will find out what the church believes and practices. We should all bear in mind just how subtle change can occur. It is very unlikely that those people who read Paul's letter to the Thessalonians ever imagined a time when one man would be recognized as the universal head of the church. Yet, at that very moment, "the mystery of iniquity" was already at work.. The changes occurring at that time would ultimately result in the Pope of Rome. For some reason some have surmised that so long as a church uses only one cup on the Lord's Table and has no Sunday school classes with women teachers they are a scriptural church. Nothing could be farther from the truth. So far as I can discern none of the churches of Asia Minor used more than one cup, yet several of them were about to have their lampstand removed. Congregations can become unscriptural and unacceptable to the Lord for any number of reasons. When any church invites denominational teachers in to instruct them on how to study the Bible, they are asking for trouble. When denominational sectarian teachers are used to inspire and uplift the men or women at some type of inspirational retreat, it should not come as a surprise when someone reports what happened by saying "I told you the Holy Spirit was

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## THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

**Question:** Is the collection strictly for the saints or can the church treasury be used to help a needy non-member who appears to be seeking the truth?

**Answer:** Let me first of all address the implication that helping a needy non-Christian might lead to their conversion. Food, clothing or money were never offered by the early church as a means of getting people to accept the truth. When Paul went to Europe for the first time he did not take any contribution of that type with him for the purpose of enticing people to obey the gospel. The gospel alone is God's power to save and if people will not accept it without some type of benevolent enticement, they are condemned anyway. When our Lord was on the earth we read of some who followed him for the loaves and fishes, but later turned back and followed him no more when he taught what they did not like John 6:66. Those who are attracted by such enticements usually turn away when the gifts are no longer there, which only underscores the futility of such schemes. In 1Corinthians 16:1-2 Paul very plainly teaches that the collection being taken is "for the saints." The only contribution, of a benevolent nature, that any congregation made out of its treasury, in New Testament times, was to the "poor saints." Romans 15:25-26 "But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem." 2Corinthians 8:4 "imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." 2Corinthians 9:1 "Now concerning the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you;" 9:12 "For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God." In Acts 11:27-30 "the disciples determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea." All

of these passages confirm that contributions were made to "saints" with no record of any church ever giving to unbelievers from its treasury. There is no way that the church could support all the needy in the world. As individual Christians we may, as opportunity presents itself, contribute to the just needs of any person. The church, however, is limited by Divine mandate as to the way it dispenses the funds contributed on the Lord's Day.

**Question:** In 1 Corinthians 11:10, why the reference to angels?

**Answer:** The passage in question reads "For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels." We must first keep in mind that the discussion at this point in the chapter involves the relationship between men and women as it relates to authority. "For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man." This is God's order and we dare not reject it. The phrase "because of the angels" is a difficult one to interpret and has been subjected to differing opinions. The two primary ones are that the woman should have a symbol on her head because the good angels are present at the Christian assembly watching what transpires there and would witness a violation of God's revealed order when the woman refused to wear that symbol. Another explanation suggests that the reference is to the wicked angels who left the place assigned to them by God, rebelling against Him (Jude 6; 2Peter 2:4). The idea being that Paul is reminding the women at Corinth of what happened to these angels, lest they make the same mistake by leaving their assigned place of subjection by refusing to wear the sign of authority on their head thereby rejecting God's order for them. In the view of this writer the second is the more tenable of the two. The symbol she wears is her long hair v. 15. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rfwade@charter.net)

## CLOSER THAN IT MAY APPEAR

*By BARNEY OWENS*

“OBJECTS MAY BE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR.” Likely, you have noticed that statement printed on the right mirror of your automobile. Unless we pay strict and unusual attention to this admonition the mirror designed to help us avoid an accident, may in fact become the cause of a collision. The mirror is constructed in such a way as to take a wider view of the highway, however in doing so, the objects reflected are made smaller. Therefore are in reality closer than they appear to be as we use the mirror for a gauge.

Having read the inscription many times in the past, while driving on a nearby Interstate Highway the other day it occurred to me for the first time that there is some spiritual benefit to be gained by variously applying this statement to some real situations. Some of the things presented for our consideration in Scripture-to warn us lest we fall prey to them, may in fact be closer than they appear.

