

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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“WHERE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FOUND”

By *BENNIE T. CRYER*

1 Cor 1:30-31, But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

The church of Christ in Corinth was divided on many issues. It was made up of a few that considered themselves better educated and smarter than the other members of the body of Christ. Because of this arrogant attitude troubles arose among the church members. Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has begun to tear down these vaunted attitudes that were causing the divisions mentioned earlier in this context. He has shown that God made Christ our “wisdom” and therefore our only source of knowledge that has to do with salvation from our sins. This is the attitude a truly spiritually wise man will have and manifest if he is “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”, Ephesians 4:3. One 21st Century brother was heard to declare, “What we choose to do here in this congregation is our own business.” He would have fit real well in the first century church in Corinth. Some in Corinth would applaud his statement and their actions but not the Holy Spirit and the apostle Paul. One brother and his wife visited another congregation and were surprised to hear a sister say that their membership was better educated than others in the area. What could have been a blessing for the cause of Christ turned out to be a stumbling block akin to the same attitude in the church at Corinth and forgets the apostle Peter’s admonition in 1 Peter 2:17, “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God.” It does require at least a little humility to heed the thoughts and obey the instructions found in this verse.

Paul now informs the Corinthians that God not only made Christ Jesus our wisdom but also our

“righteousness.” Of course Jesus was righteous and this is important for us to know, understand, and keep on remembering. In speaking of our redemption Peter wrote that we are redeemed “with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot,” 1 Peter 1:19. In 1 Peter 2:22 the Holy Spirit had him write, “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:”. Jesus did not die for his own sins but for our sins. This is one of the things that made his death on the cross efficacious. This righteousness of Jesus was his righteousness and his alone. If he had committed a single sin he could not have died in our place and for our sins. Thank God for the righteousness of his son “who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God”, Hebrews 9:14.

Thus God was able to make Christ Jesus our righteousness. But let us be clear about what this means to us today. Some are declaring and preaching that this means his righteousness is “transferred” to us. This is a long way from the truth. When you see or hear someone using the word “transferred” in this sense be especially careful. God has made Christ Jesus to be the source of our righteousness by his having the right and ability to pronounce or declare us to be righteous through our obedience to his plan for us so he could declare us righteous or free from our own personal sins. This is equivalent to our past sins being forgiven. Let us now study how this is taught in Romans 4:1-8 with reference to Abraham and David. Remember, as we study some of these verses that Abraham and David were already children of God, that is, they were already in covenant relationship with God. They both were active believers in all the senses the word “believers” stand for in reference to their God.

Rom 4:3, “For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” In this context a series of different English words are translated from the same Greek

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this would never have happened. Recently, in the last eight months, we have had 5 from digression take their stand with the truth, two men and three women. We are studying with more and have the possibility of at least two more very soon. We are also studying with a woman from the Church of God in Christ taking the Bible correspondence course. This woman seems very interested in studying the Bible with us. We have been studying with several from other digressive congregations as well as one or two preachers. We just finished a five day meeting with Brother Clint DeFrance, of Wichita Falls, Texas. He did an outstanding job of preaching the gospel message in its simplicity. He brought along our nephew, Kyle Hammonds from the Dallas, Tx. Area. We had anywhere from twenty-two to fifty in attendance each night. Several came night after night from southern Alabama. We are indebted to these brethren for their support. In all, over twenty different congregations were represented. We certainly appreciate all the support we received in this meeting. We are considering another Tent meeting next fall if the Lord wills. We have been blessed recently as well by donations from several sister congregations so that we can do some long needed maintenance on the building. Word can never express our thanks to these congregations. We are also continuing with the Friday fest booth the first Friday of each month. We are giving away bibles, tracts, DVD's and correspondence courses each month. We continue to make contact with those from the community here. Please continue to pray for the work here that our Lord will bless it and us with wisdom in doing His work here. May we all stand for the Old Paths and may the Lord bless His church everywhere.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, June 15, e-mail old_paths@juno.com We closed a good meeting this evening at Planz Rd, Bakersfield. Crowds were very good with several visitors from the community as well as from other groups not of our fellowship. Also, several from other congregations out of the area attended. There were no visible results but from all appearances good was accomplished. Pat and I really enjoyed being there and their hospitality was outstanding. We stayed with Darrell and Gail Brewer, old friends, and were treated royally. Brother Frank Brancato works with Planz Road and has done some good work. About 250 doors were knocked by Frank and

Ryan Terwilliger and that speaks of their energy for the Lord's work. The church there is at peace and works well together. If the Lord wills, we are to preach at the Yuba City congregation this next Lord's Day and then it will soon be time to attend the 4th of July meeting at Springfield, MO. May the Lord bless the work everywhere.

