

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. 10

## THE PLACE OF THE SWORD IN RELIGION

By *RONNY F. WADE*

In Matthew 26:52 Jesus states a principle in these verses, we would do well to heed. “But Jesus said to him, put your sword in its place for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” In this verse the Lord gives warning to anyone who would use violent means to accomplish the will of God. What part, if any, does the sword play in religion? The answer depends upon the particular religion to which you refer.

### I. The Moslem Religion:

It is a matter of historical record that the Mohammedan religion in its inception relied heavily upon the sword. When given the upper hand Moslems gave those whom they opposed the following options: 1. embracing their religion, 2. paying tribute money, or 3. being devoured by the sword. Gibbon, noted historian (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*), quotes Mohammed as saying “The sword is the key of heaven and of hell: a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting and prayer: whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven: at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion, and odoriferous as musk; and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by wings of angels and cherubim.” Quotations from the Koran (Quran) bear this out. “...Verily I am with you; wherefore confirm those who believe. I will cast a dread into the hearts of the unbelievers. Therefore strike off their heads, and strike off all the ends of their fingers” Chapter 8: 12. Chapter 8:67 “It hath not been granted unto any prophet, that he should possess captives, until he hath made a great slaughter of the infidels in the earth.” “Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state

of subjection. And the Jews say: Uzair is the son of Allah; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allah; these are the words of their mouths; they imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before; may Allah destroy them; how they are turned away” 9:29-30. Far from being a religion of peace, Islam is a religion of violence. Anyone who follows the Koran, will be violent, by taking up the sword. “O true believers, wage war against such of the infidels as are near you; and let them find severity in you; and know that God is with those who fear him” 9:123. I am well aware that many professing Muslims claim to be non-violent and peace loving. We don’t doubt that such is the case, however, such a lifestyle is inconsistent with the teachings of their holy book, the Koran. By the same token there are many professing “Christians” who do not follow the teachings of the New Testament.

“And kill them wherever you find them...but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers...and fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors” 2:191. Why would Muslims die or commit suicide for their religion? “Therefore let those fight in the way of Allah, who sell this world’s life for the hereafter; and whoever fights in the way of Allah, then be he slain or be he victorious, We shall grant him a mighty reward” 4:74. Those who fight can expect either Victory or “Martyrdom” i.e. being killed in battle. What is the reward? Unquestionably he will be ushered into heaven. And what awaits? The answer goes beyond Christian thought.

It is a sensual heaven wherein youthful black-eyed maidens (virgins), have been especially created to attend to the sexual pleasure and the continual delight of the true believer throughout eternity. (See chapters 55-56 of the Koran)

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**Editorial**

**RESTORATION**

*By PAUL O. NICHOLS*

In the 1800s there was a great religious movement in this country, an effort to restore ancient Christianity. There were men who were concerned and eager and who worked hard to see that true Christianity should induce honest and sincere religious people to return to the Scriptures for their faith and practice; honest men and women who really wanted to do the will of God. Some of their slogans were "Back to the Bible" and "We speak where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent." This movement appealed to conscientious and honest people who wanted to serve God in His own appointed way, neither adding to, nor taking away from that which was given by inspiration. The movement gained momentum and in the 1800s the Church of Christ was the fastest growing church in this country. Honest religious people wanted to do what was right, and they began to search the Scriptures and to listen to those preachers who were calling men and women back to the Bible and what inspiration taught rather than to continue to listen to the false teachers of that time and continue to practice error.

Many preachers and others at that time came to realize that they were in religious error. And when they saw that they were wrong and that their practices were not authorized by God, they were converted to the truth they learned. They were made to realize by a closer study of the Scriptures that they were worshipping in vain. Honesty demanded that they give up the religious error and accept the Truth; religious error that some of them had practiced for generations. This was not easy; and in many cases caused separation of families and friends. But for the sake of doing the will of the Lord they made the sacrifice.

We are a conservative Church of Christ, and the reason is because we understand the need of speaking where the Bible speaks and being silent where it is silent. We realize that we will be judged by Jesus according to "That which is written."

There are some things in the Bible that do need special study and consideration. For instance, the eldership and

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## QUERIST COLUMN

By CLINT DEFRANCE

1. Why did God not select a woman to be among the apostles, elders or pastors, evangelists in the New Testament?

Response: The counsels of God are known only to Himself, but in this case we can deduce that a woman holding such an office would be contrary to God's order of creation. The apostle Paul says in 1 Timothy 2.11-15: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" And again in 1 Corinthians 14.34-35: "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church." The offices of apostle, elder, and evangelist have a necessary function of public teaching and leadership in the church, therefore the principles discussed in the aforementioned passages would exclude women from holding those offices. This is a reasonable explanation for why history is silent on female apostles, elders, or evangelists in the primitive church. On this same basis there should be no female elders or evangelists in the churches today.

