

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. LXXXV

LEBANON, MISSOURI • AUGUST 2013

NO. 8

FAITH AND BAPTISM

By *ANDREW RICHARDSON*

When it comes to importance, the subject of salvation comes second to none. Unfortunately, within Christianity, nothing is debated more concerning the how of salvation than whether water baptism is necessary or not. Far and wide, the religious consensus is -absolutely not. However, water baptism, according to the scriptures, is a must for salvation. This article sets out to prove that an alien sinner (a person who has never previously been a Christian) cannot be saved before or without baptism, that is, immersion in water. However (and this is a huge however), this does not mean that a person can be saved without faith - the Bible is very clear and emphatic that faith is required for salvation - but this article concerns the fact that baptism is also essential.

PLAIN LANGUAGE

The necessity of baptism is taught in plain language by Christ. In Mark chapter 16, He says, “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” (vv. 15-16).

This is an explicit statement! To be saved, a person must “believe and be baptized.” The idea that baptism comes after salvation plainly goes contrary to what Jesus says here. We all know what the word “and” does. It joins the two! Simple grammar. To deny baptism as a requirement for salvation is to deny the plain meaning of language! To illustrate such clear language even further, consider this example:

He that signs up for guitar lessons and completes the course shall get a free guitar; but he that does not sign up gets nothing.

Now if I signed up for the lessons, but never showed up for the course, should I expect the free guitar?

Would I not be laughed at if I asked for the free guitar after only finishing half the course? Do you believe that completing the course is necessary to get the free guitar, or do you think signing up is sufficient?

DO NOT ADD OR DIMINISH

The scriptures often tell us not to add or take away from the word (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 5-6; Rev. 22:18-19). The Bible says faith is required for salvation (John 3:16; Mark 16:16; Rom. 5:1; Gal. 2:16), and so we should accept the necessity of faith, and most people do, but the Bible also says that baptism is needed (“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”), yet most do not accept its necessity, and this is diminishing from God’s word. There will be more about faith later in this article.

HOW DID PETER UNDERSTAND IT?

The apostle Peter was standing there when Jesus said who would be saved in Mark 16:16, so how did he understand Jesus’ statement? Did he understand it according to the plain meaning of language? Notice: “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

Here is another explicit statement! Peter says that baptism does save us! Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” and Peter clearly understood Him as saying such. To deny that baptism is needed for salvation is to deny Peter. Peter says baptism saves us, but most religious people say it does not. Notice it’s not the physical removal of dirt by the water that saves us (“not the putting away of the filth of the flesh”). The water itself does not save us. The act of baptism does not have within itself the power of forgiveness. Rather salvation happens by Christ removing the sins, which gives us a “good conscience.” Baptism is simply when

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Subscription One Year..... \$13.00
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

A SHIFT IN FOCUS

By: DON L. KING

We read with interest the last portion of Bro Wade’s article in the July issue of the Old Paths Advocate. Many of us were raised in the exact same way. As a child I knew very few who attended what was called the “picture show.” I never went (still don’t) and we didn’t allow our children to go. It may not have been that our brethren all took the position that a movie was wrong just because it was a movie, but many of us were taught to stay on the safe side of everything. If there was any question, stay away from it. That way, we didn’t have to worry whether or not we were right. No doubt the movies then were generally pretty tame as far as content was concerned, and this is no longer the case, but Hollywood even then had a reputation of being involved in things Christians found objectionable. Divorce, for instance, was rare, virtually nonexistent, among God’s people, but among movie stars it was quite common. The same was true with other things. Drinking, gambling, dancing, immodest dress, etc., were so rare among our people that it might have come from another planet. Among movie stars, all of these were common. Unfortunately, such is not as rare among us now.

The Bible still says to “abstain from all appearance of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:22) The word “appearance in this place means “appearance, fashion, shape, sight” (Strong’s Greek dictionary.) Thayer also renders it similarly. Whatever, one might say it is obvious we are to stay away from anything questionable. To put it another way, we are to remain on the safe side of every issue. In Philippians 4:8 the apostle wrote: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Again, it seems there has been a shift in our focus somehow.

I recall a true story once related to me of a young man considering becoming a preacher. He asked Lynwood Smith about mixed bathing at the Sulphur, OK meeting. Lynwood said, “You mean the boys swimming with the boys and later the girls swimming with the girls?” The young man said: “Oh no, boys and girls swimming together but we would be dressed modestly.” Lynwood was exasperated and remarked, “Oh, honey, I don’t want the boys and girls swimming together if they

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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Is it scriptural to confess a transgression against the church by proxy? Can I confess a sin to someone and have that person present it to the church on my behalf?

Answer: The scriptures teach that every child of God is a priest (Revelation 1:6 and 1Peter 2:9). As a part of the royal priesthood, we have the privilege and right to come boldly “unto the throne of grace,” confessing our sins to God through Jesus Christ our High Priest. It should be noted that we do not “confess to the preacher” with any expectation that he can forgive me of my wrong doing. If I have sinned against the church in some way, by bringing shame upon the body by my behavior, I am obligated to repent of my sin, confess it to God, and ask for His forgiveness. The church, however, deserves to be informed of my repentance and confession. In so doing, I may stand before the church and let them know of my sorrow and repentance, or I might write out a statement and have another brother read it to the church, or I might come forward and tell the one in charge and he then relay to the church what I have said. The bible does not inform us of a specific way such matters are handled. In Acts 19:18 we have an account of many who believed and came confessing and telling their deeds. The confession of sin should be made to God, because He is the one, the only one, who can forgive my sin. A proxy is someone who has the power to act in behalf of someone else. Within the context of the question I believe it would not be unscriptural for someone to tell or convey to the church the fact that I have repented of sin and desire their prayers in my behalf.

