

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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NO. 11

IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE?

BY RICK MARTIN

2 Sam 18: 32 And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe?

This question was first asked by David when he expressed concern for the well-being of his son Absalom. Fathers and mothers today need to be concerned about the safety and welfare of their boys and girls. Every parent worth his or her salt is concerned about the physical safety of their children. When they are young we move furniture and lock cabinets to keep them from hurting themselves. As they get older and start riding their bikes and playing outside we keep a check on them and warn them of the dangers of playing in the street. Then when they get the keys to the car we really are concerned about their safety. We warn them about making foolish decisions that could harm themselves and others. Many a parent has spent a few sleepless hours, when a teenager missed his/her curfew. Some of you may think when they get older and move away that your concerns are over but that is not so. When they are away we wait for that call telling us that they made it home safely. Yes we are concerned about our children's physical welfare, but above all we should be concerned about their spiritual welfare. We are losing our children. It is a disturbing trend that will have a tremendous impact upon the future of the church in this country. We can spend all the money we have on TV programs and sending people to Africa and Russia or any place else. However, if we lose our children in this country the church is going to suffer tremendously. Nothing could do more to spread the cause of Christ than that of Christian parents making their home truly Christian. If the home is what it should be, then it is practically assured that the Church will be what it ought to be. Parents ought to give the highest priorities to being what God would have them be and to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the

Lord. In this article I want to give 4 ways we can keep our children spiritually safe.

First of all, we can keep our children safe by teaching them about the uniqueness of the Church. Parents should teach their children that the Lord's church is the only church authorized by the Scriptures. The principle of authority must be impressed upon young minds. Once this principle is understood it will produce in them a cautious and conservative approach to life. Children need to learn that the Church is the way to heaven and the exclusive route to glory. Children can grow up understanding that only faithful Christians are heaven bound according to the promises of God. Children should be taught about the exclusive nature of the church to help them appreciate that salvation is exclusively available to those who are in Christ, to help them want to help those who are lost to come to a knowledge of truth, and to help them hate every false way. Parents can teach their children about the uniqueness of the church by bringing their children up in an atmosphere where the church is viewed as vital, where its welfare is pursued, where dangers to it are viewed with great concern and where prayer is offered on its behalf. Parents can teach their children about the uniqueness of the church by talking of its rich historical heritage. The Church of our Lord has a rich and unique heritage and we can keep our children safe by teaching them about it.

Secondly, we can keep our children safe by teaching them that they are ultimately responsible to God. I believe that our children will think twice about doing something wrong if they know that they are not only responsible to us, but also to God. Children quickly learn that if they can successfully hide their inappropriate actions from their parents they are not held responsible or accountable for those actions. Sometimes our children succeed in keeping things from us and in their minds they think they "get by" with things. If our children

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Editorial**"I CHANGE NOT."***By: DON L. KING*

In Malachi 3:6 God said, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." The context of this verse speaks of how God would eventually execute His judgment against those of His people who had been disobedient. He promised he would be swift in witnessing against sorcerers, adulterers, liars, those who cheated their employees, widows, orphans, and those who did not fear the Lord. Although this had been long in coming, God tells them he is the Lord and does not change. In other words, the promised punishment would indeed come upon them.

The New Testament also tells us God does not change. James said, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) It is interesting that while God created the heavenly bodies which give varying degrees of light both day and night because they are always changing, God Himself remains constant and never changes at all. A shadow from Him remains the same forever rather than constantly moving as the shadows from the moon and sun.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for us to grasp the concept of an unchanging God because literally everything we know in this life is under constant change. Absolutely nothing around us remains the same. A few weeks ago it was my privilege to hold a gospel meeting in Buffalo, near the place in Missouri where I was born and raised. One day, I took the opportunity to drive down into the old home community and see it again. I drove by our old log house and what a shock it was. Long empty now, the foundation has crumbled and the house will soon cease to stand. Nothing about the community seems the same. Places where relatives once lived are, in many cases, completely gone now with no vestige of what used to be. I stopped at the old cemetery and was made to realize how many of the people I once knew and loved are there now, yet another reminder of continuing change. Nothing has remained the same. It was familiar and yet not familiar because everything seemed different and indeed it was.

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Is it scriptural, or is it being a good steward of the Lord's money, for a congregation to use the church treasury to purchase song books every couple of years?