It bears mention, however, that there were female prophets, or prophetesses - both in the Old Testament (Exodus 15.20; Judges 4.4; 2 Kings 22.14; Luke 2.36) and in the New Testament (Acts 21.9). The reason for this seems to be that the exercise of the prophetic gift could be private rather than public (as evinced in the account of Deborah the prophetess who "would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges 4.5). This kind of setting must also have been the circumstance in which the women references in 1 Corinthians 11 and the daughters of Philip exercised their prophetic gifts. In this same setting, any woman may teach (Acts 18.26; Titus 2.3).

2. What was the kind of hymn that Jesus and his disciples sang after the Lord's Supper was instituted?

Response: The Hallel, consisting of Psalms 113-118, was usually sung at the Passover, with Psalms 115-118 being sung at the end. If Jesus and the Disciples followed this tradition, they sang the following words: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Let Israel now say, "His mercy endures forever." Let the house of Aaron now say, "His mercy endures forever." Let those who fear the LORD now say, "His mercy endures forever." I called on the LORD in distress; the LORD answered me and set me in a broad place. The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? The LORD is for me among those who help me; therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes. All nations surrounded me, but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me; but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. They surrounded me like bees; they were quenched like a fire of thorns; for in the name of the LORD I will destroy them. You pushed me violently, that I might fall, but the LORD helped me. The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. The right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. The LORD has chastened me severely, but He has not given me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD. This is the gate of the LORD, through which the righteous shall enter. I will praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my salvation. The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, and He has given us light; bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my God, and I will praise You; You are my God, I will exalt You. Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."

If this was indeed the hymn, it is a powerful thought that the Lord and His disciples sang of His own resurrection on the night of His betrayal unto death (Acts 4.10-11). How this must have strengthened the Lord in that dark hour for the grim task ahead!

### THE SABBATH, OR THE LORD'S DAY?

By MELVIN BLALOCK

In our discussion we have shown that the Sabbath was designated as a day of rest and a failure to keep the Sabbath called for the death penalty. In the covenant made with Israel they were commanded, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it," Ex. 20:8-11. That covenant, and the keeping of the Sabbath came to an end at the cross. The Apostle Paul wrote in the new testament, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ," Col. 2:14-17. The Apostle wrote that no one has the right to judge you under the new covenant for failing to keep the Sabbath. If men are still subject to keeping the Sabbath, the death penalty should be inflicted for one's failure to do so. We know of no religion in America today who is willing to enforce this part of the law. Under the old covenant we find those who questioned when the Sabbath would end. We find these questions recorded in the book of Amos: "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat," Amos 8:5-6? Amos gave the answer. "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day," Amos 8:9-10. When did the sun go down at noon and God darken the earth in the clear day? The answer is provided in the gospels. "And it was about the

sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst," Lk. 22:44-45. This significant event occurred when Jesus died on the cross, and with his death, the command to keep the Sabbath came to an end.

Today, faithful Christians observe the Lord's Day, not as a day of rest, but as a day of worship. We know of no command prohibiting working on Sunday, the Lord's Day. It is, however, a sin to work and miss worship on the Lord's Day. Paul wrote the following to Jewish Christians living under the new covenant: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace, Heb 10:25-29"

It is serious matter to fail to honor the Lord on the Lord's Day. It is called the Lord's Day because Jesus arose from the dead on this day. "Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons," Mk. 16:9. It is on the first day of the week that the disciples gather to partake of the Lord's Supper, Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; and to give to the collection, 1 Cor. 16:1-2. It was on this day that the Apostle John received the Revelation. We read this account: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book....."Rev.1:10-11. Let us always honor the Lord on the Lord's Day!

### MIGRATING MEMBERS

By AARON BATTEY

Everyone answers to someone. The words authority and submission are very offsetting today. Submission is culturally conceptualized as abusive, patriarchal, and outdated. In kind, authority is what furnishes bad

marriages and abusive relationships. Together, they make a recipe for disaster.

