

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

VOL. LXXXVII

LEBANON, MISSOURI • SEPTEMBER 2015

NO. 9

HONORING CHRIST

BY KEVIN PRESLEY

Jesus Christ is certainly worthy of great honor. He is the creator of the universe, the only begotten Son of God. The Bible declares Him to be the King over all Kings and Lord of all. We honor men of great stature, men who are given great authority and men who accomplish great things. But the one truly deserving of honor is the Lord Jesus. In this article we will notice four ways in which we can honor Jesus Christ.

First of all, we bring great honor to the name of Jesus Christ when we make the good confession. Paul spoke of that confession in I Timothy 6:12-13: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;”

What is this “good confession” that Paul says Timothy made, and that Jesus made before Pontius Pilate? When Jesus was tried and put to death, He spent all night being accused and questioned. Most of the night, Jesus was pretty well silent. Once in a while, He would answer a question that was framed in a certain way, but, presumably about daybreak, the high priest, exasperated, asked Jesus why He wouldn’t answer; Matthew 26:62-64 “And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said...” Jesus was stating the truth of the ages in those few words. He was taking the whole of human history- from the dawn of creation to the end of time on earth- and He was summing it up in this one great declaration: that He was the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Paul later calls that

the “good confession.” Today, we give great honor to Jesus Christ when we, unreservedly and unashamedly, make that good confession to an unbelieving world that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Think about what it means to tell somebody that Jesus is the Christ. When we make that confession, we’re not saying that Jesus was merely a good man, or a gifted teacher, or a powerful prophet. In making that confession, we are saying that Jesus is the only way to God and to eternal life. There are many people who will confess that Jesus was a wonderful man. They will confess that He lived and that He said some important things, and taught some wonderful lessons. They will agree that He went around doing some good deeds. That, of course, is not the same as confessing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. When one made that confession during the first century, he was putting his own life at risk, because those words had, and still have today, incredible implications.

Consider the pivotal moment between Jesus and His disciples; Matthew 16: 13-16 “When Jesus came unto the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered; Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Peter never made a more profound statement. That was a confession that Peter would one day die for, and so would many others. The scriptures teach that anybody who would truly believe in Jesus and follow Him and be saved must make that same great confession. We give high honor to Jesus when we are willing to make it, understanding what we are saying and consenting to the truth that it represents. Matthew 10:32-33 “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny

continued on page six

CONTENTS

Vol. LXXXVI No. 7



ADVOCATE

Honoring Christ..... 1
 Controlling the Fire 2
 Querist Column..... 3
 Here and There 4
 Pages From the Past..... 5
 Truth or Love 7
 Foolish Faith 9
 Little Sins 9
 I Stand with Solomon 12
 FROM THE FIELDS 10

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year..... \$15.00
Also On The Internet
Published Monthly by **Old Paths Advocate**, Lebanon, MO
A.C. Brockman, 2033 King James, Lebanon, MO 65536
periodical postage paid at Lebanon, MO 65536
Send Form 3579 to **Old Paths Advocate**
1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550.

All articles published in **Old Paths Advocate** contain the view of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and publishers. If you have any questions, please direct them to the author listed at the heading of the article.

Editorial

CONTROLLING THE FIRE

By JOE NORTON

“Think before you speak” is an axiom that has been handed down for generations, and it is well that it has been because this principle has a firm base in scripture. Exhortations to control the tongue, as well as to exercise self-control in all areas of life, abound in both the Old and New Testaments.

James is the New Testament writer who has much to say about controlling the tongue. His most aggressive statement has to be in James 1:26 where he says, “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless” (NKJ). It is one thing to say that a person may be weak in the faith, but to say that his religion is useless takes the situation to an entirely new level.

James picks up this idea in chapter three where he says, once again aggressively, that the tongue has the power to kindle an entire forest, that it is a fire that can defile the whole body and set nature on fire, and that it is set on fire by hell itself. And then in verse eight, he says it is so powerful that no one can tame it: “It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

Reading such words leaves us almost breathless and at least perplexed about how we are to deal with our own tongue. Since we realize God never gives a command that it is impossible to fulfill, we know James does not mean we are immediately doomed to defeat. He means that, while we may tame wild animals and have confidence they are under control, that never happens with the tongue. We may control our tongue for many years; yet during a moment of weakness, if we let our guard down, we may say things that will cause untold, sometimes even irrevocable, damage. So his point is that we can never feel confident that our tongue is completely conquered-that we can say we will never have to worry about that problem again. So with our tongue we must ever be on guard.