Bob Johnson 431 W. Wintergreen Rd. Apt.31104 DeSoto, TX 75115 (972) 741-1163 bobusj@gmail.com Please note my new address above, effective July 5th. Though I am ending my labors with the church here in Lexington, KY, the few brethren remaining have remained most faithful and I am confident will continue to do so after I am gone. They hope to eventually find a better location for the church to meet. My first year of labor here began with working with a young brother who has dedicated his life to the preaching of the gospel. Brother Zac Evans is an aspiring young preacher in the Lord's kingdom and I enjoyed working with him during his first year of labors here. He is currently working with the Walnut Grove congregation outside of Somerset, KY. My new location will be within short driving distance of the Lord's church in Duncanville, I look forward to meeting with the brethren there. I hope to be of assistance in the Lord's work as needed whether locally or otherwise. Though the Lord's kingdom is not growing by leaps and bounds, we know that our labors are "not in vain in the Lord." (Cor. 15:58)



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QUERIST COLUMN

By Ronny F. Wade

Question: Would you please explain what it means to “lord it over God’s heritage” 1 Peter 5:3?

Answer: The KJV reads “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.” The NKJV says “nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being ensamples to the flock.” It seems evident from this verse that Elders, who guard and guide the flock do not have the right to domineer with an iron hand those whom they lead. Being lords, according to Thayer, means to “to hold in subjection, to be master of, exercise lordship over.” As one commentator put it, they are not to be “autocratic or bossy.” Instead of being “lords” over the church Peter says that they should be “ensamples to the flock.” That is they should set a proper example before the church by their own behavior. They become a pattern, by their conduct and demeanor for the entire church. They lead by a pattern of conduct, and show the congregation how to live, act, and behave. Since there are many churches among us that have no elders, how should those men who actively lead the church behave? Do they have the right be autocratic? Can the leadership of a congregation act in such a way as to transgress the above passage, just because they are not elders? Certainly not. If duly qualified and ordained elders have no right to domineer the church neither do men who lead the church in the absence of elders. A common complaint that I hear all the time is: “we don’t know what is going on here. No one ever tells us what plans the church has, we don’t know how much money is in the treasury, we don’t know how the money is being spent, we don’t know what transpires in business meetings, we are simply told nothing.” Any group of leaders guilty of the things just mentioned are not leaders at all, they

merely pose as such. Lording over the church is an abuse of power. Such abuses lead to mistrust, discouragement, rebellion, and often apostasy. Elders and or leaders need to remember that their position is designed to encourage, lead, and aid the church in being all God planned for it to be. I would encourage the elders or leaders of every church to take seriously their role in assisting the membership to be successful in living the Christian life. Following are a list of suggestions that will help avoid much of the conflict that arises over the disclosure of information between leaders and the church.

1. Make available in some way an accounting, each Lord’s day, of the money placed into the treasury from that days contribution. This could be done by writing it on the board or posting it at some convenient place in the building.
2. Make available to the church the amount of money spent each month and to whom the money was paid, by posting it in a place where members of the church can see and read it. I do not recommend that it be posted where outsiders i.e. non-members can read it.
3. When business meetings are held for the male members, make available the decisions that are reached and adopted so that the membership can be apprised of the work the church is planning and doing.
4. Secret meetings by a few where decisions are reached and then presented to the brethren as a group are counterproductive. It gives the appearance that “a few” are secretly trying to “lord something over the church,” a practice that leads to distrust and eventual trouble.

The Lord’s business is the most important business in the world. Unity in a congregation is essential, therefore, any practice or procedure that leads to mistrust and thereby creates dissension among the members must be avoided. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 14352 Springfield, MO 65814 or ronnywade36@gmail.com)

this if we don't "have to" worry about every detail of every command? It seems like a waste of breath for Paul to spend that much time correcting things that would not matter.

The fundamental problem in this mindset is the attitude behind the statement, "you don't have to." Since when did obeying God become such a burden? I have to take out the trash and do laundry... but serving the God who sent his Son to die for my sins? I get to do that! I don't have to honor him or obey him, because he gave me the choice of making him my master (Matthew 6:24, Romans 6:16).

If you chose to submit to Jesus and have your sins washed away in baptism, to wear the name "Christian," you signed a contract—signed with the blood he shed to save us. We owe Him our lives; shouldn't we want to obey him?