Question: Would you explain why the people in Acts 19 were baptized again? Are there reasons that justify re-baptism today?

Answer: In Acts 19:1-5 Paul encounters some disciples at Ephesus. When he questioned them about the Holy Spirit he discovered that they had no knowledge of the Spirit. Hence the question

“into what were you baptized?” They said “into John’s baptism.” Paul then explains that John baptized with a baptism of repentance saying “to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is on Christ Jesus.” Upon hearing this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Evidently some were still baptizing with the baptism of John after Pentecost. Because of this their baptism was not valid because John’s baptism had ceased to be effective. Today baptism is for the remission of sins Acts 2:38, into Christ Romans 6:3-4, and in order to be saved Mark 16:15-16 and Matthew 28:18-20. Any one of accountable age and mind is instructed to be baptized for these reasons. Any baptism for reasons other than those given in the scriptures is not acceptable. When one is baptized because he/she believes they are already saved their baptism is invalid. Any baptism to please someone else is invalid. Being baptized so that someone will marry you is not a scriptural reason for baptism. It is this writer’s conviction that in these cases the individual has not been scripturally baptized and needs to be baptized for the right reasons given in scripture. Unfortunately many “very young” children are baptized with no real concept of what they are doing or what is expected of them. Even though a child can answer such questions as why they want to be baptized or state that baptism is for the remission of sins, many are unaware of the meaning of repentance or actually know of what sins they are repenting. Years later they realize this and want to be baptized scripturally. This places a great responsibility upon preachers when they are confronted with parents of a young child who wants to be baptized before they are actually ready. Baptism into Christ is a serious matter that cannot be taken lightly. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade at P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

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Pages from the Past

THINGS TO WHICH OUR SALVATION IS ASCRIBED

By Homer L. King

Our article this month comes from the pen of a young man, Homer L. King, written September 15, 1924 in *The Apostolic Way*. Brother King was a young man at that time.

There are sixteen things in the Bible by which we are said to be saved. A part of these is done for man because he is unable to do them for himself. Man in his weakness is unable to save himself independent of the things God has done for him. However, there are certain things that man can and must do to secure the final blessings.

The things that God requires of man are but a trifle when compared with what God has done for man. Let us notice the things by which the Bible says we are saved, that man could not do for himself.

1. God saves. (See Rom. 6:23) This will not be disputed by those who believe in the Bible.

2. Christ saves. “And thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matt. 1:21) No controversy here. All agree that Jesus saves.

3. The Holy Spirit saves. How? Peter says that they preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. (1 Peter 1:12) Paul says that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. (Romans 1:16) Hence, the Spirit saves through the gospel which He enabled the Apostles to preach.

4. The Apostles save. Christ told Paul that he sent him to open people’s eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God. (Acts 26:18) So the Apostles save by being agents through whom the revelation is made.

5. Grace saves. “For by grace ye are saved through faith.” (Eph. 2:8) The Bible says we are saved by grace, but does not say by “grace alone.” Grace or favor, is what caused God to devise a system of salvation by which man could be saved from endless torment.

6. Blood saves. Paul says, “And without shedding of blood is no remission.” (Heb. 9:22) “How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from

dead works to serve the living God.” (Heb. 9:14) Blood is the meritorious cause of the salvation of man.

7. Gospel saves. “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; and by which also ye are saved.” (1 Cor. 15:1,2) The gospel saves by revealing God’s system unto man. Let us see how far we may be able to agree on this system. If you believe the Bible, you believe the above save, because the Bible says so.

8. Preaching saves. “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. 1:21) Preach the Gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15) “For it (the gospel) is the power of God unto salvation.” (Rom. 1:16) Preaching is the means by which the gospel is made known.

The above may be termed the divine side of the system of salvation of man. Without the divine side there would not be a ray of hope or a gleam of day for man. It would be all of life to live and all of death to die. Surely you agree with me thus far, and I can see no reason why you should disagree with that I shall give relative to what the Bible requires of man. We shall see.

1. We save ourselves. Do I hear someone say they do not believe it? Why do you not believe it? The same Bible that says we are saved by grace, blood, etc., says we save ourselves. “Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” (Acts 2:40) “Work out your own salvation.” (Phil. 2:12) Perhaps you cannot see how we can save ourselves if God saves us. We shall see in due time.

2. We save others. Again you say you do not believe it. It is true if you never believe it, because the Bible says so. “Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.” (1 Tim. 4:16) We save ourselves by accepting and obeying the gospel, and we save others by persuading them to do the same.

3. Saved by faith. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16) “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.” (Acts 16:31) The Bible does not say we are saved by “faith alone.” How could it be by “faith alone” when the Bible says we are saved by grace, blood, etc.? James says we are justified by works and not by faith only. (Jas. 2:24-26) Faith enables us to accept and obey the gospel.