God's revelation on the subject of submission and authority is quite different to the cultural evaluation. God, in fact, is the one who ordained submission and headship from the very beginning (see 1 Cor. 11:3). A brief preview of Ephesians 5:21-6:9 illustrates how that submission and authority harmoniously work together within all relationship contexts. Paul uses a pattern of 3's to show what he means in 5:21 where he says, "submit to one another..." In 5:15-18 Paul gives three contrasts, the last one being: "be filled with the Spirit." In 5:19-21 he gives three commands all relating back to this final contrast. The last command is, "submit to one another," (v. 21). In 5:22-6:9 Paul goes on to give three contexts, showing what he meant by the command-submit to one another. Paul was not teaching the backward, illogical idea that is often termed "mutual submission" in v. 21. No, Paul was essentially saying, "Submit to the authority that God has ordained in your life, and here are three contexts to bear out this point." The three contexts he chose are as follows- wives to husbands, children to parents, and employees (servants) to employers (masters). This is not an exhaustive list of relationships in which Christians must submit, but it does provide a nice, round starting point.

Remember, everyone answers to someone. It is because this faithful saying goes unheralded or altogether unmentioned, that two things abound in the visible body of Christ: baptized believers who fail to take up membership with a local body of believers, and church members within a local body who refuse to submit to the church's leadership. These are both problems, problems that must be addressed.

God approved and God ordained leadership takes on more shape and size than simply kings in the Old Testament and church elders in the New Testament. God seems to have been pleased with Jethro's advice to Moses in Exodus 18:21, as he advised appointing judges over the people, men that feared God and were full of integrity. Likewise, Paul commanded, that's right, he commanded the church members at Corinth to submit to those men in the congregation who were recognized as leaders (1 Cor. 16:15-16). These men were not labeled as elders, neither were the "leaders" in the book of Hebrews (see 13:7,17,24) to whom those Christians were told to submit. Summarizing up to this point, every Christian is called, like Paul in Acts 9:26, to take up membership with a local congregation (i.e.

Corinth, Philippi, Colosse, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Antioch, etc.). Likewise, every Christian is called, like those at Corinth, to submit to the leadership that congregation, for leadership within the local church is God approved and God ordained. This holds true even in the absence of elders (1 Thess. 5:12-13). In the absence of elders, it would seem God appointed those called "teachers" (i.e. Eph. 4:11; James 3:1) to lead the church; these are men like Stephanus (1 Cor. 16:15).

When these directives are not followed by baptized believers, the Lord's church suffers. Failing to take up church membership on a local congregational level presents its own problems, but for the rest of this study, we will focus on those who refuse to submit to church leaders. This is called rebellion, and often times the result is what this author has termed migrating members. Migrating members are baptized believers who go from congregation A to congregation B without asking permission from congregation A's leadership, leadership to whom they are supposed to be submitting. Many times people go from one congregation to the next without asking their leaders, not intentionally disrespecting those men. At other times people church hop for the very reason of refusal to be submissive to those men. Both accounts are improper, the latter being high handed rebellion against God ordained and God approved church government.

People leave churches for a slew of reasons. Here are a few examples that need second thought- they told my family member he was sinning; the preacher taught something that didn't sit well with me; I just didn't feel the love there; I wanted my kids to be around more people their age; that congregation was so small and wasn't doing anything for me. Most of these reasons are telling of a Christian's inner character. That is, many have not pondered on the adaptation of John F. Kennedy's famous saying, "Don't ask what your church can do for you, but what can you do for your church." It is sad that people would leave congregations for any of these self-centered reasons, but such is often the case.

In response to such migrating members, there is often silence. The leaders from congregation A are often glad to see said person leave, and the leaders from congregation B are glad to see more people in the pews. The result: a continuous cycle of unaccountability, undisciplined contentions, and congregations left to struggle. Instead of being silent when members migrate like this, leaders should kindly approach new members and ask the appropriate questions. Did you leave congregation A in

peace? If not, was congregation A teaching or harboring false doctrine that led you to leave? Did you inform and get consent from the leadership at congregation A before you left? Such questions can quickly get to the bottom of the person's migrating and resultingly facilitate the process of fixing unresolved conflict if necessary. This can also help reinforce the concept of submission to leadership to which many members are innocently naive.

In those cases where members migrate whimsically from church to church, God's ordained leadership has been subverted, and many times the story of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram gets reenacted in live action role play, without the earth opening up and all that bit (read Numbers 16). Instead of this terrible unsightliness, may God's people and leaders work harmoniously together in maintaining the God given pattern meant to promote unity in the church. Ask the right questions. Be honest with yourself. Maintain the peace. Respect your leaders.

### CONTENDING FOR THE CAUSE

*pt. 2 of 3*

*By MICHAEL BOLTON*

One can easily say that the Apostle Paul was an equal opportunity preacher. In other words, he did not dwell on the negative too long, nor was he all positive. Rather than continually putting his readers down, he offered encouragement and sound words to point his brethren and us in the right direction.