The lesson is clear. We must think carefully about the impact of our words before we let them fly from our
continued on page eight

QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: How does Numbers 15:30 and Hebrews 10:25-27 correlate, and relate to the Christian today?

Answer: The scriptures in question read (1) “But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native-born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the Lord, and he shall be cut off from among his people” Numbers 15:30. (2) “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” Hebrews 10:25-27. Many commentators view the passage in Hebrews as an example of the sin described in Numbers. The sin was high-handed, one committed presumptuously, representing a challenge to Divine authority. The word of God was despised and the commandment violated. Adam Clarke says “Bold glaring acts of transgression against the fullest evidence, and in despite of the Divine authority, admitted of no atonement; the person was to be cut off, to be excluded from God’s people, and from all their privileges and blessings.” Immediately following in verse 31 of Numbers 15 we have the account of a man picking up sticks on the Sabbath. Such was a clear violation of God’s word. His sin was open and high handed being both willful and presumptuous. Coffman asserts that reading of the passage in Hebrews makes it certain that the sacred N.T. writer had the Numbers passage in mind when that passage was given. Clarke said of the Numbers passage “It is probably a case similar to that mentioned in Hebrews 10:26-31.” In Hebrews 10:25 we are admonished to “not forsake the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is...” Milligan says, “The apostle refers here, not to apostasy from the Church, as some allege, but simply to the neglect of public and social worship.” A failure to attend the services of the church was an indication of a lack of dedication and commitment. It strongly suggests that we fail to adequately and completely devote ourselves to those duties incumbent upon Christians. It is a sign of weakness and a failure to fully appreciate

what God has done in our behalf. Worship is designed by God to meet our spiritual needs. When we are absent from the assemblies of the church we fail to receive the spiritual food necessary for our spiritual survival. In the assembly we receive the exhortation necessary to grow and thrive as God’s children. A violation of this verse mirrors the high handed disobedience depicted in Numbers 15:50. People are not respecting God or His word when they willfully fail to assemble when the church gathers. The Hebrew Christians were on the verge of turning their back on Christ and returning to the law which has been nailed to the cross. Without Christ there was no means of forgiveness. The Law of Moses had been nailed to the cross. Only in Christ could they find redemption. To reject Him removed all hope of salvation. Turning their back on the assembly of the saints was a step in a process that would ultimately end in their spiritual destruction. To do so was a sin of presumption i.e. overstepping due bounds and taking liberties where they had no right. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)



“Life hasn’t any laurels
For cowards in disgrace;
Life hasn’t any applause
For slackers in the race.

“Life hasn’t any riches
For proud and selfish aim,
But life has countless blessings
For those who wear the name.

“Life may not be so cheery
For one who will retreat;
Life may be disappointing
For he who cries defeat.

“But those who face the battles,
Defending what is right;
Will surely win the victory
Will win at last the fight.”

~ Ray Roe, Dougherty, OK 1939

HERE AND THERE

By Rick Martin

The great American writer, Mark Twain took a trip to Europe and was accompanied by his youngest daughter. Everywhere Twain went he was greeted by kings and queens and dignitaries of all types. Toward the end of the trip, Twain's daughter, getting caught up in the excitement exclaimed, "Poppa, you know everybody, but God!" I wonder how many parents have gotten their children so involved in every frivolous, unimportant thing you can think of, but have failed to show them that they know God. That's what's important. Ephesians 6:4 "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord".

There are many things that cause sadness in our lives. I think one of the saddest things I've seen is to have a Christian couple who loved the church with all their hearts and who reared their children to do the same, only to have their grandchildren and great-grandchildren come along and have no respect or care for the Lord and the church. Judges 2:10 "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel". Every generation must teach their children God's word.

Worldliness ruins influence. No man is "an island unto himself." This is especially true of a Christian because he is to be a "light of the world," a "city on a hill," and a "candle on candlestick." Because the eyes of others are upon them, Christians have the obligation to live in such a way as to lead those observers to Heaven. In view of this, it is strange to hear professed Christians remark, "But I have a right to do what I like. Let me live my life and let all others live theirs?" When a person's love of the world shows itself openly in the works of the flesh, his influence for good is ruined. He can lead no one to Christ. How can he lead anyone from the world if he is still there? For this reason, we are to live righteous lives being sure not to permit our lives to be a stumbling block to others. Paul said, "Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

Paul spoke of a time when some would "not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned aside unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3, 4). There is no combination more dangerous to the truth of God than church members with "Itching ears" and preachers (and teachers) who are ready to supply the tickling they desire.