4. Saved by repentance. “Repent ye therefore and be

converted, that your sins may be blotted out..." (Acts 3:19) 'Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.' (Luke 13:3) Repentance turns us from the practice of sin.

5. Saved by confession. "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32) "And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:10) The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts 8:37) Confession is our vow of allegiance to Christ.

6. Saved by baptism. "That is where I disagree with you," says one. The question is, do you believe the Bible? Do you believe the Bible when it says we are saved by grace, blood, and faith? Then why do you not believe it when it says we are saved by baptism? Nothing but a human theory can keep you from believing it. "Repent and be baptized, every one of us in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38). "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." (1 Peter 3:21). Baptism is the last step of obedience by which we come into Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27).

7. Saved by works. By works, we mean the deeds of Christian life. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phi. 2:12)

8. Saved by hope. "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for." (Romans 8:24)

Hope is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast. Hope is that which causes us to press on in the face of severe difficulties. Without hope, we could not endure to the end.

Perhaps the reader is becoming anxious to know how we can be saved by so many things. We are not saved by any one of them alone; but by all of the things mentioned above. It is a system, and we cannot leave out any one and the divine arrangement yet be complete.

It may be illustrated by a pole, line, hook and bait used to catch fish. It is the truth to say we caught the fish with the pole; but not all the truth. It is the truth to say we caught the fish with the line; but not all the truth, for the pole, hook and bait were used also. Hence wrong to say the fish was caught by any one alone. So it is with the system of salvation.

The man who accepts all the things by which the Bible

says we are saved has sixteen chances to one to the man who says we are saved by any one of them alone.

It is like nature's way of supplying our daily bread. God gives us the means, and we use them. He gives us the soil, rain and sunshine; while we must plant the fruit. God gives us our daily bread; but not without effort on our part. He gives us salvation by conditions as above explained.

Now, kind reader, you who are away from God and without hope in the world, hear, believe, turn and obey, ere long it might be too late!

"Blessed are they that do his commandments." (Revelation 22:14) Why, O why not accept Jesus, and why not accept him now! Tomorrow may be too late! --OPA



FAITH & BAPTISM continued from page one

Christ forgives the sins of the alien sinner, when it is done out of faith. I'll speak more on the removal of sins in a moment. (Note: After baptism, we are "in Christ," and if we sin after this, we can ask for forgiveness; baptism is a one-time act.)

BAPTISM IS FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
Further evidence that Peter understood Jesus to mean baptism was included for salvation is found in his post-resurrection sermon to the Jews on the day of Pentecost found in Acts 2. After convincing them that Jesus, Whom they crucified, was indeed the Messiah (thus persuading them into faith), they asked Peter what they should do (since they were guilty of murdering the Messiah). His response:

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (v. 38).

Remission means forgiveness. Peter is telling them to repent, and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. To have your sins forgiven, is to be saved, because sin is what causes us to need salvation to begin with. Had we not sinned, we would not need to be saved (Matt. 1:21; Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4, 20; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; James 1:15; 5:20). Once more we see Peter understands baptism to be for salvation along with faith. An alien sinner cannot be saved without being forgiven of his sins. Will we not see the plain meaning of language?

POINTS WORTH REPEATING

Again, this is not to say that forgiveness occurs through some means inherit in the water or in the act of baptism itself; neither is there power of forgiveness in faith itself, but rather it is Jesus Christ that forgives sins through faith when one is baptized. I say again, baptism is when He forgives the sins of the person who has faith and is repentant. Baptism is not the what that saves, but rather the when. Neither does this mean that baptism must be performed repeatedly for forgiveness - it is a one-time act. It places the unsaved "into Christ" (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), and if we remain in Christ our sins will be continue to be cleansed by His blood (Rom. 8:1ff; 1 John 1:7).

The reader needs to see what is plainly spoken by the inspired word: "repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins." If you are an alien sinner, do you want your sins remitted?

JESUS' BLOOD IS THE BASIS FOR FORGIVENESS AND SALVATION

It is vital for the reader to know that none of this negates the fact that forgiveness and salvation is made possible by the blood of the Lord (Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:19). By shedding His blood, Jesus paid our penalty. He did this, not out of debt to us, nor constraint, but by His grace. God did not provide a way of salvation because He owed it to mankind. No man has earned it by works (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 4:4-5; Titus 3:5). Rather He provided the way because He loved us (John 3:16). It was by His grace. Most people who reject baptism as a necessary work for salvation reject it on the fact that salvation is not earned by works, but the Bible teaches that baptism is necessary as a condition of the gift of salvation -not as a way of earning it.

GOD DOES THE SAVING

The Bible says faith saves, but it is really God doing the saving, not the faith itself. Faith is a condition that God simply chose to save through. Likewise, baptism saves, but Jesus is doing the saving. The benefit that is made possible by the blood of Jesus (forgiveness) is extended to a man by God when, out of faith and a repentant heart, he is baptized. Christ shed His blood in His death, and Paul says baptism places us "into His death":

"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. For if we have been planted together in the

likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:3-5).