### **Temptation May Be Closer Than It May Appear**

Paul points us back to the Israelites as examples of things we should not pursue. Who would have thought these people could be led away from the God in so many ways so quickly. Over and again, the Lord forgave and showed them the right way when they failed to honor Him. Repeatedly they gave way to sin because temptation was closer than it appeared. Writing to the Corinthians chapter ten of the first epistle he declared, “these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted... Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.” (I Cor. 10:6, 9). Man is endowed with natural desires (lusts) that have been put within us for our wellbeing. These may be useful, helpful, and even necessary to complying with God’s will in various matters. However, when these are turned toward things forbidden by the Lord that becomes an entirely different matter. The Lord tempts us in the path of our duty as we might tempt (try) a servant by frequent experiments before we can place confidence in him. Satan tempts us to depart from our duty to God tempting us by the weakness of our principles, to give way to the violence of our passions. “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man” (1 Cor. 10:13). In James chapter one, disciples are exhorted relative to Satan’s diabolical workings. “Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed (lured away with bait).” (Js. 1:14). At the very moment when we think temptation can have nil effects upon us is the exact time that we have fallen prey to the Devil. “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” (I Cor.

10:12). When we have considered it all-the whole of the Christian life is the bearing up against temptations and prevailing over them. It is by means of the trials placed before us in this world that we are able to evidence our love and obedience to God. Through temptations that we overcome, we ourselves are able to see our fitness to be members of His Kingdom. Temptation may be closer than it appears.

### **Being Overtaken In A Sin May Be Closer Than It May Appear**

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” (Gal. 6:1). The idea presented by the word “overtaken” is of a surprise blunder or fault. It is not as though one planned or schemed to engage in some iniquitous act, but the thing happened in a way not expected. In a moment of weakness or indifference evil presented itself and wounded the soul. As we look at the verse, some helpful lessons come forth. The spiritual that was entrusted with restoration refers to those “spiritually gifted” or those possessing spiritual gifts. Since they occupied a position that normal Christians (and all of us today) did not possess, there was the possibility that they would be exalted in heart overmuch. So, the Apostle strikes at a tender spot telling them to act in meekness as the possibility of their being overcome was equally true as with the troubled soul that they were to assist. Now if these so “gifted” must take heed or guard themselves lest they fall, surely there is a need for us to take ample precautions. Restore is a term that was used in the nautical world in reference to fishing nets that were torn and in need of mending. Once they were mended they had been restored or functionally were as good as new. It was also used in the medical profession of one whose bone had been broken and those qualified would “set” the bone. It was then useable to the patient as though it had not been injured. The soul overtaken in a fault “having sinned” can be restored to his rightful place of service and worship and was as a new born soul.

Why do we allow ourselves to be surprised in a fault? There are many factors that could be named a few of which I can point out.

1st, we may become careless in our Christian life. Scriptures suggests that we take heed to “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Tit. 2:12). Like some other things in life we fail to take this admonition as seriously as we should and failing to take proper precautions to avoid the snares of Satan (failing to realize being overcome is closer than it may appear), we look up and behold we are surprised in a fault. When a person becomes careless in his work accidents are likely to happen when they could have been avoided. As Christians, when we develop sloppy habits in praying and reading God’s word we fail to cultivate character traits that draw us closer to God. We are then prime

targets for the devil to surprise us.

2nd, ignorance is a certain way by which some are surprised in a fault. By this, I mean that people fail to gain information about the operations of Satan. Failing to learn his methods can be fatal. Paul wrote, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." (II Cor. 2:11). That should be true of all of us. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise... be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph. 5:15,17). We cannot be satisfied with what we already know, we need to press onward and learn everything we can about the Lord's will in order to keep ourselves free from the yoke of sin, otherwise we will be surprised in a fault.

3rd dangerous pride Relying on self-sufficiency to combat sin is a mark of those that do not realize how close they are to being overtaken in a fault. "Pride goeth before destruction" (Prov. 16:18). Pride is like an inflated balloon that the touch of a pen can burst. When one is full of himself the slightest prick of sin will bring a surprising defalcation.

Weaknesses of others may not be ours but the possibility of being overtaken is common to all.

### **The Last Breath We Shall Take May Be Closer Than We Think**

'...For what is your life? It is even as a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.' (Js. 4:14). The brevity of life is variously described in Scripture. In each generation, God has laid before men that the promise of extended life, although desired and sought by all is not within the reach of man. Life is described as a vapor or literally a mist, which is here, then it is gone. When a mist is heaviest and apparently will not dissipate, it is at that very moment that it is gone forevermore. 'Tis true that we may do things that retard our bodies, brings grief because of disease, and sorrow in unexpected and youthful death. There is little man can do to remain on this earth longer than his allotted time. Some people can see death "knocking at their door," but the greater number of us experience the unexpected and uninvited to take our spirits away leaving a dead body behind, therefore, ever before our mind must be the thought that death is closer than it may appear.