Joshua 6:26: "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." In this verse we see that a curse would be on the man who would try to rebuild Jericho. God said he would pay for this sin with the lives of his firstborn and youngest sons. In King Ahab's reign, a man named Hiel suffered the consequences of Joshua's curse: 1 Kings 16:34 "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun." In some way, Hiel lost two of his sons. He did not remain faithful to what God wanted, because God did not want Jericho to ever be rebuilt. A very valuable lesson is taught here. The lesson is plain, and one all men should be aware of. It is a dangerous thing to build up things that God wants to be destroyed. Conversely, it is a dangerous thing to tear down something God wants built up.

Loving your friends is not a difficult thing to do, but loving your enemies is a different proposition. It is difficult to love people who treat us badly. After the Civil War, a group of Union soldiers met with President Lincoln and expressed their displeasure at the kind treatment the President was showing to the Confederates. One of the soldiers became angry and pounded his fist on Mr. Lincoln's desk and proclaimed, "President Lincoln, I believe in destroying my enemy!" The president slowly rose from his desk and said, "do we not destroy our enemy when we make him our friend?" Matthew 5:43-48 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and

continued on page seven

PAGES FROM THE PAST

The following article is from the pen of Brother Lynwood Smith. It first appeared in the June, 1950 issue of the Old Paths Advocate. Lynwood was a Gospel Preacher without equal. He dedicated his life to the work of the Lord. He was a prolific songwriter, having written over 700 songs. He published many songbooks, sermon books, and tracts. We are so familiar with his song writing that we forget he did very little writing for periodicals. I am glad that he spent a large portion of his time writing songs and doing a great service for the church. I hope you enjoy this rare article. Rick Martin

“WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?”

By M. Lynwood Smith

It was somewhere near the middle of our Lord's ministry when He, with His disciples, came into the coast of Caesarea Phillipi. Our Lord had been leading these men around now for some time, and it was time that they should have their minds made up concerning whom they were following and preaching. So here our Lord decides to put to them the question that He had longed to hear them answer correctly. Rumors were flying concerning our Lord; various things were being said about Him. But, here our Lord puts the great question to the twelve, “Whom do men say that I am?” Well, that was not too difficult to answer. It is pretty easy to tell what “men say.” We are expected to have no responsibility in a matter like that. They were very willing to answer a question of that kind. Such a question did not put them on the spot. The record said, “And they said” (showing that several were willing to answer “some say that Thou art John the Baptist (even King Herod thought this): some Elias and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” It seems that our Lord was not too disappointed at the public opinion, but His blessed heart must have been beating a little faster as he plans to put forth another question with much more personal emphasis. This is the question to test the spiritual growth and to see to what degree the discipleship had attained. Much was at stake. They must be made to believe. The time is growing shorter. Then, “He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?” Yes, that is the main thing-, that is the thing that counts; “whom say ye that I am?” Now then it is a personal matter with the disciples. Do they really believe that He is what

they are beginning to think that He might be? Are they willing to make that statement that would be considered blasphemy by the Jews? Yes, it is a much more difficult thing to tell what “I say” about a matter than to tell what “men say.” I think a pause must have been made and, perhaps, several deep breaths taken, and an exchange of glances among the disciples while they wait out there near the coast. Then, came a answer. You could always depend on Peter-. He was so in love with the Master that, he could not stand to see any question of His go unanswered, He would blurt out something,- it might not be the proper thing, and he might say some things because he couldn't think of anything else to say, as he did on Mt. Hermon at the Transfiguration (Mk. 9:6), but he would say something. When the Savior had completed His “Bread from Heaven” discourse, and the disciples began to walk away, and Jesus turned to the twelve and wondered if they, too, would leave, it was Peter who came forth with the assurance that there was no other person to whom one may turn if they sought eternal life. After the question had been asked, it was this official spokesman who bravely, firmly, and sincerely declared, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Jesus was then very pleased.

“Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: “Peter on this occasion was blest; he had been given an answer to this question in some way, by the God of Heaven. He had not learned it through flesh and blood. It had been revealed by the Father in Heaven.

Worldly friend, cannot you hear Jesus saying, as He stood there on the coast of Caesarea Philippi, “But whom say ye that I am?” Whom do you say Jesus is?? Will you not be willing to make this confession that was not revealed by flesh and blood?? Christian Brother, you who have formerly made this confession with the mouth (Rom. 10:9), do you ever think as you go through your Christian life that the question is still being asked, “Whom say ye that I am?” We can still tell our Master whom we believe Him to be by the way we live from day to day. We, after making this Heaven revealed confession, often stray from the one whom we have confessed. For proof of this, we go back to the story in Matt. 16.