We have previously written on the idea of some things to flee. Now, it stands to reason that if we are running from one thing, we must be running to another. Sometimes in reading and studying Paul's writing, we have difficulty following him because his transition is almost seamless. This seems to be the case in this instance.

Within the scope of just one sentence, the apostle transitions from things to flee to things to follow. We see this type of swift transition often in Pauline literature. In Romans 12:9, we see him saying: Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. We also see in 2 Timothy 2:22: Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Rom. 13:12: The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Eph 4:22-24: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old

man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. It should be readily observed that there is not a better way to flee evil than that of being busy and doing good. Habitual bad behavior is not changed by mere resistance, but by the right response to fill the void of the stopped action. The two concepts can be portrayed as opposite sides of the same coin. When we flee one thing, we invariably follow another thing. It is entirely up to us to decide what we follow.

This is certainly drawn out in Ephesians 4:22-24 (referenced above). There we learn we are to "put off" such things as "the old man." We also learn we are to "put on the new man." The first one is "according to deceitful lusts;" and the second one is "according to God in true righteousness." Likewise, we are to "cast off the works of darkness." The disciple of Christ is to "put on the armor of light." The difference between the two lifestyles must be distinct and sharp.

We learn from 1 Timothy 6 that the things we as members of the body of Christ should shun are things such as envy, strife, blasphemies, evil suspicions, incessant squabbling, and the love of money (referenced in pt. 1). This short article is regarding the things we should work to gain. Let us all be mindful of "both sides of the same coin."

If one offers an honest critique of Paul's writing, he should point out that Paul never left his readers in suspense when it came to what they should do or should not do. We do not need to fill in the gaps! Paul spells out very succinctly what we are to follow or pursue. These are virtues that can always be built up and increased. These are lifestyles that should be constantly improved upon.

The concept of pursuing is taught here, indicating there may always be room for improvement. We should be aware that we are heeding the idea presented in Paul's first letter to the Corinthian congregation: 1 Corinthians 10:12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Here in 1 Timothy 6:11, we have three pairings of six virtues that the man of God is to pursue.

I. RIGHTEOUSNESS & GODLINESS - Encompass our total duty to God and man. Righteousness and

Godliness indicate a type of lifestyle that is portrayed by moral correctness. The man or woman who practices immorality of any kind is neither righteous nor Godly.

Titus 2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

II. FAITH & LOVE - built upon righteousness and godliness, there are no "spiritual graces" more supreme than faith and love. God's love as produced in the heart by the Holy Spirit builds confidence to trust in God to sustain our life and guide us in focusing our behavior. Here we find an anchor to hold us in life so that we are not overwhelmed as we encounter life's many trials.

1 Timothy 1:14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

III. PATIENCE & MEEKNESS - Or, steadfastness and endurance. One who is a man of God must learn to bear up under heavy toilsome loads and endure while having a gentle disposition that does not falter. This describes the man that remains under trials in a God-honoring manner. This concept teaches us that we should be intentionally kind. Even or especially toward those people of such an ill disposition and temper that normally one doesn't want to be in their company.

Luke 21:19 By your patience possess your souls. 2 Co 6:4 But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, 2 Thessalonians 3:5 Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ. 2 Peter 1:6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness.

*PLACE OF THE SWORD...continued from page one*

## II. The Old Testament Religion.

The Old Testament Religion had its beginning at Mt. Sinai and lasted until Christ died on the cross. Neh. 9:13-14 "You came down also on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, You make known to them Your holy Sabbath, And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws, By the

hand of Moses Your servant." John 1:17 "But the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Col. 2:14 "having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us, And He has taken it out of the way having nailed it to the cross."

The Law was not a permanent arrangement, but was a part of God's progressive and unfolding revelation to man as He was getting him ready for the Savior. In the unfolding of his plan, God called Abraham. He promised to make his descendants a great nation, and through the vehicle of this nation the Savior would come: Gen. 12:1-3 "Now the Lord said to Abram: Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you will be a blessing, I will bless those who bless you and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Canaan was the promised land, where all this would take place. God gave them this land, but as it turned out, it would only be theirs through conquest. Joshua 3:10 "And Joshua said, By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites, and the Hivites and the Perizzite, and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites:"

### A Twofold Accomplishment:

1. The land was being given to Abraham and his descendants in connection with the purpose of the O.T. in anticipation of the coming Savior, 2. And in their conquest of the land God would execute judgment on its wicked and depraved inhabitants. In this connection Israel became God's instrument of judgment in the conquest of Canaan: Deut.20:16-18 "But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them; the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the Lord your God has commanded you lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God." Deut. 18:12 "For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you." Throughout the history of ancient Israel the sword was an integral part of the nation. Joshua became the military leader in the conquest of Canaan. Joshua Chapter 12 is a summary of all the kings that were put to the sword. We are told

repeatedly that he smote them “with the edge of the sword.” During the period of the Judges “the sword of the Lord and Gideon” was representative of the times. King David, reflecting the spirit of the O. T. said “He (God) teaches my hands to war...” Psa. 18:34. The O.T. religion embodied the wrath and judgment of God. It was the law of sin and death.