Because that is true James admonishes his readers, "therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (Js. 4:17). To fail in our duty, to procrastinate, to slouch in taking advantage of an opportunity is sin because we may never have the privilege of such circumstances again-we as a vapor or mist may cease to exist in the present body. Anciently the Greeks described opportunity by picturing the following. A young man desiring a wife would be given

an opportunity to possess the girl of his dreams. He must stand at the corner of a building, which he could not see around and wait. The girl wearing soft-soled shoes would pull her hair in front of her face and walk by the building past the young man. As he stood there he could not see her coming, he could not hear her walking and at first glimpse he must reach out and grab her hair. A moment's hesitation meant that she would pass him by and is lost to him forever. Death is like this young girl, it comes silently and softly and when it comes all opportunity is forever gone. With that before us the Bible warns:

1st, one should become a Christian at the earliest opportunity. "behold, now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation." (II Cor. 6:2). Many today cast these words aside, think of them as idle or openly rebel before the plain commandments of the Lord. They seem to think they will live forever failing to realize that their last breath may be closer than appears. When the Gospel was preached in New Testament times, hearers did not hesitate to claim the salvation provided by Jesus' death and resurrection. On Pentecost those who gladly received the word were baptized (Acts 2:41). When the people of Samaria believed they were baptized (Acts 8:12). When the eunuch approached water, he requested Philip to baptize him (Acts 8:36-39). The Jailer at Philippi was baptized straightway (immediately,) between midnight and one A.M. Saul of Tarsus was chided for "tarrying" and was immediately baptized. Considering the brevity of life how can we linger in the ways of the world?

2nd, exercise care to stand steadfast in the way of the Lord. "take heed brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (Heb. 3:12-13). Jesus promised that He would prepare a place for His disciples and would return for us (Jn. 14:1-4). We acknowledge His promise by dwelling in Him and trusting Him as the WAY (Vs. 6). While the world may bring us trouble even because we serve Christ, we will not give up on His promises. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tied; and ye shall suffer tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life' (Rev. 2:10). It is much easier to adopt the heart of worldlings and have a mind for this life only, however, as Christians "we walk by faith, not by sight" We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor 5:7-10). We know death may be closer than it appears.

3rd, desiring the salvation of our loved ones we know ones last breath may be closer than it appears. One man realized the truth of this lesson too late. Jesus said "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." (Lk. 16:23). His fate was sealed and the chances of changing his fate were nil. His suffering and anguish was multiplied as his heart was set upon those he loved who were pursuing the same course he had taken. He desired that Abraham would send Lazarus "to my father's house: For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." (Vs. 27-28). Many have escorted the body of a dear loved one to a place to await the Lord's coming who had failed to make preparation for that meeting. Tear stained eyes, an empty seat and a broken heart do not prevail at that great day. Friends leave us, neighbors are taken away, but when those we love pass into the realm of the unseen words do not come to express the anguished heart. When we lose a loved one, we enter into the feelings of David upon losing his child. In his sadness, he said, "can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (II Sam. 12:23). There is but a breath between our loved ones and death, therefore we should move swiftly to bring them into the fold of God-the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the writer of old expressed it, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27). Paul in speaking of judgment in an aforementioned passage (II Cor. 5:10), quickly added "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (Vs. 11). The last breath any of us may take may be closer than it appears. Read, receive, learn, acknowledge and live.

### **"THERE IS A LAD HERE"**

*BY RICK MARTIN*

God often chose the young to lead his people. The Bible is filled with accounts that show God's trust in young people. David found favor with God and was chosen to be his servant. David became Israel's greatest king and reigned for 40 years. Daniel was a teenager when he committed to serve God. As an old man facing death, Daniel continued his practice of praying 3 times a day, "As was his custom since his early days." Paul's beloved son in the faith was young Timothy. Paul had great confidence in Timothy's ministry when he wrote him "Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Paul mandated that Timothy, "preach the word," (2 Tim: 4:2.). Mary was still a young maiden when she gave birth to the Savior of the world. She was a godly woman who was favored by God.

In John 6 we see that Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee. Huge crowds of people were following Him. They were following Him to watch Him heal the sick.

When Jesus went up in the hills with his disciple, he saw this large crowd, climbing the hill, looking for Him. Turning to Phillip, he asked, "Where can we buy bread to feed all these people." He was testing Phillip because he already knew what he was going to do. Phillip said, "It would take a fortune to feed such a large crowd." Andrew, the brother of Peter, began to search through the crowd and there he found the hidden resources of a young boy, 5 barley loaves and 2 fish. He told the Lord, "There is a lad here."