After Jesus had received the answer from the disciples that He had been yearning to hear, then He gives them
continued on page eight



HONORING CHRIST. . . continued from page one
before my Father which is in heaven.”

Now, notice the verse that follows; Matthew 10:34 “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.” In other words, confessing Jesus as the Christ is not going to make you the world’s friend. It will have a polarizing effect. In fact, it will make you the world’s enemy. Today if you say what you believe about Jesus to some people, you’re going to find out how unpopular it really is. Some people will tolerate just enough about Jesus, but they don’t tolerate the fact that He IS the Son of God, and the only way to heaven. We cannot ascribe any greater honor to Jesus with our lips and we can’t utter a stronger condemnation of a sinful world than to say what Peter said, what Jesus Himself said, and what the Ethiopian nobleman said in Acts 8:37: “And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

Have you honored Christ by making the good confession? That confession must be made before you can be baptized into Christ and receive pardon from your sins.

Second, we honor Christ by water baptism I am always amazed at the resistance of people who claim to believe in Jesus, but deny the plain and simple teaching of Jesus about baptism. Think about it; there are millions and millions of people who claim to honor Christ, but they deny what He said about baptism. They may not deny the act of baptism, necessarily. They may even practice baptism. They deny what Jesus said about the role of baptism, even though what Jesus said about it really could not be more simple and emphatic. Mark 16:15-16 “And he 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.” John 3:5 “...Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

Notice Jesus placed baptism outside-not inside-the door of the kingdom. Jesus showed its importance by being baptized Himself at the very outset of His ministry. He did so to fulfill all righteousness, Matthew 3:14-15. He later commanded all men to be baptized. He made it a wonderful participation in His own death, burial and resurrection; Romans 6:3-4 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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.”

He did not say that we are baptized because we are already in Christ. He said we are baptized into Jesus Christ. How does this happen? It is by being baptized into His death. We imitate and participate in the three greatest events in history when we submit in baptism. Why do people reject that? Why do they argue with, diminish, and dilute that? It is a sacred transaction. It is not merely some church ordinance that you can take or leave. It is a tremendous act of faith in, and honor toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

Third, we honor Christ by wearing His name. The name, “Christian” is sacred. The name first appeared in Acts 11:26: “...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” Christian simply means “followers of Christ.” It is a wonderful and worthy name, and it is a scriptural name. There are many names today that you don’t read anything about in the Bible, and they do not bring honor to the Lord Jesus. They might bring honor to a man. They might bring honor to a particular doctrine or idea of men. They do not bring honor to the Lord Jesus. With all due respect, you don’t read about Methodists or Presbyterians or Episcopalians, Baptists or Pentecostals, Lutherans or Catholics in the word of God. What you DO read is that the church was built by Christ: Matthew 16:18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”

The church belongs to Christ. It was purchased by His blood: Acts 20:28 “...to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” It doesn’t belong to the pope or some kind of council, president or superintendent. You also read that it was called by His name: Romans 16:16 “..The churches of Christ salute you”

We honor the Lord Jesus Christ when we wear His name. The church is not a denomination. It is simply HIS church. Paul uses a beautiful metaphor in Ephesians 5:23-27 when he tells us that the church is “His bride.” Just as a bride honors her husband in the taking of his name as her own, the Christian and the church of which he is a part, cannot honor Christ in any greater way than to wear His precious and holy name.

Fourth and last, we honor Christ by imitating His life. This is really one of the greatest honors that we can pay to another person; to model ourselves after them. Jesus came and lived

among us for that purpose: I Peter 2:21 "... leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps..." His daily life, His compassionate deeds, His wonderful words, His pure and holy living, and His faithfulness to God-all of those things are worth imitating. John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Are you honoring Jesus by the daily life that you're living? Do so by making the good confession, being baptized in water, wearing his name, and imitating His life. - OPA

TRUTH OR LOVE?

By Joey Hickey

There is a prevailing idea in the religious world that one must choose between truth and love-that to be a Christian you must stand by and teach one only. To some, the command is all that matters, which leads to hollow, monotonous worship (Mt. 23); to others, the heart is all that counts, which leads to nothing more than lawlessness (Mt. 7:21-23). There is no better way to err, and yet, many who profess to be Christians say, "There is no middle ground." This could not be further from the truth.

Jesus said in 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." Love is nothing more than a command - those who elevate love to elimination of all other teaching fail to see that you cannot throw out "law." In doing so, you also throw out love, which, as a command, is just a piece of the New Law we have through Jesus Christ. However, love is nothing less than a command - those who belittle it have belittled a commandment that came from the mouth of Jesus, denying part of the truth.