Also, no man will be forgiven or saved outside of Christ, and Paul declares that getting "into Christ" is accomplished through baptism. Not because some magic force in water puts us in Christ, but it means that Jesus recognizes us to be "in Him" when we are, by faith, baptized. Can a man be saved without being in Christ? How does the Bible say we get "into Christ"? Paul says again in another place:

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

We learn a couple of things from this. As we saw above, baptism places us "into Christ" (when it is done out of faith, of course). Also, if "as many of us as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," then how many of us as have not been baptized into Christ put on Christ?

THE CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH

We can observe another critical point from the previously noticed passage. According to Paul, being the children of God "by faith" results by being baptized into Christ and thus "putting on Christ." The Bible says both faith and baptism are required for redemption. For some odd reason, many think such is a contradiction, but baptism is an act of faith. It is faith that leads a person to be baptized. Just as faith moved Noah to build the ark as God commanded. The ark's construction was a necessary work required for Noah, but since faith moved him to build it, then "by faith" Noah "prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (Heb. 11:7). The Israelites were required to march around Jericho (a work) for God to bring down the city walls, but since "faith" moved them to do it, then "by faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Heb. 11:30).

How did the walls come down? "BY FAITH." When? Before or after a required work? "AFTER."

Just like with Jericho, it is "by faith" that we are saved, but only after that faith has moved us to be baptized. Baptism is an absolute necessity, but it must be done out of faith. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Won't we believe Him?

NOTE: Our Brother Richardson has written on an important subject indeed.

The Bible is so plain about this topic it is difficult to imagine anyone not understanding it. At any rate, we thank our good brothers for this. Next month, Lord willing, we will run another article of his about Baptism and Ephesians 2:8-9. Don't miss it. DLK



A SHIFT IN FOCUScontinued from page two

have their overcoats on!” Can you see how a shift in focus has occurred? While most of us are still opposed to such things, and we need to be, it is not as common as it once was. A relaxation in our manner of life has somehow taken place and will only increase unless a change takes place.

It seems that our Brotherhood has experienced a change sometime during the last 50 years. We once were concerned about being on the safe side of every issue, and we were better off then. If there was a question about something, it was pretty simple for us to make a decision. Take the safe road!

Today, a shift is evident. It is not particularly uncommon to hear argument as to whether the things mentioned above are wrong. We seem to have graduated from the position of being safe in all things to the position of claiming a liberty for ourselves, and others should leave us alone. Brethren, if we claim immodest apparel and the other things we have mentioned are really our personal liberties, etc. Where will it all stop? In the final analysis, is anything wrong?

We recall Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew 5: 46-47) speaking of things right or wrong. He said, “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?” In our modern world, what makes us better than the denominations? Is it only that our worship follows the Scriptures strictly? Does it seem right that in some cases our people are little different than denominational people as far as their lives are concerned? Really, it isn't shameful to me that denominational people make more money than some of us do, live in larger homes than some of us do, drive more expensive cars than we do, etc. but it is hard to take when some of them live better lives than God's elect.

We say again, there has seemingly been a shift in our focus regarding godliness and we need to consider where we are going because we are drifting. Think on these things. DLK

INFORMING NEW CONTACTS ABOUT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST
By GREGORY S. ROBBINS

At the forefront of any evangelistic effort is the great commission, which the Master of life and godliness commanded the Apostles as well as Christians in every age of this dispensation to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Mat 28:19-20) The Churches duty to evangelize is so great that we can never lose sight of that divine purpose, especially after an individual has made contact, desiring to know more about the Church of Christ. There are so many ways to gain information about any given subject; even that of the Church of Christ. One cannot rely on the newspaper, internet and media to plead our cause though these tools make the effort to save souls easier. These things can't replace what brethren have been commanded to do to “go ye therefore ... and make disciples of all men”.

It is the duty of the local body of Christ and its Evangelist to sit down with the unconverted to study the Bible and see what these words of inspiration have to say about the Church which is “the manifold wisdom of God.” When someone from the community wishes to know more about the Church of Christ, the best approach is often the easiest, to ask them what is the best time for me (the Evangelist) to come over and have a Bible study? There are many good Bible study tracts that have been used as aids to help in the saving of men's souls. The best however, is the Bible, to set down with the individual and discuss with them all the words of this life.

Often, in such a discussion, it has been this writer's experience to direct the seekers to the passage found in Acts 2:37 “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Notice with me that after the gospel had been preached, the hearers asked “what must I do to be saved Peter declared “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Act 2:38)

It is at this time that during the Bible study that the Evangelist should ask of the unconverted “What must you do to be saved?” Hopefully they will say to repent

and to be baptized for the remission of those sins. I have found that it is beneficial to the saving of souls to show them in the light of the scriptures that baptism is necessary for salvation. It shows that 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. (Rom 6:4) It adds us to the Lord's Church, just like those people that had obeyed the gospel on the day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:47 "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

I ask of this seeker next, if they understand that they can only be saved by being added to Lord's Church and that Church has a name, which is the Church of Christ. Paul said "Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you." (Rom 16:16) At this time I plead with this new contact if they know of a congregation of the Lord's people that wears the name Church of Christ and practices New Testament Christianity as found in the Bible? Then I extend an invitation to them to submit to baptism and tell them that a congregation of the Lord's people meets in this community.