Answer: Christians are commanded to sing in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. No mention is made of a songbook in carrying out the requirements of the above mentioned scriptures. Most likely the singing of early disciples consisted, at least in part, of the psalms of David. It may well be that they had a collection of these hymns in some kind of a booklet. We don't know because the scriptures do not furnish us with that information. It is very likely that whatever they had it was vastly different from the books we currently use, that is a songbook that has a combination of words and music. There obviously were no shaped note song books used by early Christians. This, of course, does not prove that it is wrong for us today to have such books. Songbooks are merely an aid that we use in carrying out the command to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord. When or how often we purchase new books is a matter left to the discretion of the congregation. Since the Lord's money is being used to purchase the books we must use care and wisdom in the choices we make. Most everywhere I go, churches have somewhere in the building a room full of used songbooks, most of them are in good condition, which is an indication that they weren't worn out but were merely discarded in favor of newer song collections. In some churches where I go, they sing perhaps one half of the songs in the book over and over, never using the other half at all. When a new book is purchased the same procedure is followed. This is not the fault of the publisher, but rather the fault of those who lead the songs in the assembly. In other churches they seek to use most of the songs and after two or three years decide that a change will be good for the singing in general. Is buying new books every couple of years being a good steward of the Lord's money? The answer, I believe, lies in the way the congregation uses the books they have. If the church is using all the songs in a book and the singing is vibrant and lively, then a new book might continue to

inspire the church to greater heights of praise. If, on the other hand, the church sings the same songs as those used before, and there is no attempt to improve the song service, then new books could be considered a waste of the Lord's money. If there is a justifiable need for new books, there is nothing wrong in buying them. It really boils down to a matter of judgment. We must always use wisdom in how we spend that which belongs to the Lord.

Question: Is it scriptural to give someone money from the church treasury for the funeral of a grandparent?

Answer: Unfortunately, it seems to me, that in many situations brethren are careless as to how they spend money from the church treasury. We must remember that this money is not ours, nor are we at liberty to use it as we please. The scriptures restrict its use in the following passages which deal with helping the needy saints among us: Acts 2:44-45, 4:32; 6:1-3; 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-26; 1Corinthians 16:1-2; 2Corinthians 8:8, 9:1, 12, 13. It should be noted that the church is in no position to care for those not of our number. It would be impossible for the church to feed all the hungry people in the world. On the other hand, we are responsible for our own i.e. those in the church who are in need. Regarding the above mentioned situation, since I know nothing about the circumstances surrounding it, I would recommend that the proper and scriptural procedure for dealing with this need would be for Christians, as individuals, to help this fellow Christian by giving out of our pockets, rather than taking money out of the treasury. The church is not in the business of burying people. People often define "need" in different ways. Years ago I ran into a situation where a brother had bought a watch on credit. He was unable to make a payment and wanted the church to help him in this matter. He felt that was a "need" that should be met by the church. It was not. It was a loan he instigated and it was his duty to pay it, not the church. In the same way many have various "wants" or in their eyes "needs" and expect the church to be responsible for them. All such situations must be weighed within the framework of revealed truth, and not by feelings or sentiment. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

PAUL WASN'T SENT TO BAPTIZE? CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING!

By ANDREW RICHARDSON

"I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; (15) Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. (16) And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. (17) For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

When it comes to properly understanding a statement in the Bible (or anywhere else) -context is everything! Teachers who deny baptism as a requirement for salvation often offer I Corinthians 1:14-17 as support, alleging that Paul is "de-emphasizing" baptism. Apologist Matt Slick, host of CARM radio, said the following:

"If baptism is necessary for salvation, then why did Paul downplay it and even exclude it from the description of what is required for salvation? It is because baptism is not necessary for salvation" (<http://carm.org/is-baptism-necessary-salvation>).

This is an abuse of context to the fullest. Paul explicitly states the reason he was "thankful" for not having baptized the Corinthians—"Lest any should say that I baptized in mine own name" (v. 15). Paul had enemies who were always seeking to undermine his work and influence, and he did not want them to have an opportunity to charge him with an attempt to gain his own disciples by baptizing his converts in his name rather than Christ's name. The context reveals why they might lay such a charge:

"For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. (12) Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. (13) Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (14) I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; (15) Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name."

The Christians at Corinth had formed factions under the names of various preachers, including Paul. Some professed to be "of Paul" - the party of

Paul, so to speak. In rebuke, Paul asks, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" Christians should be "of Christ" since it was Jesus Whom was crucified for them. It was Christ's name in which they were baptized. Christ is not "divided." Paul condemns their behavior.