Love and truth are inseparable. You cannot choose one or the other. Jesus is the truth (Jn. 14:6). God is love (1 Jn. 4:16). 1 Peter 1:22 commands, "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart." Love and obedience go hand in hand. Ephesians 4:15 tells us that God intends for Christian leaders (v. 11) to set an example by "speaking the truth in love," and, that this practice will aid in not only combating "every wind of (false) doctrine (v. 14)," but in the growth of the church in Christ (v.16).

If we take truth out of the equation, we do nothing more than give a "high five" to the lost as they walk the broad

way into destruction. Choosing not to confront a sinning brother ("In a spirit of meekness") does not exhibit love-and, for that matter, choosing to warn a brother of his sin is not judgmental. The church at Corinth, who prided itself on its unconditional acceptance for sinning brethren, was told in 1 Corinthians 5:6, "Your glorying is not good." If one comes up with his own interpretation of God's will, apart from God's Word (2 Pet. 1:20), he not only has no personal relationship with God-he "does not have God (2 Jn. 9)." It is apparent that truth is a "salvation issue."

If we take out love from the equation, however, we become nothing more than noise (1 Cor. 13:1). If I attempt to diminish the value of love, all my efforts in living the Christian life are null and void (1 Cor. 13:2-3). Love is important-so important my salvation depends on it as well (1 Jn. 3:14; 1 Jn.4:20). If I am without love, I put myself at risk of being nothing more than a know-it-all (1 Cor. 8:1-2), and might never appreciate the love Christ displayed leading up to, and while on, the cross.

You cannot eliminate truth or love from the Christian walk. In doing so, one wrongfully "handles the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15)." While others choose one or the other, to compensate for the other extreme, let us "fix our eyes on Jesus" and choose both love and truth.



HERE AND THERE. . . continued from page four

pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect".

I recently had a gentleman tell me if the church was ever going to grow we were going to have to get rid of our air of superiority. I asked him what he meant by that and he said, the "idea that only one cup can be used in the Lord's Supper". Luke 22:17 "And he took the cup and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves." Matthew 7:14 "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it".

Some people get upset and accuse the preacher of preaching to them. Maybe they were. If the shoe fits, wear it. The bit dog always howls the loudest.

There are many who are sick and hurting across our brotherhood. I want to especially mention Sister Patti Whigham from the Lowery, AL congregation. Patti is one of the most dedicated Christians I know. She visits the sick and elderly regularly and has a great Bible knowledge. She has been dealing with issues due to a kidney transplant for well over a year. Please remember her and others when you pray.

That's all for now. Pray for the brotherhood.



PAGES FROM THE PAST. . . continued from page five

the most informing news that they had heard Him say, about the Kingdom, giving Peter the keys. Then, He feels they are able to know the fact about His death and He begins to tell them how He must go to Jerusalem and be killed. Afterwards charging them that they should tell no one that He is the Christ. Then Peter, poor Peter, who had just confessed His Lord, now begins to tell Him how mistaken He must be about having to die. (Here it is Peter who does the talking, this time not pleasing to the Lord). And this time the Savior tells him in different words from what He told him the other time, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," (Reader, remember when he made the confession Jesus said that was Not of Men, but of God, note the difference Peter confessed His Lord, yet he denied Him, We are not too unlike Peter. Yet let us always; be like him, in that we are ready to come right back in an humble way, and always be ready to let anyone know just how we would answer the Lord's question, "Whom say ye I am?")



CONTROLLING . . . continued from page two

lips. What we say to others can come across to them in ways we never intended. Words can cause hurt, they can cause division, they can cause confusion. But we must weigh our words so that none of these is a problem.

The most common sin of the tongue is reacting angrily to another person because of something he says or does to us or perhaps just "flying off the handle," as we say-

that is, reacting angrily and immediately to a situation without thinking.

Other sins of the tongue can include criticizing others without just cause, complaining excessively about situations in life or in the church, telling lies, gossiping, tale bearing, causing disunity among brethren, and the list goes on. James' teaching strongly admonishes us to avoid these sins-that is, "Think before you speak."

"THE SOUNDS OF THE CROSS"

As the sounds of the cross
Echo in our mind,
We look at our Lord
As He's hanging there.

And what we find,
As we gaze at that one,
God's own Son,
Is a man dying in pain.

And then we remember,
That's why He came.

Even if the soldiers thought
They put Him there.

Let us remember,
Let us beware,
Of what He'd already said.

"You do not take my life,
I lay it down."