One of the greatest concerns of every Christian and every Christian parent should be how to instill in the hearts of our children a meaningful faith. Unfortunately many parents and older adults who could give spiritual direction are so involved in their own busy schedules that they have provided little if any help. Not only are they too busy, but they have allowed their own life pattern to hinder them from developing their own spiritual lives. Those who are spiritually mature should seek to help the young by challenging them to serve the Lord. This can be done by a Christian example and by presenting positive instruction as well as warning against the destructive paths of evil. Following are five things we need to teach our young people. 1) We must teach the young to respect authority. In some there is a tendency to disrespect and disregard authority. For the young, the desire to be free with no restrictions or restraints has a very powerful pull. Most of us probably went through a stage when we did not want an adult telling us what to do. The young must be taught that all their lives there will be someone, to whom they must give an account; parents, school officials, employers, policemen, judges and above all God. The young should seek to obey God in all things. Ecclesiastes 12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; The young need to obey their parents for this is good and right, Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. In most cases parents know what is best and have the best interest of the child at heart. Obeying the laws of the land is important and right, Romans 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. While it may be fashionable to some to openly defy the laws of the land, young Christians will have no part in such things and they will not sympathize with those who do. Young people should not follow the crowd to do evil. (Ex 23:2) "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil". The crowd will lead you in the wrong direction. Some would never consider doing something wrong,

but when they get with a crowd they can be led astray. We need to remind young people to be careful where they go and to be careful with whom they associate.

2) We need to teach young people responsibility. Young people need to learn to work hard. Hard work will usually be rewarded. Hard work is good for you. (Lam. 3:27) "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Those who work hard will make good in life and the lazy will have more trouble. (Pro. 10:4) "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich." In the New Testament, people are encouraged to work 1 Thessalonians 4.-11-12 "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing". While physical work is important, the work of the Lord is more important. Usually, those who are diligent workers at school, on the job and in the home are also hard workers in the Lord's Kingdom.

3) Young people should grow spiritually. The spiritual growth of the young must not be neglected. The kingdom of God must come first and all other activities must be secondary. Parents must provide their children with spiritual guidance. To be spiritual adults our children must learn to live in an ungodly society with confidence in God. We cannot shield them from all the ungodliness that is found in our society. We must teach them to cope in ungodly situations and unfortunately some of these situations may even come at one of our big meetings. They need to know that they do not have to give in when confronted with ungodly situations. We must urge the young to grow spiritually and become mature Christians, so that they will be able to make it to heaven.

4) Young people should gain wisdom. The main endeavor of the young in early years is a secular education. Young people should look at education as a challenging opportunity to do their very best. When young people are in school, they should be the best student that they can possibly be. To play around and be disruptive or to not do assigned work is not very becoming of one who is a follower of Christ. Some consider education to be boring and a waste of time. This is bad, because we are rapidly moving into a society where a good education and specialized training are necessary to survive. Even though this is the case, education should not be the main goal. Young people should seek to gain spiritual wisdom (Ezra 7:10) "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." There are 4 things found here that Ezra sought to do. 1) He prepared his heart. This is where it all begins; there must be a willing heart to know God and his will. 2) Ezra prepared his heart to

seek the law of God. In school, young people will be studying many books, but there is one book that is more important than all the books of the world. Only the Book of God will lead you to heaven. 3) Ezra prepared his heart to do the law of God. We should all seek to know the will of the Lord and do it. 4) Ezra prepared himself to teach the will of God. We need young people preparing to teach like Ezra did. It is spiritual wisdom that leads to eternal life.

5) We need to teach the young to reject the world. Young people should be happy and enjoy life. Good clean recreation and happiness are an important part of youth. God wants people to enjoy their youth and to remember Him while enjoying it. It is a great challenge for young people to live in the world, but not be of the world. Young people should be encouraged to choose good companionship. (I Cor.15:33) "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good manners." Parents should surround themselves with good companions. Such associations will affect the thinking and direction of our children. The young should place their minds on heavenly things. (Col 3:2) Set your affection on things above and not on things on the earth." Our hope and desire is that the young people will learn to love the world less and less and the Lord more and more.

Conclusion: Jesus shows us the importance of children. On one occasion in Mark chapter 10, some mothers were bringing their children to be blessed. The disciples rebuked these mothers and told them to not bother Jesus. When Jesus saw what was happening. He was very displeased and said "Let the children come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as them. Don't send them away.". Children and their spiritual well-being must be important to us. We need our young people. We need them now for their zeal and enthusiasm. We need them for future years to sustain that which we have fought for, loved, and held so dear to our hearts. In John 6 Andrew introduced a boy to Jesus. No preacher, teacher, brother or sister, parent or grand-parent could ever do a greater thing than to introduce a boy or girl to Jesus. We can do this by our example and encouragement.

Perhaps there is a boy or girl in your life. Maybe one in your home or one you just know. It might seem to you that he or she doesn't have very much to offer. Andrew said of the boy in John 6, "five barley loaves and two fish. But what is that among so many." On that occasion, Jesus took the meager resources of a young boy and performed a great miracle. That boy or girl that you know needs to be introduced to Jesus. Who knows what great things will be done for cause of Christ, when Jesus is in control of what he or she has. Let us always remember, "there is a lad here".