If Paul's opponents caught wind of those at Corinth that were professing to be "of Paul," then they would have likely accused him of baptizing in his "own name," but Paul had not baptized many of them at all; thus the potential accusation of his adversaries could hold no water, and this is why he was thankful. His statement had nothing to do with the importance of baptism in relation to salvation. Slick asserts that Paul "downplayed" baptism, but in truth, Paul downplayed the administering of baptism by his own hands among the Corinthians -not baptism itself. Paul did not say he was thankful none of them had been baptized, but that he himself had not been the one to baptize them.

Paul continues and says, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." To those who think like Slick, this means Paul separated baptism from the gospel, but again, he was not talking about baptism itself, but the work of performing it. It was not a significant thing to Christ for Paul to be the one who administered the baptisms -it matters little which Christian is the baptizer.

Slick asks why Paul excluded baptism from what is required for salvation. The answer is-he didn't! In fact, Paul says he preached the gospel, and the gospel teaches baptism as essential for salvation:

"And [Jesus] said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16).

The gospel according to Jesus includes both faith "and" baptism for salvation, and Paul taught the same:

PUTTING ON CHRIST

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27).

Doesn't it stand to reason that if "as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," then as many as have not been baptized into Christ have

not put on Christ? Can a man be saved without “putting on Christ”?

BAPTIZED “INTO CHRIST”

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (4) Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection...” (Rom. 6:3-5)

Baptism is how we get “into Christ.” How can one be saved without being in Christ? Paul says “if” we have been planted in the “likeness” of his death (baptism) we shall also be in the likeness of “his resurrection.” So, what if we have not been planted in the “likeness of his death”?

THE CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

“In [Christ] also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” (Col. 2:11-12).

Paul connects the removing of our sins with being buried with Christ in baptism. It is in baptism when Christ “circumcises” the sin from our souls (forgives us). (Note: Another necessary aspect of the removal of sin from the heart is repentance which proceeds and leads to baptism wherein is the actual removal of sin, i.e., forgiveness, by Christ- Rom. 6.) Just as Peter said to repent, and be baptized “for” the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Can a man be saved without the “circumcision of Christ” -the forgiveness of sins?

It’s intellectually dishonest, as well as sinful, to rip scripture from context to support a preconceived belief. Paul didn’t “downplay” baptism anywhere, but rather taught its purpose and necessity in the salvation of our souls. Let us take on his attitude when he said, “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:17).

TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS BY MARK GRANT

In James the first chapter we read, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:2-4; KJV). James doesn’t say IF we “fall into divers temptations”, but whenever we DO we are to “count it all joy.” James teaches us that all Christians are going to have to face “trials and temptations” in life, and that it is possible to profit from them. As Christians we are not to pretend to be happy when we face adversities but we should have a positive attitude since it is an opportunity for joy because of the struggles it can produce in our lives. James is teaching us that when difficulties come our way we can turn them into times of learning. One of the many beneficial purposes of afflictions in this life for the child of God is to test the genuineness of our faith. We can’t really know the depth of our character until we see how we are going to react under “trials and temptations.” Solomon said, “If you faint in the day of adversity, Your strength is small” (Prov. 24:10; NKJV). God knows that tough times can teach us perseverance as well as help us to mature and become complete. So next time instead of complaining about your struggles, you should see them as opportunities for growth. The New International Version reads this way, “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:2-4).

What Is Temptation?

Webster’s dictionary defines temptation as, “1. A tempting or being tempted 2. Something that tempts; enticement” (New World Dictionary, pg. 1464). While most people associate temptation with only an enticement to sin, the scriptures do not limit it’s meaning as such. Marvin Vincent describes how temptation is used in the bible by saying, “It is a mistake to define this word as only solicitation to evil. It means trial of any kind, without reference to its moral quality” (Vincent’s Word Studies Of The New Testament, Vol. 1; pg. 44). The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible explains the word “tempt” as, “To test, try, put to the proof. “Tempt” and “temptation” are used in

the Bible characteristically of the testing of man or of God" (Vol. 4, pg. 568). We can understand then, that temptation is used in two different ways. First it is used in a good sense of God testing man by proving his belief in obeying God's word. The prophet Jeremiah wrote, "O LORD of hosts, You who test the righteous, And see the mind and heart.. (Jer. 20:12; NKJV). God's testing is always for the good end of exposing loyalty and disloyalty, faith and unbelief, for what they are; but it is never an enticement to do evil (James 1:13). Secondly, it is Satan who tempts man to do evil through the lust of the flesh (2 Pet. 1:4). Temptation then, is simply a trial which serves to show us what we are and what is in us. It brings to light the strength or weakness of our faith, our love to God, and our regard to His law. It was Job who said in his trial, "But He knows the way that I take; When he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold (Job 23:10; NKJV). As gold is heated, impurities float to the top and can be skimmed off. Likewise our trials, struggles, and hardships refine and strengthen our faith by teaching us patience (Rom. 5:3,4; 1 Pet. 1:7) and help us grow to be the kind of people God desires.