And, as we hear the sounds
That echo round,
We realize that even as He died.
Even as to the Father He cried,
He died exactly as planned.

He was still in control.
He was fulfilling His role,
As the Son of God, the Son of Man.

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FOOLISH FAITH*By Aaron Battey*

Faith seems like a simple enough concept, yet so many people do not know how to spell it. Contrary to popular opinion, faith is not spelled “F-O-O-L-I-S-H.” Yet, people who say, “I don’t need evidence, because I have faith,” are being as foolish as Pinocchio. This is the popular cop-out statement used by people who have no legitimate reply when evidence of their faith is questioned. Foolish faith like this is what Solomon had in mind when he said, “The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps,” (Proverbs 14:15). Throw away the cop out and get some evidence.

The common word for “faith” used in the New Testament scriptures is the Greek (pistis) which incorporates the meaning of trust, confidence, and belief. Faith without evidence is foolish and blind. If someone were to claim they saw Winston Churchill walking the streets of Manhattan wearing a mullet, would you not ask for evidence? So should evidence be readily available for one to have confidence (faith) in God, Jesus, the Bible’s inspiration and whatever else.

The Hebrew writer says, “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God...” (11:3). This statement can be made because simple logic is evidence enough to give one confidence and understanding that the panoramic earth could only be created by something more powerful and majestic than itself.

The Bible gives evidence after evidence acclaiming to Jesus’ life on earth. In fact, there is enough evidence to stand up in a court of law. Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them,” (Matthew 18:20). This is the same standard that exists in the American judicial system today, but where are the witnesses? Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 that more than 500 believers saw Jesus after His death. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Peter in their writings, all attest to seeing Jesus after His death. 500 witnesses is enough to get the death penalty but not enough to induce trust in the Savior of all men?

Got milk? Got faith? Got evidence? If no, you got foolishness... and some bad cereal.

LITTLE SINS*By Nathan Battey**www.christianresearcher.com*

In religious conversations people often argue, “I don’t believe God would send someone to hell for one...” and then they fill in the blank with whatever sin they feel is not that “big”.

Humans tend to have a different perspective on sin than God. Man, based on his own authority, decides that some sins are not as bad as others, and that some sins are not worthy of eternal punishment. Based on their own reasoning, many attempt to turn some “smaller sins” into “non-sins” and thus excuse certain behaviors.

For example, some argue, “I don’t believe God will send someone to hell just because they drank a single glass of wine.” Others might say, “Oh, it’s just a little white lie.” In other words, drinking wine or telling a fib is not really a big deal; in fact, maybe we shouldn’t even classify them as sins. Since we don’t feel such behaviors are sins worthy of eternal punishment, they must not be.

Unfortunately for mankind, God did not grant us the power to determine and classify sin (Psalm 119:11), no matter how much they “feel” about it. To argue man determines sin is to argue that man determines law (1 John 3:4; 2 Peter 1:20-21). When God either explicitly or implicitly says that something is a sin, man must not transgress the law of God (1 John 3:4).

Many have forgotten the account of how sin first entered the world. Eve sinned by eating some fruit and then offered the fruit to Adam, who also sinned by eating it. How could eating a piece of fruit cause someone to be lost? Yet because of this one “small” sin, Jesus had to enter the world and die for all of mankind.

What many fail to realize is that when they excuse sinful behaviors they are passing judgment on God and mocking the death of Christ. For instance, when someone says, “I don’t believe God would send someone to hell for drinking a single glass of wine!” what they are actually saying is, “I think it was unfair for God to kill Adam and

Eve for eating a single piece of fruit and silly to send Jesus to die because of it!"

While some choose to focus on the "unfairness" of God in the garden (or in our day for that matter), they fail to see the blessing God had provided in placing Adam and Eve in the garden to begin with, as well as the rebelliousness that caused Adam and Eve to die. God did not force Adam or Eve to sin; it was their choice. Actions have consequences; man determines the actions, and God determines the consequences. Though you may not like the facts, we cannot change the rules, and God is not unfair in setting rules / boundaries.

When God commands his people to be sober (1 Thessalonians 5:7-8; literally - free of intoxicants), to violate God's command and drink of the forbidden drink is worthy of death. When God commands his people to, "let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one", lies of any shape or size become worthy of death.

When we start down the path of, "I don't think _____ is worthy of eternal punishment," we have entered the realm of Relativism. By what standard are we to walk, and who determines the set standard? Is everyone left to choose his or her own path? Drinking alcohol does not seem to be a big deal to one person and murder does not seem to be that big to another. Hand in hand both men fall into the pit of sin and death (Matthew 15:14).