WHERE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS . . . continued from page one

words. They are: impute; reckoned; counted; and in Galatians 3:6, accounted. All these from the same Greek word, except the case or tense of the verb might be different. It means God accepted Abraham's faith as a child of God, and put down to his account that Abraham's sins were forgiven and now he was righteous in his relationship with God. The same could be said of David in vv 6-8. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Since Christ Jesus is the source of our righteousness when, through grace, we accept his plan for forgiveness and obey the gospel we then stand guiltless before God, free from sin. Righteousness is ours because Christ Jesus is our source of righteousness and, therefore, when he declared us righteous, he was simply exercising his right to do this. His righteousness was not transferred to us. All he had to do, upon our obedience, was to speak the word and we became a new creation when we first obeyed the gospel, and remain in good relationship with him by confessing our sins properly as a child of God. 1 John 1:9 declares, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In this way we retain our right standing with God.

Some at Corinth did not understand the difference between an alien sinner obeying the gospel plan of salvation and an erring child of God again having righteousness imputed to him. Brethren do not err in your teaching on this subject. I have heard of some who have begun to believe and teach that God forgives the alien sinner of his past sins when he believes. Thus they have joined themselves to denominationalism and are endangering the souls of those who hear and obey such teaching. Brethren do not follow after those who err from the truth. -OPA



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saddened at such egregious behavior. There are many more places we could cite but this will suffice to show how bad the gentile nations were. Paul went on to tell them in verses 9-11 that while they might not be able to control what happened in the world around them, they were not to "company" with those of the church who were guilty of fornication. It is also going on all around us today, brethren. If it is not preached against, warned of, it will certainly invade the saints today. What about where you worship? Do you hear about such sins? You might because it is a pervasive problem among the world and rears its ugly head among our own from time to time. What our young people see on television and certainly the movies, absolutely glorifies this sin. Women wear as little as they can legally get by with in our world and sexual wrong doing of every kind is pretty common now.

Homosexuality has exploded in this world as something to be accepted and tolerated as normal behavior. Not long ago a celebrated sports figure came out in the open with his lover and affectionately hugged and kissed on television before millions of "moral" people, many of which then congratulated them for their behavior. Think of all the young people, some of whom are members of the church, who saw this portrayed as a wonderful thing. Frankly, we were amazed that the event was the lead story on many news programs, newspapers, and was mentioned several days in a row. It was about as shocking an event as most of us will ever witness. This behavior is called, "uncleanness" (Romans 1:24) "vile affections," Romans 1:26, and in the same verse as an act "against nature." The apostle went on to say that those who engage in such things have a "reprobate mind." (Romans 1:28)

to Noah about the wood that was to be used in building the Ark? He told him, "make thee an ark of gopher wood." (Gen. 6:14). Noah was required to use one wood-gopher. To use pine or oak was disobedience. The statement included gopher but at the same time excluded any other wood. There is one Lord and one God, and there is one baptism. To preach "no baptism" is to present a doctrine that is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ. To include "more than one baptism" is to proclaim something in addition to the doctrine of Christ. Keep this in mind because a comparison of other "baptisms" in action and in purpose will be considered later.

Bible students are aware that the New Testament mentions several baptisms. For example: the baptism "unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (I Cor. 10:2). Then there is "the baptism of John" (Acts 18:25), the baptism "with the Holy Ghost" (Mt. 3:11), and the baptism "with fire" (Mt. 3:11). These fulfilled specific purposes either in time or in design. At the time the Ephesian letter was written these had either passed or pertained to another age. As far as a baptism authorized by Jesus Christ and accepted by God, Paul declares, "there is one baptism." This "one baptism" applies alike to all and is to be obeyed by all in the same way and for the same purpose. Because men have advocated more than "one baptism" in the past, the unity of God's people has been destroyed. To restore unity we must accept and teach "one baptism."

The Christians at Ephesus knew about the baptism of the Holy Ghost which occurred with the Apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), and there's no doubt that they rejoiced upon recalling the wonderful event at the house of Cornelius confirming to Peter that the Gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles as well as the Jew. In addition, they knew about the baptism John preached, since some of them had been immersed by his authority (Acts 19:1-4). Yet, Paul says, "there is one baptism." The purpose of Holy Ghost baptism was forever done and needs no repetition. The baptism of John (Mt. 3:1-5), had run its course, however, the baptism authorized by Christ (Mt. 28:18-20), was to abide until the end of the world.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ONE BAPTISM

1. It is administered by the authority of Christ. When Jesus commissioned the disciples He had chosen He declared unto them, "All power (authority ASV) is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go

ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Mt. 28:18-19). Although, it is apparent these men did not understand the extent of this commission, they did understand that they were to baptize those whom they taught. To the Jews Peter demanded that they submit to baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ" and, when Peter understood the extent of the commission was to include the Gentiles, he "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." (Acts 2:38 10:48).