HOW DOES GOD TEMPT MAN?

In Genesis the twenty second chapter and verse one reads, "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Gen. 22:1-2; KJV). To offer Isaac as a burnt offering was surely the supreme test of Abraham's faith. Abraham was given the decision to choose between his affectionate love for his son or obeying God's word. As Abraham was about to slay his son the Angel of the Lord called to him and said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me" (Gen. 22:12; KJV). God's test for Abraham was matched by his faith and trust in God. "By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son" (Heb. 11:17; NKJV). The great lesson this story bears for the believer today is that all trials allowed by God are for the strengthening of one's faith by enduring the trials that come our way, neither growing weary nor quitting, we can

prove our faith in God to be genuine. It was God who allowed trials to enter into the lives of the Israelites as they wandered in the wilderness in order to humble them, prove them, and test their obedience. "And you shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not" (Deut. 8:2; NKJV). It is imperative that we all understand that God created man as a free moral agent in order to be put to the test. We can choose to serve God, and submit to His word and live with Him in eternity, or we can choose to serve Satan through the lust of the flesh and spend eternity in torment. "The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. 17:8-9; NKJV).

HOW DOES SATAN TEMPT MAN?

As long as you and I are in this physical body then we are going to be tempted by old Satan to do evil. James wrote, "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:13-15; NKJV). Temptation to do evil comes from sinful desires within us and not from God. Jesus said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19; NKJV). Temptation to sin is a process that begins with an evil thought and becomes sin when we dwell on the thought and allow it to become an action. There is no sin in just being tempted; for Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15; NKJV). Temptation, however, does become sin when we are drawn away by our own desires and enticed and then yield to the enticement from within, followed by action and finally and ultimately death. Sin does not force itself on the unwilling, but is chosen because of its attractiveness. "Drawn away ... and enticed..." are primarily hunting and fishing words, used metaphorically here to explain the consequences of yielding to Satan's enticements. It was the beauty of the forbidden fruit that acted as a lure for Eve, the bait, which resulted in her being caught upon the hook of sin (Gen. 3:1-6). Forbidden

pleasure, however great the desire for it may be, must be firmly excluded from our lives, lest we be caught in Satan's snare. "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7; NKJV). Submission to God is an attitude of the heart shown by obedience to His Word, while resist means that you refuse to cooperate with the devil. Let us as Christian's learn to exercise discipline by rejecting the appealing "bait" with which Satan lures us into his trap of enslavement to sin. Let us determine that we will never do or go to any place where there is the possibility that we may be tempted to sin. As Paul said, "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22; NKJV)

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

Oscar Wilde once said, "I can resist anything, except temptation." No one is immune because we all have our battle with temptation everyday of our lives, and at times we may lose the battle. But we must keep fighting and fighting to resist Satan. That is why we need to watch out for Satan for he will do his best to attack us and try to destroy us (1 Pet. 5:8). While it is certain that Satan will attack us, we need to know and understand that Satan is limited in his power, because God has put certain restrictions upon Satan's efforts. In first Corinthians the tenth chapter in verse twelve we read, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:12-13; NKJV) When faced with temptation no one needs to feel that he has been personally singled out, because temptations happen to all people everywhere. The great difference between a sinner and a Christian is that a Christian has God as his helper when he meets these temptations, whereas the sinner must face them alone. The temptation to do evil may be very great, but God has put a limit on it. When we resist the temptation then God is faithful, for He is right there with us to keep us from being overwhelmed by the temptation. God has nowhere promised exemption to His children from temptation and trials. Yet, He has promised His sustaining presence and power by providing a way of escape when we have the fidelity to resist, thus enabling the believer to conquer. As Peter said, "...the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations..." (2 Pet. 2:9; NKJV).