### III. Christianity And The Sword.

The Law served its purpose according to Gal. 3:19. In it we see the awfulness of sin, and that all sinned Rom.3:23. Man needed a savior, for the wages of sin was death Rom. 6:23, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. “The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ John. 1:17. “Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” 1 Tim. 1:2. All of this is reflected in the Cross. “For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified” 1 Cor. 2:2. “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. Gal1.6:14 By no stretch of the imagination could a literal sword be representative of Christianity.

#### Swords Into Plowshares

A literal sword, very evident in the context of the Moslem religion and the Old Testament, is no part of New Testament Christianity. Isa. 9:6 speaks of “the prince of peace.” the next verse continues “Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end...” Isa.2:2-4 “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say come and let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us of his ways and we shall walk in his paths for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations and rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” Here the writer describes the character of the citizens of the new kingdom. In the holy mountain they will learn war no more. In the kingdom of Christ, the implements of war are to be cut off. He (Christ) would speak peace to the nations. This He (Christ) did. Eph. 2:17 “He came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh.” The fact that the new kingdom, unlike the old, will not be defended by carnal weapons, is borne out in 2 Cor. 10:3-5 “For

though we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds.” “Put up thy sword into his place: for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword” Matt. 26:52 “My kingdom is not of this world for if it were then would my servants fight, but my kingdom is not from hence.” John. 18:36

#### The Sword of The Spirit.

Christians are engaged in a spiritual warfare. Eph. 6:11 “Put on the whole armor of God” in preparation for the battle. “Taking the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.” “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places...” “No physical violence pictured here. It is the good fight of faith. No Moslem Jihad, (holy war). What Jesus taught in the sermon on the mount, stands in sharp contrast to what is taught by the Moslem and Old Testament religions: “Ye have heard it said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you: That ye may be the children of your Father which in heaven...” Mt. 5:43-48.

*RESTORATION...continued from page two*

deaconship. The qualifications for these positions in the church are difficult, and the Bible is very clear that there is a need for such men. But they must qualify, and the Scriptural qualifications are not easily met, and most men in the church do not qualify, and that includes some who have been appointed to these positions. But because some over zealous preacher has ordained them, such men accept these positions even if in their own minds they know that they are lacking. Some desire the prestige, some want the authority, and some because they have been shamed into accepting these positions in the church. The apostle Paul writes in Eph. 4:10,11, “He that descended is the same that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” Each of these positions is different from the other. The position of an apostle was different from that of a prophet. The position of prophet was different from that of the evangelist; and the same can



be said of the pastors (elders) and teachers. Jesus told the apostles to evangelize the world (Mark 16:16) “Go teach all nations” (Matt. 18:19,20). But this was not the work assigned to elders. The elders were told that their duty was to “feed the flock which was among them” and to keep them safe from “wolves” (false teachers) (Acts 20:28-31). We do not believe that elders who are over a flock (a congregation) can be an evangelist at the same time; holding meetings all over the country or the world, while neglecting their duty as a ruler and care taker over a flock (congregation) (Heb. 13:7; 13:24). He is either an evangelist or an elder; one or the other. We would not think of hiring a traveling salesman to be shepherd over a flock of sheep, and the Lord never suggested that we have “elders” who neglect their duty at home while doing the work which is assigned to the position of evangelist. We are made to wonder if pride and money are not part of the equation. We at Stony Point do not have elders hold our meetings. We have evangelists come and do the work of an evangelist, and let the elders stay at home and do the job they have been appointed to do.

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### Our Departed

WISSINGER - Thelma Lee Lindsey Wissinger was born December 24, 1938 near Lebanon, MO and departed this life August 25, 2019 in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, after an extended illness. She bravely fought the disease of cancer but ultimately succumbed to its ravages. Thelma was preceded in death by her parents, husband, and

one brother. She will be lovingly remembered by her three children: Jeffrey, Wissinger, Janet Crouch, and Julie Stephens, and several grandchildren and great grandchildren. Thelma was a graduate of Lebanon, MO high school where she met her future husband Dan. She obeyed the gospel at the Hayes St. Church of Christ, and soon thereafter she and Dan were married. From Lebanon they moved to Springfield where they became pillars in the old Benton Avenue Church of Christ. Thelma was a wonderful wife and mother. She loved the church and spent a greater part of her life doing good for the cause of Christ. Dan loved to preach and she supplanted him and helped him in that endeavor in every way possible. She will be greatly missed in the family circle and the assembly of the saints where she assembled on a regular basis to worship God. A large crowd gathered at the Greenlawn Funeral Home in Springfield to pay their respects to her memory.