A PREACHER'S VOICE

By STEVEN BOWEN

With our recent surgery requiring "voicelessness" for seven days, my son Mal recommended we write a daily chronicle called "A Preacher without a voice."

We liked the idea, but it was not long before we realized something important: Our voices for the Lord, indeed, cannot, must not, be silenced. We all-whether in our daily speech or in a light-shining walk -must proclaim the glory of our Lord each day (Matthew 5:16). For a man who has been redeemed by the gospel of Jesus Christ to hold his peace-why, the very stones, as it were, "would immediately cry out" (Luke 19:40). This great message cannot be held in. As Jeremiah said long ago when he thought he had come to the end of the preaching road, "...his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones ... and I could not quit" (20:9).

So, over the past few quiet days, we could not help but reflect on a preacher's voice and how, exactly, he should put it to the Lord's use.

First, we realized that the preacher's voice should be filled with praise and prayer. Even though the apostles had the miraculous measure of the Spirit, they gave themselves "continually to prayer" (Acts 6:4). We should remember to pray for those to whom we preach. Remember: don't preach until you pray. We are, as Matthew Henry puts it, "God's mouth to the people and the people's mouth to God." We must pray continually for the conviction and conversion of

sinner and for the edification and strength of Christians. Paul sets such a great example for all preachers by keeping his prayer wheel turning, praying, for example, that the Ephesians would "be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" (Ephesians 3:16). When a congregation looks to call a preacher, it would do well to consider how fervent his prayers as well as how powerful his sermons.

Second, the preacher's voice - and heart- should give God the glory. I am convinced that one of the prerequisites for a growing work is that we give the glory to God, not gather it for ourselves. The apostle makes it clear: I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6). I am continually amazed how the Lord can do such powerful things through these "earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

It, no doubt, took the apostle some years of labor and difficulty to come to that grand place in his life where he could say, "For when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). Though a great preacher, Paul understood that the power of the gospel was not in the messenger but in the message. He knew that a preacher's message should be filled with conviction, strength, and truth, but also with humility and praise. One of the hindrances to our work is that we often lean too much on our own abilities and wisdom and not enough on God's wisdom and power. The Lord does not need men of great pedigree to accomplish His work. He needs men of great humility, dedication, passion, and power (Ephesians 3:20).

Third, a preacher's voice should be heard in the "byways and highways." The greatest sermons, no doubt, are the ones few ever hear. They are the sermons preached on front porches, in living rooms, in break rooms at work, and driving down the road. And even before that sermon can be preached, the messenger -the Christian -must spend many hours building confidence and trust. A sinner is very unlikely to hear our message if our light hasn't shone in his life long before the introduction to the sermon. We hear many great sermons in the early church, but few are in the pulpits. In Acts 16 alone, we get glimpses of three great sermons: one down by the river, and one that began in a jail and continued on to the man's home. Each sermon ended with rejoicing.

Finally, the preacher's voice should share the greatest message of all: the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That theme was the apostle's greatest: "I determined not to know anything among you, "says Paul, "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2).

We offer this encouragement to every man - young or old - who answers the Macedonian call to preach the gospel. If you should take on such a work, preach the gospel. Preach it first and foremost, beginning to end. Do not preach it generally or vaguely, and do not begin with the restrictions. Tell the story directly and powerfully. Take each listener up Calvary's hill, drawing a picture with every breath of a love that is longer and wider, higher and deeper than we can even imagine (Ephesians 3:18-19). Then - with that portrait vivid

in power and grace - step away and explain the cost (Luke 14:18). The cost seems so small when laid beside the story of Jesus Christ Yes, some will walk away- as does the rich young man (Mark 10) - but they do not walk away because the story is insufficient, for it never is (Romans 1:16). The gospel can drag a calloused sinner- even a godless jailer- from the edge of a hopeless tomb to a saving, watery grave (Acts 16:27,33; Romans 6:3-4).

But let no hearer walk away because we failed to preach the death, burial, and resurrection of 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 as well as the DBR in Romans 6:1-7. If they choose to walk away, may it only be that they cannot reach down deep enough in their souls to draw a resolute, decisive line in the sand (Luke 15:18).

Surely, a preacher's voice- and the voice of any Christian who offers a gospel of salvation to all they can - is a beautiful thing, and it is the voice put to its greatest use. We encourage all to use it with passion: Use it in praise to our God and in prayer, and use it courageously in every corner and nook of your life to share the great message of "Jesus Christ and him crucified." Such a message, and such a voice, cannot- must not-be silenced! (steven.bowen@redoakisd.org)

Announcements

Think On These Things

Think On These Things is a compilation of 83 editorials by Don L. King, Publisher of the Old Paths Advocate Some of the topics covered in the book are Televangelist's, Alcohol, Characteristics of Love, Is Gambling Really So Bad?, and Why We Are Members of the Church of Christ. This book covers topics that are facing the Church and her members today -- very pertinent and a book that every home should have. It is easy/quick reading for our young people aspiring to be leaders/preachers as well as every member of the Lord's Church. This book would be a great addition to any library and will enhance people's knowledge on a variety of subjects. \$20.00 Price includes shipping

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2013 Texas Labor Day Meeting

a gospel meeting conducted by the Fossil Creek Church of Christ with Ronny Wade assisting.