HOW TO RESIST

The greatest example of how to resist Satan was given by our Lord when He was led out into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted (Matt. 4:1-11). Jesus was tempted by the Devil, but he never sinned! The Devil's temptations focused on three crucial areas; (1) lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eyes, (3) the pride of life (See I John 2:15-16). Jesus' response to all three temptations was to quote the Word of God (...it is written...), showing His followers the power of Scripture in battling the Evil One. Satan will certainly attack those who obey God but he is powerless against those who resist him with the Word of God. It was David who wrote, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You" (Psa. 119:11; NKJV). Jesus was able to resist all of Satan's temptations because he not only knew Scripture, but he also obeyed it. Knowing Scripture verses is an important step in helping us resist the Devil's attacks, but we must also be willing to obey and do what the Scripture's teach as well (James 1:22-25). Note that Satan memorized Scripture and quoted it, but he has always refused to obey it. Knowing and obeying what Jesus taught in the Gospel will always help us to follow God's Will rather than the Devil's.

In closing, you and I can take comfort in knowing that Jesus knows firsthand what it is to experience temptations, and He is willing and able to help us in our struggles. "For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted" (Heb. 2:18; NKJV). No one can truly suffer with someone else unless he has been through a similar experience himself. That is why a Christian can go into His presence with prayer at any time of the day or night and acquire mercy, grace and support in time of need. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:15-16; NKJV). When you are going through trials and temptations, then go to Jesus for strength and patience. Remember, the Christian who has stood the test and remained lovingly faithful to God, even under afflictions will receive the crown of life. "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (James 1:12; NKJV).

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IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE. continued from page one

think they can “get by” with things as they grow older this attitude could cause many problems. We must teach our children at an early age that in reality no one “gets by” with anything. Rom. 14: So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. It is unfortunate that many parents fail to communicate this principle to their children. As a result the children grow up thinking that if Mom and Dad don’t see what they do and other earthly authorities do not see what they do they have gotten away with something. If we teach our children that they are ultimately responsible to God they will be forced to think twice before they do something wrong when we are not around. When we teach our children that they are responsible to God we keep them safe.

Third, we can keep our children safe by teaching them the importance of prayer. As parents we must teach our children the importance of prayer. Prayer must be a part of our daily lives and we should let our children know this. When we pray together as a family we will develop a family unity that no problems or storms of life can destroy. We should teach our children that God listens to prayer and encourage them to pray about decisions concerning their standards and values, as well as their behavior. Our children need to realize the importance of prayer in their daily lives. Without learning to pray and depend completely on God, our children will look for something or someone else to meet their needs. When we teach our children the importance of prayer they will have the background for making wise and godly decisions. 1 Pet.5:7 casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. We need to let our children know that they can cast their cares upon the one that cares for them. As parents we must teach our children the importance of prayer. Prayer can keep our children safe.

Fourth, we can keep our children safe by teaching them how to resist a permissive society. The most fundamental thing in teaching our children to resist a permissive society is to show them that there is an absolute standard for morality. This standard is God’s Word. It is inspired. 2 Tim 3:16-17. It is a guide to all Christians in life.

The basic error of the permissive society of our day is the philosophy of “get all out of life you can to satisfy yourself.” This philosophy leads to many sinful activities. Some of these sinful activities are

even participated in, while attending some of our “big meetings”. Why is this philosophy wrong? It is wrong because it stands against God’s standard for His creatures. Our lives are to be lived for the glory of God and in order to do this, man must be obedient to God’s will.

From the standard, God’s Word, it must be pointed out that whatever we sow, we will reap. Gal.6:7-8, and that an accounting will be given for our life for whatever lifestyle we follow 2 Cor. 5:10.

A desire to live eternally in heaven must be created in the hearts of the young. That desire will come from a knowledge of God’s word. This is difficult to do because of the materialistic society in which we live, but it can be accomplished and will go a long way in helping the young resist the charms of a permissive lifestyle.

Conclusion: Is the young man Safe? There is no evidence that David gave time, attention and interest in the training of Absalom, spiritually or otherwise. There was not the proper discipline when Absalom did evil. Spiritual training was obviously lacking, seeing the kind of person Absalom was. Parents harm their children immeasurably when they withhold proper discipline from them, when they are not attentive to the upbringing of their children, when they are too busy with other things, such as house, jobs, sports and fulfilling their own ambitions. David was a busy man.

Some parents have traded a life for a living. Yet, “a living” is not the most important thing, a life is. Many parents are scrambling daily to make more money so they can buy more and better things, but oh what a price they pay! We are wasting our best when we waste our children. Our children are our future. They are our evangelistic field. If we lose them, we have lost it all. I ask the question, Is the Young Man Safe!