— Ronny F. Wade

DICKINSON - William Dickinson, Jr. of Midlothian, Texas passed from this life on August 17, 2019, in Midlothian, Texas. He was born April 16, 1924, in Carbon Hill, Alabama, to William and Alice Dickinson. He is preceded in death by his parents, two brothers, George Day and Luke Day, and three sisters, Edna McDade, Clela Day and Bessie Wheeler. Survivors include two sons, Jerry Dickinson (Judy) of Wake Village, Texas, Billy (Judy) of Springfield, Missouri, and two daughters, Marilyn (Steve) Bowen of Red Oak, Texas and Carolyn (Richard) Keele of Houston, Texas. He is also survived by ten grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren, whom he loved very much. He was a veteran of WWII and D-Day and served in Patton's famed 3rd Army. He received a Bronze Star for saving the lives of American soldiers who had been wounded when they were crossing a minefield. He crawled through the minefield and dragged them to safety. He worked at Armco Steel in Houston for 37 years and never missed a day of work! After retiring from Armco he drove a school bus and then worked at Randall's grocery store for several years. After coming home from the war he moved to Houston where he met Jimi Boyett and they married on October 10, 1948. He was 24 and she was only 16. She was 17 when their oldest son Jerry was born. Last October they celebrated their 70th anniversary! Dad loved Jimi, his children and all his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They all loved to listen to Pawpaw tell stories about growing up during the depression in a small coal mining town in Alabama and his exciting (and sometimes scary) World

War II stories. Above all else, however, he loved Jesus and His church. He was not raised in a Christian home and learned about the Lord from mom who was a devout Christian. Mom was a member of the Church of Christ and took the 4 kids to church every Sunday without him. Because of her influence he decided to turn his life over to the Lord. He was baptized in 1960 at the age of 36 by an Elder in the Church of Christ named Eugene Mensch. Dad made a drastic change in his life and began to study the Bible and even to teach and preach. Brother Mensch said he had never seen anyone develop as fast spiritually as dad. He dropped out of school in the 8th grade, but he was well read in the Bible and a deep and original thinker. He was brilliant at harmonizing scripture and had a unique style of preaching that included using illustrations and anecdotes from his own life that captivated his audience. He was not a “professional” preacher but he was a master communicator and Bible teacher. He told his oldest son Jerry not long before he passed that he had enjoyed being a Christian. What a great testimony and legacy he leaves his family and friends, as well as brethren in Christ. Dad requested that his Eulogy will be given by Chuck Morris. He also requested that his obituary be given by Steven Bowen and a prayer by Richard Keele and congregational singing be led by Gary Cannon. He requested that his 6 grandsons be pallbearers. —Jerry Dickinson

HATTER - Sister Lois May Hatter was born to James Knox Butler and Frances Josephine (Morrison) Butler on April 8, 1920 in Searcy County Arkansas. She departed this life on August 14, 2019 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She was ninety-nine (99) years old! She was married to Glenn Alden Hatter on February 15, 1941. To this union was born Gayle Dean Hatter, Lorene Ellen Cox, Glenna Marie Darr and Glenn Alden Hatter Jr. I counted Sister Lois as my life long friend and sister in Christ. She faithfully attended the services of the Capitol Hill Church of Christ then later the church in Moore. She was a source of encouragement for me and always a cheerful lady with a positive outlook on life. I was always glad to see her. I am going to miss this busy little sister of mine. Lois was the prime example of a “good woman”. Her husband went to the Methodist church when he married Lois. He was later converted and was baptized into Christ by Bro. Tommy Shaw. Brother Hatter always gave all of the credit for teaching him the truth to his wife, Lois. Sister Lois was full of good works. During her life she worked as a bus driver, baby sitter, care giver (being a Certified