Websites: TexasLaborDayMeeting.org or
Facebookcom/TexasLaborDayMeeting
Friday, August 30th - Sunday, Sept 1st
Preachers: Jimmy Cating, Doug Hawkins,
Clint De France, Bruce Roebuck,
Kevin Presley and Ronny Wade

NEW BOOK!

"If You Ask Me"

THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

This attractive 425 page 6x9 gloss laminate hardback book contains over 25 years of articles that have been published in the Old Paths Advocate in a question and answer format. It contains a broad topical and scriptural index of subjects along with Bible passages cited. The book will be a useful and resourceful tool in the study of God's Word for years to come. It is now available for purchase. Price: \$15.00 plus \$4.00 shipping. Send order & payment to: Bill J. Fergerson, PO Box 140524 Broken Arrow, OK 74014 Or email order to: fergyl259@yahoo.com

3000 Words that Could Lead You to Heaven

Steve Bowen recently printed an attractive, professional tract titled, 3000 Words that Could Lead You to Heaven that succinctly addresses the truth on baptism and the Lord's Supper. Brethren can distribute this to friends, family, etc. with the confidence the material "speak(s) the truth in love." Every congregational tract rack will be enriched by having copies. I am confident souls will be saved by reading this work. Steve Bowen comes from a family of preachers. He is the grandson of E. H. Miller, nephew of Alton Bailey, brother-in-law of Jerry and Billy Dickinson, and cousin of Allen and Mark Bailey. He is a retired high school English teacher who is now able to devote more time to the Lord's work; he is presently focusing his efforts with congregations in North Texas and Oklahoma.

The tracts are \$35 for 100; this amount also covers the cost for printing. You can order from Steve (steven.bowen@redoakisd.org) or Guy McAlister (guy@mymammothgraphics.com)
Brett Hickey

*The first printing of 5000 of the tract are now almost gone. Steve is currently taking orders for a second printing. -DWL

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Where The Saints Assemble

Please correct phone number for George Battey:
405-589-4184

Where The Saints Assemble

The 2013-2014 is almost sold out. If you would like to order one please send order to:

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A PREACHER STILL NEEDED

In the June issue of the Old Paths Advocate, Southside Church of Christ, in Andrews, TX. announced that we desperately needed a Gospel preacher to come and work with us for a year or two. One prospect answered our plea, but later decided that he could not come, due to the fact, the brethren where he was then laboring, persuaded him to stay with them. Therefore, we want to make our plea again, for we believe that out there, somewhere, there is a conservative preacher who is willing to go out into the highways and the byways, to help us seek and find those that are lost in sin and those who have left the fold, to return to their first love, as well as strengthen the remaining one's in the faith. We are willing to pay a substantial salary, help with the work in other ways, financially, physically, morally, and spiritually. If you as a preacher, think that you might be interested, and willing like the apostle Peter, when he answered the Macedonian call, please get in touch with us by writing to me: C. A. Smith, 7 Old Lampasas Trail, Odessa, TX., or call me (432) 653-1337 at your convenience, and we will arrange for you to come out, look things over, and determine if you want to follow through, doing the work of the Lord, with we here in Andrews, Texas. Time is of the essence! Brotherly, C. A. Smith

Field Reports

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, Mo or ronnywade36@gmail.com July 17, 2013 The meetings at Deer Park and Lytle, Texas were both very enjoyable. We had good crowds, and were blessed with the presence of old friends we hadn't seen in years. Both congregations are at peace and working for the good of the cause of Christ in their area. The July meeting here in Springfield was truly a feast. Large crowds, good preaching, and great association contributed to its success. Why not make your plans to attend next year, the Lord willing. If God allows, we go to the following places in the near future: Aurora, MO July 21-28, New Salem near Brookhaven, MS Aug. 2-11, Mtn. Grove, MO Aug. 21-25, Texas Labor Day Meeting hosted by Fossil Creek August 30-Sept. 1 and Harrison, Ark September 18-22. Why not attend one of these meetings if you are close by. We would love to see you. While at Lytle Clint DeFrance and his wife came down for two days which we all greatly appreciated and enjoyed. The Lord bless all His children everywhere, is our prayer.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, e-mail: old_paths@juno.com July 13, 2013- We just returned from the annual 4th of July meeting held in Springfield, MO. Brethren Smith Bibens and Billy Dickinson were in charge and did an excellent job. The Mission Hills congregation is to be commended for their foresight and service in hosting such a meeting. Many years ago, our brethren began gathering at this time of the year. The meeting then provided brethren an opportunity to see and hear the preachers they loved and respected. This also caused the brotherhood to

