

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

OLD PATHS ADVOCATE

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

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

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NO. 6

THINGS KNOWN & UNKNOWN

By FOSTER PRINCE

The contents of this article are taken from a book of personal sermons preached by J F. (Foster,) Prince. His widowed wife (Elizabeth) gave it to me February 7, 1976. Brother Prince was a gospel preacher, and an elder in the congregation at LaGrange, GA. He was proficient in the rudiments of music conducting schools to instruct others. With pride, I called him “friend” and I cherish his memory. -Barney Owens

“This sermon is particularly needed in our present world, as there are many who contend that we cannot know anything with certainty. Some of our brethren have been drinking deeply of this cup of iniquity and like a parrot in a pet store greeting all who will listen with this blasphemy. How these can stubbornly insist upon such a doctrine is a mystery to me. How can anyone KNOW that we cannot KNOW anything? Apparently the unknowable applies to others and not to the advocates. A preacher made a statement in my presence a while back and then quickly said, “I don’t know that as we cannot know, but I think it is so.” Talk about ignorance gone to seed! Not only are there things that we can KNOW we can KNOW we KNOW them. In addition, there are some UNKNOWN things that we can KNOW that we cannot KNOW them.

WE CAN KNOW THE TRUTH

In anticipation of the New Testament being ratified Jesus told His disciples, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn. 8:32). Were these going to know the truth, or was Jesus ignorant of what He thought He knew? Two things are necessary (according to Jesus,) in order to enjoy the glorious liberty found in the Gospel. First, we must know the truth. Secondly, we must obey what we know from the truth. It is with a pitiful eye that we behold some who proclaim liberty outside of God’s truth. Freedom from the Law, which came by Moses, the philosophies of the learned and the bondage of sin is found only in a knowledge of and submission to the Gospel.

Armed with this knowledge we can know we are saved. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (I Jn. 3:14). Death in the passage refers to condemnation + spiritual death while life is spiritual life and acceptance by God; a state which if persisted in will end in eternal salvation. The change of state was made upon obedience to the Gospel and being added to the Body of Christ-separate and apart from the world. Obvious to all was exhibited in the test of this amidst the persecution suffered by these Christians in their love one for another. To love fellow

Christians in suffering and sacrifice allowed them to know they had made the passage from the cares, pleasures, desires and sin of this world to the things that were better and higher. The point we must not overlook is that these knew they had passed from death unto life. We can know it too.

WE KNOW THAT WE SHALL DIE

This knowledge is one of observation even if no other source of information is sought. Foolish is the man who has a thought of never dying. When we consult the book of inspiration there is sufficient teaching on the subject to satisfy any inquiring mind. When speaking of the death of Jesus Christ, the writer draws from this a lesson to benefit all by saying, “and it is appointed unto man once to die” (Heb. 9:27). The Apostles who walked about the countryside with the Lord were not exempt from dying. He who received the keys to the kingdom declared, “knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me” (II Pet. 1:14). Although many years, many trials, much deliberation and growth had taken place in Peter’s life, his memory was yet fresh with the occasion when Jesus had told him he would die. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not” (Jn. 20:18). What did the Lord mean when He spoke these words regarding Peter? We are not required to allow our minds to imagine because John quickly informs us of the Savior’s meaning in the very next verse, “This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.”

Regarding or disregarding our circumstances in life, we are going to die. We may or may not wish to die, we may or may not try to avoid death, and we may or may not have narrowly escaped what was sure death. Be these things as they may, one hot summer day or one cold winter evening, one morning as spring comes with anticipated welcome, or in the darkness following a brisk fall day death will be our fate. Knowing this to be true, wisdom leads us in the direction of making preparation for what we cannot avoid.

WE KNOW WE SHALL BE JUDGED

How sure can we be of the judgement? We can be as sure that we shall be judged as we are of life and death. Notice again, Hebrews 9:27, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” While those who reject the sacrifice of Jesus need not look for another sacrifice appointed by God, with assurance they can have confidence of “a certain fearful looking for of judgment” (Heb. 10:26-27).