Nurse Aide) and with the most diligence being wife, sister, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, great great grandmother and a committed Christian! Lois had many activities that she enjoyed. Her hobbies included singing and cooking; singing and sewing; singing and crocheting; singing and gardening; and sometimes just singing. I found out that she was also a great fan of Braum’s ice cream. Her favorite flavor was the one that was in her bowl at the time of her death. She is survived by one daughter, Lorene Cox, one son, Glenn Alden Hatter. She also leaves behind twelve (12) grandchildren, thirty (30) great grandchildren and eighteen (18) great great grandchildren. This is but a short list of the dozens of her brothers and sisters in Christ, relatives, friends and neighbors that crowded into the auditorium to remember this very important person in their lives. One of her children told me that if we could ask Lois each individual in this really big crowd would be “her favorite one.” My thanks to Bro. Steve Martin for his excellent assist in the service and Bro. Micah Weaver for his capable effort in leading the singing. —Joe Hisle

## Field Reports

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old\_path@juno.com, September 13. The Labor Day meeting at Ozark, MO closed with one confession of faults. A number of congregations were represented, some outside folks as well. and also several preachers among whom were Brad Shockley, Billy Dickinson, Smith Bibens, Ronny Wade, Aubrey Smith, Roger Owens and some whose names have slipped away. We enjoyed the meeting, the preaching, and association with brethren we have known many years. Smith Bibens organized the preaching schedule with me preaching Lord’s Day through Wednesday evening and the final Lord’s Day morning and visiting preachers the last service. Pat and I really enjoyed staying with Wayne and Donna Towe (old friends) who could not have treated us better. We also enjoyed meals and visits in various homes daily. Last Lord’s Day, we spoke at Yuba City, CA and Lord willing, we are to be with Stockton, CA this coming Sunday. Lord bless the faithful.

Paul O. Nichols, 14217 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, Sept. 9. Time is swiftly passing and the end may near. Before Jesus went back to heaven, He posed a question; “Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Lk. 18:8). We view world conditions and see congregations

which are losing members and closing doors, where once there were faithful churches having two week and three week meetings to edify the members and to save the lost. And some preachers would continue as long as there was an interest, where now we have three day, five day, or a longer meeting of no more than a week. It is no wonder we are losing ground. At one time the Church of Christ was the fastest growing church in this country. We were establishing congregations which are doing what they can to help save the lost. They are supporting preachers and the Cause of Christ here and in other countries. And we do have preachers who are dedicated and willing to carry the Gospel to the lost wherever they are. We need to let them know that we appreciate their faithfulness and dedication, and support them and their families, who are often left without husbands and fathers for long periods of time, while the preachers are away, striving to save the lost. The Stony Point congregation is supporting eight preachers and sending financial help overseas when special needs are made known. May the Lord bless all the faithful congregations who are fulfilling their mission of striving to save lost sinners before it is too late.

Carl M. Johnson, 1400 Northcrest Dr., Ada, OK 74820, carlmj@cableone.net, Sept. 14, 2018. Since my last report we attended the Texas Labor Day Meeting and I preached on Saturday night. There was a great crowd in attendance and I enjoyed the meeting immensely. I also preached at the Arlington Green Oaks congregation both services on Sunday before Labor Day. We appreciate the opportunity to be with these good brethren again. August 4th we began a meeting with the Napoleon, Alabama congregation. Napoleon has a long history as a strong congregation whose members are highly respected in the community. They love gospel singing and are very generous supporters of gospel preaching. Phyllis and I stayed with longtime friends Ronnie and Brenda Prince during the meeting and enjoyed it immensely. Several members of the community attended the meeting. Our next meeting was with the Mill Creek Congregation in Shawnee, Kansas, for a weekend meeting. We had excellent crowds, including Paul Nichols who just celebrated his 97th birthday. It was great to have him in attendance. I greatly enjoyed my stay in the home of dear friends Keith and Karen Sifford. I am scheduled to preach both services tomorrow here at home, and then we head to Blue Springs, Kentucky for a meeting (Sept. 18-22). Jimmy Cating is to be here at Ada, Sept. 22-29, and my last two meetings of the year are at Kansas City, Missouri, 85th & Euclid (Oct. 9-13), and Weatherford,