When people begin playing God and determining which sins are and are not worthy of death, it is not long until they find themselves in the camp of the annihilationist where nothing is deserving of eternal death. Friends, be warned: there will be a judgment, and God the righteous judge will judge every deed, good and bad, according to what is written in the books (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Revelation 20:12); the righteous shall inherit eternal life and the wicked eternal punishment (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:13-15).

May we heed and share the words of the Psalmist:

Psalms 119:11 (NKJV)

Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.

Psalms 119:128 (ESV)

Therefore I consider all your precepts to be right;
I hate every false way.

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Field Reports

Rick Martin 300 Clubview Terrace Woodstock, GA 30189 mmartin@bellsouth.net The congregation at Marietta closed a very enjoyable meeting with Don King recently. Don did an excellent job proclaiming the Gospel and it was a pleasure to visit with him and Patsy. We consider them to be dear friends. We are getting ready for our annual singing with Kevin Presley. We are also looking forward to having Johnny Elmore attend. We started the singing 21 years ago, with the assistance of Lynwood Smith, and it is one of the highlights of the year in our area. I have recently been able to hear Gospel preachers, Jimmy Cating, Jerry Dickinson, and Terry Studdard. All of these men are great preachers of the Gospel and their sermons were excellent. My

next meeting will be at Temple, GA, October 24-26. We would be happy to have you attend. I solicit your prayers for me and the congregation at Marietta.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old_paths@juno.com August 14- We are at home again after a good meeting in New Salem, MS. It had been three years since we had been there and it was great to see everyone again. Crowds were very good all week with several States represented and reportedly every congregation in MS was well represented also. Several young people came from out of State and remained for all of the meeting and that was impressive. New Salem's hospitality is alive and well, as always. We appreciated all they did for us, and with us, during the meeting. There was one confession of wrongs and we pray good will be seen for a long time to come. Brethren got up early both Lord's Days to barbeque several kinds of meat for the usual feast served by members. Southern food and Southern people are hard to beat. Lord willing, we will go next to Ada, OK in September and we look forward to that. Let me encourage our preachers to send their reports and articles for the paper. Please, mention the paper where you travel and offer to send subscriptions. You will do the Cause of Christ a great service. Lord bless the faithful everywhere.

Bob Johnson 431 W.Wintergreen Rd. Apt. 31104 Desoto, TX 75115 bobusj@gmail.com The church in Duncanville, Tx continues to be at peace, and harmony prevails among the saints. Our highlight for this year was having fellow preacher Cullen Smith conduct a weekend meeting for us this past Spring. This young brother gives stirring sermons, to say the least. His forcefulness and ability in presenting each message was manifested to all who were present during the meeting. We truly were made better by his presence. We recently had some heavy card stock cards printed with information concerning our worship services. These door hangars are the best I have ever used, especially if it is a windy day. I also have been asking folks to fill out a "soul survey" and after passing out a few, one lady filled it out and mailed it back having answered all of the questions. It makes them search the scriptures and reflect on the life they are now and have been living. Two of our preachers have received a copy of it, seem interested and may also use it for their home church. We are all looking forward to the Annual Texas Labor Day

Meeting. The Fossil Creek congregation in Ft.Worth, has been good to provide a suitable meeting place as they have in previous years. Brother Ronny Wade will be taking charge of the services and always does an excellent job. Brother Johnny Elmore will be speaking here at Duncanville on the Lord's Day morning during the meeting. The Labor Day Meeting has been well attended throughout the past, and no doubt it will be the same this year. Most likely the meeting will be over by the time this field report is published. We solicit the prayers of the saints as we continue to search for the few honest hearts that will heed the gospel message.

Bruce Roebuck, 1666 E. 2060 Rd. Hugo, OK 74743 The spring and summer have really flown this year. I have held a number of meetings this year and attendance and interest have been good. In March I began in Weatherford, Tx. The meeting was well attended. It was great to stay with Gary and Carol Robinson while there. Next I spent a week with the church in Cave City, AR. They seem to be doing well. I greatly enjoyed working with Andrew Richardson, who is an asset to the church. Next we were at Galey, OK for a week long meeting. It was good to see old friends and stay with Ken and Kathy Holland. The following week we were at Golden, OK. This is where I began my preaching career, so it was a special treat to be there again. The meeting closed with two baptisms. Recently, I was in Earlytown, AL. The church there is well. Brethren from near and far made the meeting a great success. Special thanks goes to my good friend Aaron Studdard, who stood in for me one night while I traveled to conduct a funeral. Brethren, community visitors were present at most of these meetings. At one place members of a commune came to here the gospel. That's a first for me. So I think the value of a gospel meeting is underestimated too many times by our own members. It may be old hat to us but its still a new and amazing concept to many lost souls. Presently, I'm in Mountain Grove, MO. The meeting began with a great crowd last night. I look forward to the rest of the week. My next endeavors are: Texas Labor Day Meeting, Walnut Grove, Ky Oct. 4-11. Then of course it'll be time to pack up and head to the Alabama New Years meeting before you know it. May the Lord bless the faithful everywhere!!!!!!