2. It is immersion in water. One example should suffice to show the necessity of being immersed in water. "As they went on their way, they came unto certain water: and the eunuch said, what doth hinder me to be baptized? (Acts 8:36). Reading this entire narrative beginning with verse thirty, there is not a single mention of baptism, yet it is the sinner (the man preached to,) that requested baptism. Why so? We are told that Phillip the preacher "preached unto him Jesus" (verse 35). It is impossible to preach Jesus without preaching the demands of Jesus that apply in a specific case. In this case, the great commission applied where Jesus had said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mk. 16:16). This sinner understood and wished to be saved, therefore sought baptism. We then are informed, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. "Following that, "they were come up out of the water." (Verses 38-39). Clearly water was involved, in addition, there was a going down into the water" by the administer and the one to be baptized. Then there was a "coming out of the water" by the both of them. Baptism took place after they went INTO THE WATER and BEFORE THEY CAME OUT OF THE WATER.

Furthermore, the word baptism itself addresses immersion. Baptism means, to dip, plunge, immerse. A proper translation of baptism is immersion. The word baptize is from the Greek word baptizo which the translators of the King James Version did not translate (it would have condemned King James who had been sprinkled,) so, rather than offend the King, or err in their translation they transliterated the word.

3. It is administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost Referring once more to the commission of Jesus to those whom He chose, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Mt. 28:19). This is

to have his sins washed away. It takes one word to answer that inquiry-NO! Such a baptism serves to get the baptized and the baptizer wet and nothing more. The very idea of such a thing is akin to Moses striking the rock twice in the wilderness to obtain water. He was told to strike the rock once. Jesus Christ was offered once. Men are to be baptized once. There is one baptism.

BAPTISM IS THE ONE ACT OR ACTION THAT SEPARATES FROM THE WORLD

The disciples were told to “teach all nations, baptizing them,” or, “preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mt. 28:19 & Mk. 16:15-16). The same act is to be obeyed to obtain the end result-salvation for any and all. There are not various types or forms of baptism. The same action secures the benefits desire by everyone. One cannot be saved one way and someone else another way. There is no respect of persons with God or with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

PAUL, THE APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST

By MICHAEL BOLTON

He is arguably the greatest New Testament man outside of Jesus Christ. His influence still greatly impacts us today. Paul, or Saul as he is first introduced to us was very close to the same age as our Lord. It was according to most scholars while in his 34th-35th year that Saul was on the road to Damascus with authority to imprison believers that he was converted from Judaism. However, it could not have been more than a few weeks at most after the dispersion mentioned in Acts 8.2 “And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions...”. This man’s work was really just beginning. Paul is known from this point forward for his great travels to spread the gospel. Three times Paul left Jerusalem with the express purpose to preach the good news. During the remainder of his life Paul wrote extensively, a total of fourteen letters to the churches in which he by inspiration recorded the doctrine of the church.

Though he was “one born out of due time”(1 Cor. 15.8) Paul was clearly an apostle. He referred to himself at least 17 times as an apostle. And in 1 Cor. 9.1 says, “Am I not an apostle?” He makes no pretence to hide the fact of his apostleship. This idea conveys that he was an envoy, or messenger of God. But Paul, claims that he is more than just a “message-bearer”. Paul’s constant and particular use of the Greek term which has been often translated as “Apostle” indicates that he was a legal representative of God. In other words, Paul had the authority because of his office as - Apostle to set forth law for the church. Many today call the Apostle names that are unfavorable at best and really just wrong. Paul’s writings should not be scoffed and ridiculed. He wrote law for the church in this New Testament time.

Paul has often been unfairly charged with teaching some strange doctrines. For instance, Paul did not teach that there is a second class gender! In fact Paul taught very clearly the opposite! He said, Gal 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” There are at least twenty other specific references to equality of men and women of all races and social standing before Christ. He taught clearly that all who believed on Jesus as the Son of God had the power, or privilege to obey the gospel and be saved. He too has often been unfairly charged with teaching that there is nothing a man has to do to be saved, but believe. Yet Paul teaches baptism frequently. While immersion is a work of righteousness, it is nevertheless a work that man must do to become a Christian. Beginning with his own life Paul preached and practiced baptism everywhere.

He also taught other doctrines. He taught men how to behave in the house of God which is the church of the living God the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3.15) His teaching on the church is unparalleled. He masterfully combined doctrines on church government and practice and Christian living often in the same chapter see 1 Cor. 11. His parting charge to Timothy to “keep this commandment” (1 Tim 6.14) should be ever in our mind as a solemn responsibility.