*THE COLLECTION . . . . . continued from page one*

if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.”

Yet another example of the collection’s use is to support the elders. 1 Timothy 5:17-18 “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, “you shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, “the laborer is worthy of his wages.” Here Paul stresses that the elders were to receive compensation for their efforts as well as high respect for their work. He even quotes a passage from Deuteronomy 25:4 to leave no doubt that he is referring to financial support.

Last, but not least, is the use of the collection to spread the gospel. If an elder is to be considered a gospel laborer and to be financially supported, it stands to reason that a man who devotes his life laboring as a preacher should also be supported. “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”-1 Timothy 5:18. The command to go and preach the gospel necessitates the preacher. Romans 10:14-15 shows that it was necessary for God to send preachers that His word might be heard, believed and obeyed in nations around the world. This preaching cannot be done without a means of support. At times we find Paul himself laboring with his own hands as a tentmaker (Acts 18:3) until such time as he was relieved by the brethren that he might devote his time to teaching the gospel (2 Corinthians 1:11-16). Though the implication to support the preacher is enough, Paul was inspired to pen the explicit command of the Lord here in 1 Corinthians 9:14, “Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.”

As to the frequency of collecting, it is duly noted that every first day of the week was required. Let us pose another question: “How long shall we continue to have collections?” The answer is: as long as the gospel is preached, as long as elders continue to lead the congregations, as long as widows are widows in deed and as long as there are poor and needy saints, to which Jesus said, “For you have the poor with you always...” Matthew 26:11.

As for distributing funds to the world, we have no commands for the collective body of the church to do so, we do however have a word from James to show

a personal responsibility to “visit” the affliction of widows and orphans (James 1:27). Paul also implies this personal responsibility in Galatians 6:10, “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Since the church has no “para-church” organizations, for example, soup kitchens, hospitals, schools etc. There is no authorized funding of these or any other worldly institutions. To support any work that is not a work of the church would be in total violation of the collection’s purpose. -Sean S. McCallister, duke5457@yahoo.com.



*THE CHURCH IN IRVING . . . . . continued from page two*

going to knock your socks off.” Traditional, main line, churches of Christ as we have known them are struggling for their very existence. If you read the **Gospel Advocate, Firm Foundation** and other like papers you will see that “change” is slowly but surely destroying those churches that have for years opposed instrumental music in their assemblies. Many of them have now adopted the instrument. How did that change happen? One reason is that many of their preachers were schooled at sectarian colleges and universities. They brought back, along with their degrees, sectarian ideas and dogma, and as a result “change” began to take place. Brethren, we are suffering from the same problem. We have people and churches reaching out to and drinking from these same sectarian, denominational wells. The results will destroy us, if we don’t wake up and do something about it. One cannot read their books, listen to their speakers, without being affected by the messages they deliver. It’s just that simple. When churches use the Lord’s money to buy playground equipment so the children will have a place to play while at church, look out, it won’t be long until they have a church program to teach those children. When the church becomes involved in all kinds of social programs, mark it down, they have started on a journey that will take them deeper into sin and digression. The very nature of change is progressive, and once the cycle starts it almost always continues. Brethren, it’s time to awake out of sleep. The handwriting is on the wall.

## Our Departed

**MURPHY-** Murphy, Peggy L. Born Nov. 2, 1935 to Ray and Louise Gregory at Hazard KY. She died Sept. 1, 2010. Peggy is survived by her husband Bill, daughters Vicky Fellenz and Deborah Murphy. One granddaughter Ashleigh and great-granddaughter Izzabella. She also leaves her sister Pat Wesley. She was preceded in death by her parents and her son Billy. Peggy will be greatly missed by her family and the church meeting at Sharonville. She was faithful to assemble with the church at every service even when she could literally put one foot in front of the other. Those gathered to pay last respect were reminded of the need to prepare for the hour of death by pointing to Peggy as an example. - Barney Owens