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THE BACK PAGE...

I STAND WITH SOLOMON

By CARL M. JOHNSON

Bill Dickinson worked for ARMCO steel manufacturer for many years in Houston, Texas, and rose through the ranks to become a foreman. Since his job required him to deal with people on a daily basis the company required him and other administrators to take a class in psychology. One day, his psychology instructor told the class he wanted to discuss the old saying, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." (The essence of the statement is found in Proverbs 13:24.)

The classroom was filled with highly educated people, including metallurgists, engineers, and Ph.Ds. When the instructor asked all of them in turn to give their opinion of the old saying, they replied in essence that "spare the rod and spoil the child," was old-fashioned, outdated, ineffectual, harmful to children, and should not be practiced in an enlightened civilization such as ours.

Finally, the instructor got around to asking Bill his opinion. Bill rose from his chair and said, "I am probably the dumbest person in this room. I think I finished the ninth grade. But, do you people know who spoke those words we are discussing today? SOLOMON! With the exception of Jesus Christ, Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived! He was wiser than the sum total of everybody in this room. So, I am going to have to disagree with all of you on this issue and take my stand with Solomon."

The continuing public debate over whether spanking is an appropriate form of discipline for children was heightened last year by the case against Adrian Peterson, star football player for the Minnesota Vikings. Peterson was originally charged with felony child abuse when he whipped his four-year-old son with a switch and left cuts and welts on the boy's legs. Subsequently, Peterson pleaded no contest to a reduced charge of misdemeanor reckless assault. He avoided jail time by paying a \$4,000 fine, court costs, and agreeing to 80 hours of community service. He was also suspended by the Vikings for the entire 2014 football season.

Most Americans agree Peterson crossed the line by injuring his son while disciplining him, but it is a mistake to use this case as an indictment of Solomon's words and of all physical punishment for children.

Solomon explains that all discipline is not spanking. In fact, he speaks of two types of discipline or correction—"the rod AND rebuke"(Prov. 29:15). The word "rebuke" refers to verbal correction which includes teaching, nurturing, and warning. However, according to Solomon, there are occasions when discipline involves the use of force (Prov. 10:13; 17:10; 22:15; 23:13-24; 29:15).

Solomon is not calling for child abuse when he says, "Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die" (23:13). The word "beat" simply means "to strike (lightly or severely); to smite" (Strong's Hebrew-Chaldee Dictionary 78).

The word "rod" is also translated, "reed-like rod; "stick;" or "paddle." According to D. Bland, the original word may refer to a threshing rod that served to separate the hull covering the seed from the seed itself. In the same way, the rod of discipline separates the folly that surrounds the heart and mind of the child and opens the way for wisdom to take root (NIV Commentary 202).

Solomon continues, "You shall beat him with a rod, and deliver his soul from hell" (23:14). Solomon cautions parents not to be weak, thinking they will injure the child with judicious correction. Parents must punish children firmly when necessary (13:24), and far from harming them, they do them the greatest good.

Solomon consistently explains that physical discipline is an important part of the correction and training of a child, to teach it to avoid wrong behavior, to embrace what is right, and to build godly character. Equally important, physical discipline is an expression of love for a child, while the one who 'spares the rod hates his son' (13:24).

Taking into account all of the teaching of Proverbs, physical discipline of a child must never be severe and must always be exercised in love. It should always be to instruct the child and never as a vent for anger (Cf. Heb. 12:5-11). There is no call for abuse in any of these passages. Loving discipline does not destroy rebellious children; it does them a big favor.

In spite of all of Solomon's wise counsel, there is an increasing number of people in our society today that mirror the people in Bill Dickinson's psychology class. Deb Sandek, program director with the Center for Effective Discipline argues that corporal punishment of any kind causes psychological trauma in children and should be banned entirely (time.com 9-17-14).

I am sure Sandek and associates mean well, but the inspired wisdom of Solomon has proven true for 3,000 years. Therefore, I join Bill Dickinson in this continuing controversy and take my stand with Solomon. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com