Texas (Oct. 25-27). Please pray for us.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, Sept. 14. Working with the Jamesville congregation, holding meetings and filling various preaching engagements have kept me busy this year. I've enjoyed preaching at the following places: Neosho, MO, Harrodsburg, IN, Bedford, IN, Tulsa, OK (11th Street), Grapevine, TX (Texas Labor Day Meeting), Weatherford, TX, Ozark, MO and Bolivar, MO. Back in May I also started preaching every 4th Wednesday night for the congregation in Montreal, MO. On the Sunday of Sept. 29, I will be with the brethren in McAlester, OK. Finally, the first weekend in December I will be one of the speakers in a homecoming meeting with the Fairbanks congregation in Houston, TX. It has been 4 years since I've made a trip back to the place of my birth and childhood (the length of time since moving our parents to an assisted living facility in Midlothian, TX), and I'm longing to go back and stir up some "precious memories" by visiting various sites. Our parents, Bill and Jimie Dickinson, recently died just 3 weeks apart and both of them were proud Houstonians. Although they are gone, this trip will give me the opportunity to go back and remind myself of how blessed I was to be one of their children. Indeed, their legacy and godly influence lives on. The work here continues. We are looking forward to our meeting at Jamesville with Greg Gay on Oct. 18-20. I'm thrilled to report that one of our young people was baptized into Christ after the Sunday morning service of Aug. 25. We are so proud of him (at the age of 15) in making the decision to live for Christ!

Frank Brancato, 12718 Larkin Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93312, frankbrancato@sbcglobal.net, September 17, 2019. On September 15th, I closed a meeting in Farmerville Louisiana. The meeting was well attended, and we pray that much good was accomplished. We had visitors every service, and we did our best to plant the gospel seed. We didn't have any visible results while we were there, but we pray for God's increase some time in the near future. The congregation has bilingual services, and Jonathan Correa translated for me. Jonathan did a fantastic job, and I enjoyed working with him very much. Special thanks to Cullen and Julie Smith for taking care of me while I was there. Their hospitality was incredible, and I loved being in their home once again. If the Lord wills, my next meeting will be in Fair Oaks CA (November 1-3). May God bless His faithful everywhere!

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## WALKS THROUGH THE BIBLE...

### IF YOU GIVE I WILL GIVE!

*By JERRY DICKINSON*

“So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow and said, O Lord of hosts, if You will look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.” (I Samuel 1 :9-11)

“If you give I will give!” Those words of Hannah constitute the central terms of her vow to God. If you give me a son I will give him to you all the days of his life! What a marvelous vow. The Book of I Samuel, and this great period in the history of the nation of Israel begins with the cry of a woman. God answers that cry and raises up Samuel who anoints the first two kings of Israel. Samuel means “asked of God” and after he is weaned Hannah keeps her vow and brings Samuel to Eli the priest in Shiloh. Her unforgettable words will live forever. “For this child I prayed and the Lord has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore I also have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the lord.” (I Samuel 1:26-27)

The Hebrew word for “lent” means to give or grant. She is simply saying the Lord granted her request and gave her a son and therefore she was keeping her vow and giving him back to the Lord. I am sure you agree with me that the world, and the church, needs more mothers like Hannah. My own mother reminds me of Hannah. My mother just passed away at the age of 87 and her whole life was dedicated to giving her children back to the Lord who gave us to her. Even before my dad obeyed the gospel mom took the four of us to church every Sunday. I remember leaving dad at home and mom loading us all up and driving to church. Of course, it was this kind of dedication that eventually influenced my dad to become a Christian himself. However even after dad was a member of the church mom took us to meetings and even debates when dad was unable to go because of work. I remember attending debates in my early teen years on the questions of Bible classes and churches supporting colleges and orphan homes, etc. These were the days when brethren were interested in (and willing) to discuss Scriptural authority and mom made sure we heard these discussions.

She was determined, too, like Hannah to give her sons to the Lord as preachers of the gospel. After several gospel meeting with some preachers from New Mexico she quipped, “We need some preachers from Texas!” I was very young but I understood her to be talking about me and Billy. (lol) The Lord had given my mother children and she did her best to give them back to the Lord! The same is true of my wife, and so many mothers I have known through the years all across our great brotherhood. God bless all the “Hannahs” in the church of Christ!

“If you give I will give!” Really, this should be the vow of everyone of us. The Lord grants us health and we should use our vigor and energy to work in the vineyard of our Lord sowing and reaping. The Lord has granted us prosperity and we should give back to the Lord as he has given to us. We freely receive so let us freely give. The Lord has granted us family and dear loved ones so we need to make a priority to try to give them to the Lord all the days of their lives. God has granted us time to live and we need to “redeem the time” and “number our days” and make sure we “buy up every opportunity.”

In contrast to Hannah we have the story of Hezekiah, who upon learning he was going to die, prayed for more time. God heard and granted him several more years but the Bible says he did not return to the Lord as he had received. For some reason, inexplicably it seems to me, Hezekiah failed to appreciate the extra time he was given and did not serve as he could have. The result was his son Manasseh was one of the most wicked kings who ever reigned in Judah. God has granted us time and prosperity and loved ones. Everything that is good in our lives is God given. Let us give all we have to Him in return. Let us make Hannah’s vow our own. “If you give I will give!”