**KING-** Howard Wayne King of Stockton, CA passed away on October 1, 2010. He was 86 years of age having been born to Homer L. and May Bell (Massie) King on March 29, 1924 in Lebanon, MO. He was a member of the church in Stockton for some 60 plus years having been baptized into Christ prior to moving to Stockton. He was an outstanding teacher in the church, a song leader, and a wonderful influence on others as he tried to lift others up personally. He worked for Bruener's Furniture Company for more than 40 years and served them as operation manager for much of that time. He was an avid hunter, fisherman, and sports fan. He loved the *Old Paths Advocate* religious journal that his father helped begin in 1931 and his brother Don continues as Editor and Publisher to this day. He served his community well as a retired executive and helped many of the small businesses in the area to begin correctly and successfully. He had a great interest in gardening and attained the rank of Master Gardener and served his community in this area as well. Howard is survived by his brother Don, Don's wife, Patricia and their two children, Kris (Bob) and Lance (Kelly); a nephew, Travis Cook (Shirley); a niece, Sandra Maggard; and a host of brothers and sisters in Christ, and friends, business associates, and neighbors who gathered for his memorial services in Lodi, CA. He was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters: Velma Cook and Nola Milner- Pruitt. Howard and his family wanted a simple service much like our congregational services. Jeffrey Cryer led the singing and I had the honor of speaking a few words

of comfort and warning to the many who gathered for that service. He will be missed. -Bennie Cryer

**THOMPSON-**It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Iverson E. "Ivey" Thompson. Ivey departed this life on September 29, 2010 at the age of eighty-five. He was the husband of Pearly (Shelnut) Thompson for almost sixty-eight years, the father of Larry and Mike Thompson and Shirley (Thompson) Jackson. He had been a member of the Murphy Ave. church here in LaGrange for many years, he was truly a "rock" among us. His friendly smile and contagious laugh will be sorely missed. Ivey loved The Book and the Church, and talked to untold numbers in an attempt to reach them with the truth. A large crowd of friends and relatives gathered for the memorial service at the Murphy Ave. building on October 2, 2010. A trio of Kevin Presley, Phillip Prince, and Duane Snow sung with flawless precision the sweet songs of Zion. Brother Kevin and this writer sought to comfort the bereaved and warn the lost.-Ronny F. Wade

## Announcements

### UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Please continue to send all material for publication in the *Old Paths Advocate* to Ronny Wade at P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA or [rfwade@chareter.net](mailto:rfwade@chareter.net) until further notice.



### TUCSON NEW YEAR MEETING

Dates: Thursday, Dec. 30th, 2010 through  
Sunday, Jan. 2nd, 2011  
Speaker: Paul O. Nichols  
Location: Church Building  
1502 S. Country Club Tucson, Az.

Contacts: Troy Seals (520) 762-1468  
Jim West (520) 495-4790  
Thurs: 7:30pm Fri: 8pm - midnight  
8pm: Regular service  
9pm-10pm: Refreshments  
10pm: Young men speak  
11 pm-midnight: Sing in New Year  
Sat: 6pm & Sun: 10am and 1:30pm

## Field Reports

Stan Owens 8432 Cox Rd. West Chester, OH 45069. Sept.30-Although it has been quite some time since my last report, I have kept busy with appointments and meetings. I recently returned home from an enjoyable meeting in Radnor, WV where one was restored to The Faith and hopefully much good was done. While there I was able to spend some time with fellow-preacher Wyn Baker and his family who live nearby. I was privileged to speak at the meeting over Labor Day weekend hosted by the Fossil Creek, TX congregation. This meeting is under the oversight of the elders at that congregation and I was honored to be a part of it. I also had a meeting at the Paris, TX congregation where William St. John and Bruce Roebuck labor with the brethren there in the work of the Lord. It was a benefit to me to get to visit with them. In the last few months I have been able to speak one or more times at Bandy, KY; Burkhart, MO; and Lexington, KY. In addition, I have been able to hear Don King, Clint De France, Bruce Roebuck, Ronny Wade, and Brandon Stephens in recent meetings. At the time of this writing we are preparing for our meeting at home the last week of October with Tony Melton. Shortly afterwards, I will continue with my fall/winter meeting schedule. Keep The Faith.

Darrell Crawford 208 E. Baldwin Rd. Unit S Panama City, Fl 32405 bugz1955@hotmail.com October 10, 2010 Greetings to all! We are experiencing some very beautiful weather here in Florida as of late, and a wonderful month otherwise. We enjoyed the Tennessee Labor Day Meeting very much. The brethren there go all out to host this annual meeting. If you have never attended it, you should make plans to do so next year. The brethren there as well as Bro. Kevin Presley did an outstanding job. We appreciated being asked to speak there, as well as twice at Earlytown, Alabama, was our first time to speak there, and the brethren were very good to us. We very much enjoyed being with them there. We pray that the work that Bro. Kevin Presley does there goes well. The work here in Panama City continues to move along, we are studying with some of our local brethren, and also we have been studying with a local digressive preacher on classes. He understands that there is no specific scriptural authorization for classes, but refuses to