come together in every way. It helped form a cohesive brotherhood that continues to this day. I recall as a boy the great joy brethren expressed upon seeing others from afar. Great crowds gathered even then and continue still. Our prayer is that the meeting will continue for many years to come. It still provides the same benefit it did in the long ago. It is good to be at home for a while but we look forward to being in Buffalo, MO for a meeting in September. We also look forward to the California Labor Day meeting in Oakdale this year. We appreciate those of you who subscribed or renewed their subscriptions to Old Paths Advocate at the 4th of July meeting this year. The paper goes into many places including foreign lands and does a wealth of good. At some point soon, it will be necessary for us to raise the price to \$15 per year due to increased printing and postage costs. Virtually, everything we use to publish the paper has gone up dramatically since we raised it to the current price a number of years ago. If you can subscribe before this increase becomes necessary you may do so for multiple years at the current cost of \$13. Let us hear from you soon, please. While you are about it, consider subscribing for a friend as a gift. Lord bless the faithful everywhere.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com July 13- It was an honor for me to help conduct the annual 4th of July meeting here in Springfield, MO. I enjoyed working with Smith Bibens in this effort, a gentleman in every way, and things ran smoothly. The preaching overall was outstanding, using, according to my count, 31 preachers in the meeting. We had a young men's service on Tuesday morning of July 2, coordinated by Colby Culbertson of Mississippi and Zack Elliot of Texas, and 14 young men spoke words of soberness and truth. Judging from what we heard that day, we have talented young men in the church who desire to be sound preachers of the gospel and are working toward that end. Let's continue to encourage them in every way that we can! We had large crowds from service to service, probably some of the largest in recent times, with approximately one thousand in attendance at the final service on Wednesday night of July 3. To all the preachers who came prepared to speak and preached their hearts out, thank you for making the meeting the success that it was. Most of all, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Mission Hills congregation in Springfield for hosting this meeting! I trust they know what a blessing it was to all who attended. I am now looking forward to the rest of my meeting schedule: Aug. 17-25 at Hoyte, TX (along with my brother, Jerry), Sept. 18-22 at Aurora, MO, Oct. 9-13 at Moore, OK, and Oct. 16-20 at Columbia, MO. Please remember us when you pray.

Mozambique Report - I write this letter to you hoping that it will find all in good health. I am doing fine too. The work in Zambia is doing okay. Recently, I Roy Siansobanda, Armando Horacio, and Duane

Permenter made a trip to Mozambique. This trip served to strengthen the work and to visit the congregations that side, with whom we have been out of touch for several years. It took us two days journey from Lusaka to Chimoio, Mozambique. One of the reasons it took two days is along the way we visited a congregation in Eastern Province of Zambia by the name of Chimunsi church of Christ. During this visit we were successful to have a day Bible study with the people that attended. About 250 people were in attendance for this is one of the largest congregations in the Katete area of Eastern Zambia. The congregation has about 350 meeting every Sunday morning for worship. Brother Duane and Horacio preached that day. The topics that were taught dealt with the problem of backsliding and the true church. I helped them with translating. They talked mostly about Hebrews 10:35-39; Hebrews 1:1-3; Hebrews 2:1-4; Matthew 16:13-18; Ephesians 4:4-5; and Mark 16:15-16. When we were done that afternoon, we slept in Katete at a guest house. In the morning, we left for the Chimoio area in Mozambique where we would begin our work in that country. It took us about 12 hours to get there. Three hours of this time was spent at the border to clear the vehicle. We finally got to Chimoio around 8:30 pm. It appears farther than it is because of the rough road. While in Chimolo, we visited several congregations such as Namahone, and Namahone B churches of Christ. We preached mainly at these congregations Bible sermons about the Lord's church and the importance of worship. Also, at Namahone, I preached about the six rules of the church assembly found in I Corinthians. The following verses were emphasized: I Corinthians 14:23, we must meet in one place or one assembly; verse 27, we must have a translator when preaching in a foreign tongue; verse 29, judgment must be passed on the preaching; verse 31, men only to speak one at a time; verse 34-35, women are to be silent during the teaching assembly. I also showed when, where, and how a woman can teach per Acts 20:20; Acts 8:24; 1 Timothy 2:8-15. Finally, I Corinthians 14:40, all things to be done decently and in order, and I Corinthians 14:33, the Lord is not the author of confusion but peace. We were blessed with 10 people who were baptized on Sunday. We remained in this area 25, 26, 27, and 28 of April, 2013. Our Sunday worship was at April Seven church of Christ 28th, April, where we baptized 25 into Christ. On April 29, we left for Nyamatanda which is to the east on the highway to the coast. We also had a Bible study for two days there. I preached about worship from John 4:22-24 and Acts 2:42-47. We also taught about the church from Matthew 16:13-18; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:17-18; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-38 and Mark 16:15-16; here we baptized 26 more precious souls into Christ. We - praise God for the increase! After this, we left for Beira where we visited some congregations located just a few minutes this side of the city of Beira. We had Bible studies and 3 people were baptized. The next day, in town we had the opportunity to buy Bibles from the money that was