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“I CHANGE NOT.” continued from page two

Perhaps this is one reason why some have not been able to resist changing the church. We are accustomed to seeing constant change about us, and we see changes in the church as well. The church should never change, but in some places it has. It is of divine origin and no man has the right to change anything about it. Our God is the one

thing we know that never changes. His Holy Word has not changed, yet men have tampered with what the Lord brought about from the foundation of the world. Even the name has been changed in rare instances by those who apparently think they can do better than God. Most of us understand that the church is the bride of Christ and naturally should wear and bear His name. The worship was also divinely instituted, yet that too has suffered at the hands of foolish men. When, if ever, are men going to realize an unchanging God brought the church about and He set within it what He wanted. No one has the right to alter anything about the church, yet change has continued for many centuries and does until the present time. Do men not realize judgment is coming? Is it possible some feel the Lord will simply overlook their tampering with Holy things? "I am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6) That passage alone should give all men pause.

Under the Old Testament Law, we read about the table of shewbread. (Leviticus 24: 5,6) God decreed there should be twelve loaves on that table, one loaf for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. He also commanded that those loaves be placed there in two rows of six. Why did He do this? Men may not have known why, but we may be sure it would have been a great mistake to place them in three rows of four. Yet, we see the Lord's Table changed by many today. It is plain He desired one cup and one loaf on the table in the church. That is all anyone can read in Matthew 26: 26, 27; Mark 14:22, 23; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16, and 1 Corinthians 11: 24, 25. Yet, it is common among some to use individual cups rather than a single one. Seemingly, there is no thought given to what the Lord set in order. Brethren, a day of reckoning is coming and men who have changed Holy things will someday stand before the Lord who doesn't change.

A sense of change is all about us today. In view of the Scriptures, that seems very strange. Jesus said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:9) "Doctrine" means that which is to be taught. Jesus then plainly tells us that if our teaching (doctrine) comes from men, our worship is vain, or worthless. It will not be accepted! The apostle wrote in Hebrews 5:9, "And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." How can we obey the Lord if our teaching is from men? We cannot. It would seem obvious that our teaching must be from the Bible. Men take a huge risk by following what any man says rather than what we can read in God's

Word. Jesus said in Matthew 15:13, "...Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Of course, this is so because the Lord never changes. On Judgment Day there may be many disappointed people. Much of what they have been following will be discarded by the righteous Judge as "vain" or worthless and, they will be left to explain themselves to an unchanging Lord.

Thank God for men and women who will have no doctrine unless it comes from the Bible. Let us "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent. Then, we can know we are safe as we serve Him who changes not. -DLK

A TRIBUTE TO ROY LEE CRISWELL

BY RONNY F. WADE



It has been my privilege to know Roy Criswell for over sixty years. We first met as teen-agers in Oklahoma City. Roy was preparing to enter the field of gospel preaching. Having been raised in a Christian home, he had the utmost respect for God and His word. It was my privilege to visit in his parents home in the Purcell, Oklahoma area on a number of occasions when I would be holding gospel meetings in that part of the State. They were both God fearing people. That along with many other good traits they passed on to their children. From time to time thru the years my path would cross with Roy and his family, however when he moved to the Cassville, Missouri area, in 1974 we had opportunity to visit and work together more frequently. I have always found him to be a man of determination and conviction. You could depend on what he told you. He was strait forward and never given to beating around the bush when it came to matters of truth. His reputation in the community was spotless. If need be he worked at secular jobs in order to support his family and continue preaching at the same time. He and his good wife Zella have opened their home to countless visitors during the years. A few months ago a large crowd of friends, family members and Christians met in Aurora, MO to celebrate Roy's eightieth birthday. The out pouring of people stood as a testimony to the

respect he has earned in the Cassville-Aurora area. Roy and Zella recently announced that they would be moving to the Kansas City area to be near their children. His absence in this area of Missouri will be felt by many, however we all realize the wisdom of such a move. The years have taken a toll on Roy's physical condition, and he felt it time to cut back on some of his activities. We will miss him in Southwest Missouri. His good name and consistent example have been a blessing to many of us. The church at Aurora stands as a testimony to his zeal and determination to see a faithful congregation in that city. May the Lord bless both Roy and Zella with good health in the years that lie ahead. You may address cards or letter to them at 10306 Lucca Lane, Peculiar, MO 64078.- Ronny F. Wade

Announcements

WHERE THE SAINTS ASSEMBLE

Please correct phone number for Thomas Francis
in Andrews, Texas 79714 432-524-9702

Thank you - Bro. Thomas



NEW YEAR'S MEETING

Doug Hawkins will be the speaker.