How sure can we be of the judgment? We can be as sure that we shall be judged as we can of the certainty of the resurrection

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Guest Editorial

DANGEROUS NATIONS

By: BILLY D. DICKINSON

The possession of the land of Canaan demanded great courage from the Israelites because it involved the removal of seven dangerous nations that stood in their way. It was actually God’s intention that they should “utterly destroy” them (Deut. 7:1-2), causing some people to question this harsh command. After all, how do we explain a loving and merciful God having His people to obliterate several nations from the earth (even including their children and little ones)? As we ponder the answer to that question, there are at least three things that must be kept in mind. (1) The destruction of these nations was not just to make a place for Israel, but it was actually God’s judgment upon them. Deut. 9:4 makes that plain by containing the following statement: “But for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee.” The peoples of Canaan were in a very degraded condition morally, having progressed so far in sin that they needed to be removed from the possession of the land. (2) The Canaanites were hardened idolaters and the pollution of heathen worship threatened to weaken the resolve of God’s people in their devotion to Jehovah. Since God knew that this evil would be a constant source of temptation to His people (Deut. 20:17-18), the destruction of these nations was for the self-preservation of Israel. (3) The deaths of the children and little ones can actually be viewed as a merciful act on God’s part toward them. As adults they would have also given themselves to idolatry, so the Lord simply took them out of a bad situation and rescued them from eternal damnation.

I believe that there is a spiritual principle in all of this that we need to understand today! As “spiritual Israel” (Gal. 6:16; Rom. 2:29), the church, our warfare also involves enemies that must be opposed if we expect to possess our heavenly Canaan (Heb. 4:1). Our warfare, however, is not a carnal one (we don’t seek to harm anyone in a physical sense), but it is spiritual in nature (John 18:36). Yes, there is a sense in which the church is facing some dangerous “nations” that we need to be opposing. If we are not careful, these “nations” will invade the borders of Zion and create havoc in our lives, destroying the church from within. Let’s notice a few of them...

STAGNATION

Here is something that we must guard against because it is the very opposite of what God demands of us. [The following definitions demonstrate why this “nation” is so destructive: Stagnate- “To be or become stagnant; to fail to progress or develop”/ Stagnant- “Not moving or flowing; motionless; foul from standing still; stale; lacking liveliness; sluggish”] When we take a really good look at our spiritual lives, can we honestly say that we are on the move, growing in faith and character, and pressing toward our heavenly goal (Phil. 3:13-14)? Or is it actually the case that we have reached a point of stagnation in our service to God?

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THE QUERIST COLUMN

By RONNY F. WADE

Question: Is the baptism of a person scriptural if, at the time, they are attending a church that is engaged in unscriptural practices?

Answer: First of all we need to determine the requirements for scriptural baptism. According to Hebrews 11:6 it is impossible to please God without faith. Jesus said "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" Mark 16:16. Peter, by the Spirit, declared that one must "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins" Acts 2:38. The Eunuch was told that he could be baptized if he believed with all his heart. He then confessed "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and was baptized by Philip. Any baptism with these proper prerequisites and design is a scriptural baptism. Those so baptized are added by the Lord to the church Acts 2:47. A scriptural baptism does not depend upon the faithfulness or spirituality of the one doing the baptizing. If that were the case one could never know for sure if his/her baptism was scriptural. When an individual is baptized into Christ the Lord adds them to the church in the aggregate and not the church local. The universal church is a spiritual relationship and has no earthly or tangible arrangement or organization. When the Ethiopian was baptized he was not attending any local group of Christians. He was added to the church and at some later date joined a group of disciples already meeting or participated in the organization of a local church in his home community. None of us are baptized into a local church. The fact that one may be baptized by a person who holds different views than we do regarding instrumental music, Sunday schools, or a plurality of cups on the Lord's table does not, in the view of this writer, make his baptism unscriptural. One who learns the truth regarding these issues and later comes to the truth need not be re-baptized. Whatever he or she may have done that is wrong took place after the baptism, not with or before it. In our divided religious world it is possible for some organizations to wear the name "Christian Church" or "Church of Christ," while teaching unscriptural ideas about baptism and a number of other things. For these reasons it is always wise to talk with people to be sure that their baptism followed the teaching of the scriptures. Although the querist did not ask, I would like to say just a word about re-baptism. It is not all that uncommon to have someone request baptism based on the fact that they can't remember "if they knew what they were doing" when they were baptized. Although I suppose that is possible, it seems to this writer that the one doing the teaching and subsequent baptism should make as sure as possible the intent of the one wanting to be baptized. Any child raised in a Christian home who regularly attends church services will often be touched at a very early age by the fear of hell or being lost. This, in itself,