donated by the brethren from Fieldstone, Missouri. The brethren were very happy and thankful to receive the Bibles. One congregation in Beira had only about five brethren with Bibles and only one sister in the whole church had a Bible to read. Without a Bible how can someone learn the word of God? Anyway, I hope the few Bibles they got will help them in studying God's word. We also visited the church leaders in Beira town where they meet for worship at a home of one church leader. They said they are planning to move since they were able to acquire land. What is left is to find some money to build the church building. The way we were able to pass out these Bibles that we bought from Beira to Nyamatanda and Chimoio was to stop along the way and give each congregation a few of them. Next, we traveled to Machipanda which is on the other side of the country near Zimbabwe. The work in Machipanda has basically died. We don't have anything in this part of Mozambique due to the fact that the strong older Christians died and the younger ones did not carry on. Some of the younger people who were established enough to continue moved to Beira. We did some teaching with outsiders from the denominations who wanted to know more about the doctrine of the Lord's church. Brother Armando Horacio, the preacher from Mozambique, got their contacts and he is going to try and teach them the truth of God's word. Sunday 5th of May we went for church at Namahone church of Christ in Chimoio. Brother Duane preached and I waited on the Lord's table. Here we had one brother who was restored. We came back on Monday to Zambia where we had Bible studies in Mphomwa in the morning of Tuesday 7th of May and afternoon in Chipata North from 2:30 pm where various congregations came together for the study. Here we had 8 congregations that attended. When we came to Lusaka we only rested for two days and left for Chiyokoma church of Christ. We had a Bible study with Brother Duane preaching on the subject of backsliding and I preached on the topic of the kingdom of heaven based on Matthew 20:1-16 and Matthew 25:14-30. Lusaka to the North in the Kitwe Area - - Furthermore, Brother Duane Permenter left for the Copperbelt on 11th of May for two Armando Horacio days. I remained behind and rested as I was getting ready to go and visit the work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 14th of May, 2013. Basically that's the Roy Siansobanda part for the work in Mozambique and Zambia. There is need to visit a lot in Mozambique. They need more teachings and moreover the country is just too big. I don't know how Brother Bill Davis managed concerning the work that side. Thank All of You for Your Assistance and Prayers. We would like to thank the brethren in America at Fieldstone church of Christ and whoever was involved in sending Brother Duane Permenter for the support rendered for the trip. The Lord blessed our efforts with around 50 baptisms in Mozambique and Zambia. May the Lord richly bless you! Roy M. Siansobanda

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THE BACK PAGE . . .

CHILDREN OF GOD OR COUNTERFEITS?

By CARL M. JOHNSON

The United States Treasury Department has a special group of people whose job it is to track down counterfeiters. Naturally, these people need to know a counterfeit bill when they see it. How do they learn to identify fake bills? Oddly enough, they are not trained by spending hours examining counterfeit money, but rather they study the real thing. They become so familiar with authentic bills that they can spot a counterfeit by looking at it or feeling of it.

John uses this same approach while warning us that in today's world there are counterfeit Christians and he refers to them pointedly as "children of the devil" (1 Jn. 3:10). John explains that one of the things that distinguishes children of God from children of the devil is the way we view sin.

John reasons that the hope of receiving a glorified body at the resurrection motivates the child of God to be pure as the Lord is pure (1 Jn. 3:3). There were some in John's day, however, that felt moral purity had nothing to do with being a child of God or the hope of the resurrection.

John argues, however, that "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 Jn. 3).

These words may sound shocking at first and you may think they contradict John's earlier words, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 Jn. 1:8, 10).

John says in chapter 1 that if we say we have not sinned we are liars. In chapter 3, however, he says that if we are children of God, we do not sin and, in fact, we cannot sin. Is John contradicting himself? Absolutely not. The explanation lies in the tenses of the respective verbs he uses.

John uses the Greek aorist tense in chapter 1 when he says, "if we say we have not sinned we make him a liar" (1:10). The aorist tense describes an isolated act that took place in the past. In chapter 3, however, John uses the present tense when he says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (3:9). The present tense describes an activity that is occurring presently and is continuous in its duration.

For example, a man may say, "When I was a teenager I stole a car." The verb "stole" is in the aorist tense and describes an isolated act that occurred once in the past. It would be quite a different thing, however, to say, "I steal cars." The verb "steal" is in the present tense and describes an activity that is occurring presently and is continuous.

With the exception of our Lord, every great personality mentioned in the Bible sinned at one time or another. Abraham lied about his wife (Gen. 12:10-20). Moses lost his temper and disobeyed God (Num. 20:7-13). Peter denied the Lord three times (Mt. 26:69-75). However, sin was not the settled practice of these men. Their sin was totally contrary to their normal habits. Furthermore, when they sinned, they admitted it and asked God to forgive them (1 Jn. 1:9; 2:1).

So it is with children of God today. Because of weakness, error, ignorance, or inadvertence we may commit an occasional wrong act, but it will be the exception rather than the rule of our lives. When, in such instances, sin occurs, we approach the Father through our Advocate Jesus Christ, confess our sin, and ask forgiveness (1 Jn. 1:9; 2:1).

In contrast, John says those who live in habitual sin, continuous sin, as a habit of life are children of the devil. He warns us not to be fooled by others or to kid ourselves. Living the life of a Christian is the only real proof of a person's being a Christian (ver, 7).

Paul is in strict agreement with John's distinction between occasional lapses into sin and a life of continuous sin. He says that when we are baptized we are no longer to continue in sin. We die to the practice of sin in baptism and rise to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:1-6).

Paul warns us further about the cavalier attitude that says Christians can deliberately engage in occasional, isolated sins because, "I can always get forgiveness" (Rom. 6:15).

We would all do well to ask ourselves on a regular basis, "What is my attitude toward sin?" "Am I humble enough to admit sin and confess it?" "Is there some sin I love more than Jesus Christ that I am deliberately allowing to remain in my life?"

Honest answers to such questions help us to determine if we are truly children of God or mere counterfeits. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com