give them up. Next we plan to study the cup with him and look forward to that. We continue to have visitors from the community, some outsiders as well. Two women, one a Catholic, and the other a non-denominational have attended, we continue to visit them both they are a mother and daughter. We plan to study with the brethren here to help teach some of the younger how to wait on the table and other things. We were sad that Bro. Phillip Prince was here for his last regularly scheduled 'visit with us in September. He has been a real asset to the work here, having come the last few years on a monthly schedule. It was good seeing both him and his wife once more. We pray that they will continue to be used in the Lord's vineyard. We solicit your prayers for the work here that we can be used to our best ability for the Lord's work. May we always stand for the truth, and may the Lord bless his church everywhere.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953. e- mail: jobenc58@yahoo.com In the last few weeks I had the privilege of speaking at various congregations including: Bakersfield, CA (Brundage); San Angelo, TX; Grapevine, TX; Arlington, TX; Aurora, MO where we enjoyed a short stay once more in the home of Roy Lee and Zella Criswell; and Neosho, MO (Freeman St.) where I participated in their annual Labor Day Study which this year featured various speakers presenting their studies on several topics relating to marriage and the family. This proved to be a very interesting study, and, of course, they plan to have the Labor Day Study again next year. Please plan to attend. While there we had the privilege of staying in the new home of Roger and Sue Owens which we enjoyed very much. On this trip Joann and I had the privilege of visiting with Johnny and Sally Elmore in Ardmore, OK and attend Johnny's 60th year anniversary of preaching celebration. A large crowd gathered for this. We returned home September 11th to resume our work with the Olivehurst, CA congregation. We have since enjoyed having Joe and Joann Norton in our home. He spoke for us twice at Olivehurst. God bless all of you.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old\_paths@juno.com, October 5, 2010-Lord willing, we leave for a trip to Zambia (Africa) in a few minutes. While we're gone these weeks

we appreciate Brother Ronny Wade taking care of the paper. Be sure you send your material to him until notified to do otherwise. You may reach him by e-mail: rfwade@charter.net or regular mail: P.O. Box 800337, LaGrange, GA 30240. I will take this opportunity to remind the preachers to send field reports and articles regularly, please. We thank all who have recently subscribed either to the paper or on line edition of Old Paths Advocate. We believe the paper is still doing a great deal of good in many places around the world. Let's keep up the good work. Recently, it has been my pleasure to preach at home as well as other local congregations and we look forward to being at Wichita Falls, Texas November 3 -7. This year has held much joy because of the success of the gospel in so many places as well as sadness because of serious illness and even death of those we love. Just yesterday we attended the funeral service of Howard King, my brother, in Lodi (near Stockton) California. He had been in failing health for some time and we lost him on October 1. We are also saddened at the very serious illness of our beloved Virgilio Danao who has gone back to the Philippines for treatment of cancer. Our good friend, and traveling companion Frank Brancato, is also in treatment for cancer. Don't forget these good men when you pray. We are also saddened to learn of the defection of some to digression or even denominationalism. However, we recall some in Bible times who behaved in similar fashion so we certainly are not discouraged. We are encouraged that others are so interested in the church and want to preach the gospel. May their tribe increase. We have a number of talented young preachers, many of whom have already proven themselves in the battle against Satan. Lord willing, the church will be in capable hands for many years to come. Lord bless the faithful.

Paul O. Nichols, 14217 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221; pon.wjn.ks@juno.com - The last of August I drove to California in time for the birth of my first great grandchild. That was a wonderful blessing. On the way to San Diego where my granddaughter and her husband live I had the privilege of visiting my sister at Canon City, CO and was asked to preach at both service on Lord's day. I had the invitation to speak at Arizona City, AZ at the Wednesday night service. In California my daughter, Paulette, and I attended three services of the annual California Labor Day meeting. It was great to hear Bro. Carl

Johnson preach twice and to see so many of our good friends, brethren with whom we had worked in years past. On Lord's day I preached at Atwater where there was one response for baptism. At the evening service I was honored with the invitation to speak at Planz Road in Bakersfield. At one time this was home to me and my family, and I had the happy privilege to worship with this congregation which we helped establish in the 1960s. They still "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). I returned home on Sept. 7th. I have been asked to hold a short meeting at North Plains, OR., Oct. 28-31. I look forward to being with my old friend and co-worker and fellow preacher, Gayland Osburn, and the brethren there.

PERHAPS THERE ARE TENDER, SWEETER THINGS,  
SOMEWHERE IN THE SUN-BRIGHT LAND,  
BUT I THANK THE LORD FOR HIS BLESSINGS,  
AND THE TOUCH OF A LITTLE HAND.

A LITTLE HAND THAT SOFTLY STOLE  
INTO MY OWN ONE DAY:  
WHEN I NEEDED THE TOUCH THAT I LOVED SO MUCH  
TO STRENGTHEN ME ON MY WAY.

