

PREFACE

For twenty five years the brethren in the state of Oklahoma have been having a New Year meeting, which would be less than a week in duration, ending on New Year eve. It has grown in influence and interest so much that people from all over the nation attend, some from as far away as California. There is a special emphasis on encouraging young preachers and teachers, and some of our very able and well known preachers of the day got their start in this meeting and made their first talks there. Too, the beloved late, Tom E. Smith suggested that we have a theme each year and focus our thoughts and teaching thereto.

Such was the case in 1973, when the New Year meeting was invited to Moore, Oklahoma. Moore has a very nice congregation with talented brethren and good plans were made for this meeting. This is the home of Brother R. B. (Bill) Roden who worked for the meeting, laying the plans and working out the details. The timely theme for this meeting was, "THE CHURCH, - Still It Stands". There was a reason for choosing this particular theme at this time. It was due to a tendency among a few who were seeking, we feel, to downgrade the Lord's church by esteeming it no more and no higher than the man made denominations of our land. Some who were members of the church were fellowshipping and working with the same. Some were referring to the church of our day as a "splinter group" and other such defaming terms. Some were trying to convey the thought that the church has sort of dissipated into a meaningless conglomeration of beliefs, where one was as good and as "true" as the other.

This false teaching jars heavily upon the ears of the men who still preach the Gospel and stand up for Truth and Right. Such discordant cries shall not go unnoticed and may the advocates thereof never over estimate themselves nor their teachings so as to think themselves able to cast the Lord's people into disarray. We believe and still preach the church is as true and as real today as when Paul left this earth nineteen hundred years ago. We believe that time has not passed her by and can never do so. We know that her truths and teachings are as modern as this day's headlines and as timely as this morning's dew drops.

So for this reason this theme was selected and we feel justified in the results. The meeting was a great one with people attending by the hundreds. Brethren were there from Michigan, Texas, Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, California, Tennessee and perhaps other places. Many preachers were present who did not get to speak and this is regretted. The crowd became too large for the church building and spacious and accommodating chapel on the campus of Oklahoma City University was used for the last few services.

The sermons herein are designed to teach no new doctrine! We feel we have had too much of that already. But these faithful brethren, who love and work for the Lord's church, even with all our faults and failures and human weaknesses, have reaffirmed the truth concerning the church which Jesus loved and died to save. It will do you good to read what these men forcefully preached. You will be refreshed and heartened to know that some will still raise their voice and declare the beauties of Zion. It will be satisfying to know that the things you have been taught from the Bible since your childhood are still declared today with an "Old Fashioned" brush arbor ring!

I stand in the debt of a number of brethren for their help and special encouragement during this meeting. My special thanks are due Brethren Ervin Barnes, Harrison, Arkansas, and Alan Bonifay, San Antonio, Texas, for their valuable help in recording these sermons. I appreciate Brother Richard Frizzell, Jr. for his help.

Brother Johnny Elmore and his wife, of Ardmore, Oklahoma along with Sister Claude Ruff of Springfield, Missouri helped by transcribing and preparing the manuscript for printing. Sister Chapman also assisted in this. Also I am indebted to Brother Richard Bunner for the assistance that he has given in getting this printed.

We send forth this book with a prayful desire that good for the Lord's church will accrue from it, and the "mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the hills". So please as you read, be assured that "THE CHURCH - Still it Stands".

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"I Love Thy Church, O God,
Her Walls before Thee stand;
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And Graven on Thy hand"—T. Dwight