Dates: 28 through 31 Dec. 2013 Country Club
Church of Christ 1602 S. Country Club Tucson,
AZ. 85713 Contacts: Jim West (520) 495-4790
jimwest34@q.com Troy Seals (520) 762-1468

Our Departed

CARR- On September 16, 2013 brother Jerald Carr passed from this life after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. He had been a member of the church for a greater part of his life, and for the past number of years he had attended the Mission Hills church in Springfield, MO. He was truly a joy to know, a kind outgoing man with a winsome personality. It was my privilege to have known him for nearly fifty years. He was married to Berniece Ruebush in May of 1952 and together they shared the joys and sorrows of life. He was present every Lord's day for church services right up until the last few weeks of his life. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife Berniece, two daughters Suzzane and Debra and their families. It is with sadness that we say "goodbye," and with faith that we look for a reunion on fairer fields and in brighter climes. The

writer conducted the memorial service from the Holman Funeral Chapel in Lebanon, MO. -Ronny F. Wade

Field Reports

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, October, 11. We are still working with the church in Olivehurst, CA. The church is growing bit by bit. There has been one baptism in the last 2 months. So far as my battle with non-Hodgkin lymphoma cancer is concerned I am doing fairly well. After my first series of treatment by chemotherapy they found that the original cancer had disappeared and we thank God, the doctors, and all the prayers from our brothers and sisters for this. However, after the treatment ended they did another scan and found a small spot in another part of my body, so they began another series of chemotherapy treatments that ended two weeks ago. Another scan will be taken in about another month to see whether or not that spot has been successfully treated so please continue your prayers in my behalf. We are to be in Bakersfield (Brundage) Sunday to preach. May God bless all of you as you strive to magnify the name of Jesus.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, Oct. 14, old_paths@juno.com We recently enjoyed a short meeting at Clovis, California. It had been several years since we had been with them for a meeting and we really enjoyed it. We made our home with Don and Lyndall Rowland and were treated royally. Visitors came from other areas and congregations giving us nice attendance. Some outsiders were in attendance as well which we appreciated. We enjoyed getting to visit in some of the brethren's homes as well. There are good brethren at Clovis. Fremont closed a short meeting yesterday with Greg Gay. Greg did an outstanding job and the congregation both enjoyed and benefitted from his preaching. He taught things we needed to hear and we are sure much good was accomplished. We pray God's richest blessings on him and his family. The church here continues to enjoy peace and the brethren love to be together. If you can visit our services, we will

be happy to have you. Fremont plans to relocate to the city of Livermore sometime next year when a new building has been completed. If you have relatives living there we will be happy to contact them about visiting the services. Pat and I plan to visit the brethren in Hawaii soon to work with them a few days and hold a short meeting. Pray for us in the work.

Darrell Crawford, 208 E. Baldwin Rd. Unit S. Panama City, Florida, 32405 bugz1955@hotmail.com Things are going well here in Panama City, we have had a very wet, hot and busy summer. We are experiencing growth here spiritually as well as numerically. Recently we have had a Brother and a sister from a local black congregation take their stand with the truth coming out of the cups and classes. We feel there are more to follow in the near future. For this we give God all the glory, honor and praise. We currently have 8 attending from the same congregation and most are studying with us. All except the children. We are in the process of preparing to mail out letters to the homes in the area of the church inviting them to church and offering correspondence courses to all who are interested. Due to the weather and sickness we were unable to do the last few Friday Fest's in downtown Panama City, but Lord willing we will again be there in November for the final one of the year. Then resume them again next year Lord willing. We have been asked to attend and speak at the annual October study at the Queensborough study in Shreveport, La. We have never been there, so we are very excited about this opportunity. We are looking forward to the annual New Year meeting in Dothan, Al this year, it looks like it will be a great meeting. I would encourage all to make plan to attend if you can. We want to again thank everyone for all the calls, cards and other help during my recent illness. I am getting better, but other issues have come up that may be problems in the future. Please keep us in your prayers. Please continue to pray for the work here, and visit when you can, We love visitors!!