does not mean the child is ready for baptism. Most of these children can respond to the questions asked with the right answers. In other words when asked why they want to be baptized, they reply "to be saved," or "for the forgiveness of my sins." That is the right answer. But the question is does a young child really grasp what is taking place and are they ready for the duties of the Christian life? Do they have any sins? If so, do they know what they are? Years later that same child, who had the right answers, comes to realize that they were not at all ready for baptism, and want to be re-baptized. Preachers are often caught in the middle between parents who want the child baptized and their better judgment that says the child is not ready. Baptism must always be accorded the respect and solemnity given it by the scriptures, and should never be entered into lightly or in a capricious manner. (Send all questions to Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 or rwwade@charter.net)

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

By Bennie Cryer

Paul has just appealed to the Corinthians to be in unity with one another by speaking the same thing and there were to be no schisms (tears like a garment is torn but still in one piece) among them. They were to be perfectly joined together. Some today are saying, after reading all the different things Corinth was guilty of, that they are an example for us to exist in unity even though we differ widely on several doctrinal points. Paul dispels this idea by teaching Corinth to "be of the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:11, "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you." Louw and Nida says this about the word translated "contention:" It means "conflict resulting from rivalry and discord. This type of strife---is frequently described as verbal, for example, 'always saying bad things about one another' or 'never having a good word to say to one another.'" It seems quarreling was going on among the members at Corinth. We must be careful today lest this same problem exists in a local congregation or in the brotherhood. We should never be guilty of verbal actions or doing various things that would stir up such contentions among us today. Paul had at least partially learned of this problem from the house or family of Chloe. Perhaps this family had withstood this spirit of contention in their home congregation, but now they take the problem to Paul who had helped start the work there. I think this example indicates that when we put forth our best efforts to solve a problem locally and it is not solved then we can appeal to someone outside the congregation to help solve the problem. This does not violate the autonomy of a local church. Proverbs 11:14 declares "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety." Of course if a troubled congregation does not listen to the counselors and

heed their instructions you could bring in a dozen and it would do no good. Besides, Paul helped found the church there and he was an apostle. Solomon wrote a wise counsel about this subject in Proverbs 17:14, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with." Some lexicons indicate that the word translated "meddled" indicates that such contention will make participants obstinate and will cause strife to break out. Study the "beginning of strife" at Corinth chapter by chapter. Chapter 1: Permitting men to be their leaders instead of the Lord and an off shoot of this was thinking that whoever baptized them was more important than the crucified Lord. Chapter 2: Thinking that their own knowledge and education was more important than divine revelation and the inspired words of the apostles and prophets. As we list these keep in mind these were not merely opinions they held but serious doctrinal issues. Chapters 5-6: The necessity of holy lives and church discipline. Chapter 7: The problems with divorce and remarriage. Chapters 8-10: Their problems about liberty, fellowship with idolaters, and apostolic authority is dealt with. Chapter 11: The order of authority and the relationship the hair of men and women have with it. Also abuses of the Lord's Supper. Chapters 12-14: Correction of abuses of spiritual gifts and instructions about how to use them to edify the body of Christ. Chapter 15: Correction of those who had the wrong beliefs about the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the body. Chapter 16: Instructions about the collection for the saints and his desire to visit them. Embedded in this last chapter is a verse that is a death blow to anyone desiring to use the church at Corinth as a paradigm for a congregation to exist with schisms in it along with false doctrines. Paul wrote, Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity" (vv 13-14). He had written "the faith" on these matters to them and he expected them to "stand fast" in these things. The Holy Spirit did not want them to continue in their unfaithful practices and beliefs.