SOFTER IT SEEMED THAN THE SOFTEST DOWN,  
ON THE BREAST OF THE GENTLEST DOVE,  
BUT ITS TIMID PRESS AND ITS FAINTEST CARESS,  
WERE STRONG IN THE STRENGTH OF LOVE.

IT SEEMED TO SAY, IN A STRANGE SWEET WAY  
"I LOVE YOU AND UNDERSTAND"  
AND CALMED MY FEARS AS MY HOT-HEART TEARS  
FELL OVER THAT LITTLE HAND.

PERHAPS THERE ARE TENDERER, SWEETER THINGS,  
SOMEWHERE IN THE SUN-BRIGHT LAND,  
BUT I THANK THE LORD FOR HIS BLESSING,  
AND THE TOUCH OF A LITTLE HAND.

--ANON.

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## THE BACK PAGE . . .

### THE VANISHING EVENING SERVICE

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

During the course of a gospel meeting earlier this year a young preacher asked, "What can I do to get people to come out to Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services?" I told him that when I learned the answer to that question I would let him know.

Poor attendance at the evening worship services is certainly nothing new. It has long been said that "the popularity of the preacher can be seen by attendance on Sunday morning, the popularity of the church by attendance on Sunday evening, and the popularity of the Lord by attendance on Wednesday evening."

R.N. Hogan, an African-American preacher from the early 1900's, once observed, "The apostle Paul compares the church to a physical body (1 Cor. 12:12-26). On Sunday morning the whole body is usually present, and it is a beautiful sight. On Sunday night, however, there will be an arm missing and a leg missing, and on Wednesday night there is usually nothing there but the head and backbone!"

While poor attendance at evening services is nothing new, the problem has gotten significantly worse in the last couple of decades among all religious bodies, including the Lord's church. In the 1970's, we deplored the fact that only 50 percent of those who attended Sunday morning services were back for Sunday night and Wednesday night services. Surveys today, however, show those percentages have plummeted, causing churches to drop the evening services from their schedules altogether.

It is true that evening worship is not prescribed specifically by Scripture. The meeting times for all services are established at the discretion and on the authority of the elders of the church (Heb. 10:25; 13:17). It cannot be denied, however, that the practice of worshipping twice on Sunday is a centuries-old, firmly established tradition in the church. Just as Israel offered morning and evening sacrifices to God on the Sabbath Day (Num. 28:1-10), the earliest Christians offered morning and evening spiritual sacrifices to God on the Lord's Day, framing the whole day as belonging to the Lord (Chrysostom c. 347-407). In fact, the apostolic church often met on a daily basis (Acts 2:46; 5:42).

One of the reasons for keeping this tradition alive, or reviving it, is the need of frequent public preaching. Paul urges Timothy, "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2). In this charge Paul is following the example of Moses and all the prophets of the Old Testament, as well as that of our Lord and His apostles. These great servants of God were preeminently preachers and teachers of God's Word. Preaching was the key they used to unlock the kingdom, and they were at it incessantly (1 Cor. 1:21).

The preaching of God's Word in both morning and evening worship services on the Lord's Day, has been regarded as an important application of this "frequent preaching" principle, crucial to the life of the church. Granted, this principle may be fulfilled at other times than Sunday evening, but experience has shown this to be the time that best suits most Christians. This practice has been universally recognized for Bible-believing churches and has gone unchallenged for centuries.

"Not so today!" says Paul Alexander in his little pamphlet, "Let's Keep Our Sunday Evening Worship." He continues, 'Church growth' experts are advising us that the evening service (and frequent preaching in general) is excess baggage, inhibiting evangelism and getting in the way of 'small group' ministries now deemed more important than preaching. We are being advised that 'the culture has changed,' that evening worship no longer meets the 'felt needs' of our contemporaries, and that we need a great variety of programs to meet the needs of every age and interest in our world. If we do not change with the culture, it seems, we will be consigned to the trash heap of irrelevance, or, what may be even worse, to smallness, a fate worse than death to the 'church growth' mind."

In view of a recent Pew Forum Survey that shows Americans do not know much about the Bible or the beliefs of their own churches, we all ought to ask ourselves if this is really the time to reduce our own efforts at preaching. In this "Age of Information" we are inundated by the mass media with propaganda and distracting trivia to the point of utter confusion. To reduce our own preaching at a time when ignorance and confusion reign supreme in America makes no sense. The true and frequent preaching of God's Word is what we need the most, and I am suspicious of any program that de-emphasizes preaching for the sake of some new, unproved methodology.

For centuries evening worship services have offered great spiritual benefits to those who prepare for them properly. Therefore, revive those services and make a special effort to be in the Lord's house for them to sing His praise, offer united prayer, and learn His Word to the refreshment of your souls. carlmj@cableone.net