THE WORD

By JOHN STEPHENS

I want to be of service every day
 To help someone along the way
 I want to be a light when things are bad
 Causing people to wish they never had sinned
 Only time will tell where we will be
 In heaven or hell through eternity,
 It all depends how we view the word
 Being careful to act, as those who heard
 "One faith" throughout, the Good Book reads
 Telling us to teach what the Bible heeds,
 Your soul or mine, how will it be,
 As we study the word toward eternity?
 Some day, I know not when it will be
 The Lord will come with a shout for me
 I will arise from the dust of clay
 A call to judgment, what will He say?
 I stand there trembling before the great "I AM"
 Will my name be written in the book of the Lamb?
 Yes it will, I suggest to you
 For back on earth we have been true
 Believe and obey that's what we heard
 We trusted God by the power of His word.
 Only Christ's church, that's what we read
 Obeying the gospel we heard it said
 So enter in, come one and all
 For you heard and obeyed the Masters call.



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THE BACK PAGE. . .

NIP IT IN THE BUD

By CARL M. JOHNSON

In an episode of “The Andy Griffith Show,” Sheriff Andy Taylor adds three deputies to his force to help deal with the influx of people coming to Mayberry for the annual Founder’s Day celebration. After he informs the new deputies of their duties, longtime deputy Barney Fife smugly steps forward and adds that when the new deputies see a problem developing they should “Nip it! Nip it in the bud!”

Several years ago a young couple with no religious affiliation walked off the street into one of our church buildings. The brethren at the congregation welcomed them warmly, encouraged the couple to come back, studied with them, and eventually baptized them into Christ.

The young man indicated a desire to teach in the assembly, so the elders worked with him and eventually gave him an opportunity to teach at an evening service. When he got into the pulpit, however, he shocked everyone as he began an angry tirade against the congregation. He ripped the church and the elders as being uncharitable. Several minutes into the rant one of the elders rose from his pew, made his way to the front of the pulpit, and said in a firm voice to the young man, “You’re through! Get your stuff and get out of there!”

The elder had the physical and temperamental capabilities to back up his request so the young man complied. He gathered his notes and his wife and darted out the back door, never to be heard from again.

Unfortunately, the couple had an ulterior motive for visiting the church. They were bread-seekers primarily concerned about charity (money). The elder’s quick response to the young man’s misuse of the pulpit, however, was a classic case of bud-nipping.

Churches are vulnerable to many kinds of evil influences. The Lord and the apostle Paul warn that the well-being of a congregation can also be threatened by the “leaven” of false teaching and immorality (Mt. 16: 6, 12; 1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

A small amount of leaven (yeast) mixed into a lump of dough will pervade the entire lump very quickly and dramatically alter its nature. Paul explains false teaching and unchecked immorality have the same effect upon the church, and he warns us against the silent, insensible, and gradual influence of such evils. He explains, “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” (1 Cor. 5:6).

There will always be false teachers looking to devour the flock (Acts 20:28-31), and they may not always be easy to detect. Some hide their true agenda while they leaven the lump. They quietly work themselves into positions of influence while carefully discrediting anyone who stands in the way. Eventually, they get a thrill out of shocking folks with their rhetoric, undermining their faith, and replacing it with their own heresies.

A common ploy of false teachers is to claim perpetually that they have been misunderstood when they are caught peddling their heresies. They may also demonstrate a negative and hostile attitude toward the brotherhood, convinced that it consists of ignorant and backward sectarians. Yet, one of the tests of true Christianity is whether we love the brethren (1 Jn. 3:10, 14, 16-23).

They may claim defiantly the right to practice their “Christian liberties,” while having no consideration for brethren whom they consider to be “hide-bound” by tradition. It is true we have liberty in Christ, but we have not been liberated from the law of love. We must exercise our freedom in a way that helps brethren and does not entice them to do wrong (1 Cor. 9:18-23; 10:23-11:1; Rom. 14).

Some argue that it is the spirit and not the letter of the law that counts and they identify the spirit of the law as love. It is true that without love we are nothing (1 Cor. 13), but love without law is a shifting sentiment without any sense of direction. How can we know what love is unless there is some standard by which we can identify it? Are we to love one another as the wolf loves the lamb? How is love to avoid evil and do good if there is no standard by which to measure conduct. Love fulfills the law in that it refrains from doing the evil the law prohibits, and it does the good the law commands (Rom 13:8-10; Mt. 7:12). Jesus says, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (Jn. 14:15). If there is no letter of the law, how can we know what His commandments are?

We are not to be suspicious of everyone, but we are not to be naive either. The Lord and the apostles repeatedly and passionately warn us that false teachers will threaten the church. Therefore, when we see “wolves in sheep’s clothing” disseminating their evil leaven in the church, we must purge it quickly before it spreads throughout the whole body (1 Cor. 5:7). In the words of the inimitable Mayberry deputy sheriff, we must nip it! Nip it in the bud! cmjthebackpage@gmail.com