1 Corinthians 1:12. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

The words translated "saith," and "am" in this verse are present active indicative and signifies they were in the habit of saying, claiming, or practicing this activity continually. Thus they were a constant irritant to one another. This practice was an example of what Paul meant in v10 when he used the word "division" and in v11 where he employed the word "contentions." In 4:6 he elaborates on this condition a little more and restricts them as to what they think of men. "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." This verse indicates that Paul could have used the names mentioned in the verse we are studying (v12) metaphorically in place of the names of some of the leading men in Corinth each of whom had developed a following of different members. Paul warned the elders of

the church in Ephesus about the possibility of this very practice. Acts 20:30, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." So there may have been more divisions than the four mentioned in this verse we are studying. But why did some of them say they were "of Christ." Some have said that these may have been as bad as the other groups. This does not necessarily follow. There seemed to be some at Corinth who rejected the practice of these divisions. 1 Corinthians 11:18-19 seems to teach this observation. "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. 19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." The divisions (schisms) seems even to have been carried over into the assemblies of the church. There is always the danger of a "schism" developing into a "heresy." A "schism" (division) is only a tear with whatever is under consideration (such as a garment) remaining in one piece. A heresy is when someone makes a choice (a strong one) and tears the garment into two or more pieces. There was danger in this happening in the church at Corinth. The word "approved" has in it the idea of approving after testing. This type of approval is based on what happens in the testing of metal such as gold or silver to see if it is genuine. In this way they could accept some metals and reject another for being spurious. In testing some members in this manner they could determine who was approved as a genuine follower of Christ and who was found to be a pretender. There are certain things Christians can make a judgment on. Matthew 7:6 teaches this. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Those who follow Christ must not judge by appearance. John 7:24, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." The testing or judgment must be righteous. An example of this is found in Revelation 2:2, 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." In doing this testing in love a congregation or a brotherhood can learn to speak things and "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." KJV

LIBERTIES-FREEDOMS-RIGHTS? OR JUST SIN? PART 1 OF 3

By HOWARD MEENTS

In recent years, we have seen many erring from the truth and others trying to find ways to uphold them in their error and protect them from correction. This has led to division of some congregations, strife spreading, and endangering the brotherhood. So much sin is involved! This is the beginning of a three part series on how supposed liberties, which are actually sinful departures from God's word, have led to division among us.

In John 17, we have record of Jesus praying to his Father for his Apostles (verses 6-19) and for all who believe on him through the word of the Apostles (verses 20-23). This would be, of course, by their direct preaching or by the scriptures.

Notice verse 17 -- "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Then, in verses 20 through 23 he is talking about those who believe on him through their word, praying that they may be one as our Heavenly Father and Jesus are one. In verses 22 and 23, he shows that he wants all believers to be made perfect in one, so that the world may believe.

In this prayer, we see the oneness of believers is very important to the Lord. If this unity is important to Him, then it should be important to us. I submit to you the only way to ever have this oneness is by an adherence to God's word, which is truth and sanctifies us.

In olden times, God's word came through holy men, directed by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1: 20-21). In latter times, it came the same way, from God through the apostles and select others (Mark, Luke, etc) by way of the Holy Spirit. In Matthew 18:18, Jesus is speaking to his disciples. Notice, the apostles were to be given the keys to the kingdom, what they bound or loosed on earth was to be bound or loosed in heaven.

Many read this and think that this applies to Peter only but Jesus was addressing the entire group. Peter was just the spokesperson. In fact if you go to John 20:19-23 you can see much the same thing said and see that it applied to them all! The apostles were the only ones given this right of binding and loosing! Other men of that time, or even our time, do not have that right! In fact, in Galatians 1: 6-9 the apostle Paul tells the Galatian brethren they had removed themselves from God by following after a perverted or changed gospel (something beyond what was bound or loosed) and goes on to say that if man or even an angel preach something different, let him be accursed. Of course, we have other similar statements made in God's word! In Acts 2, notice, in verses 41 and 42, the new Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, (in what was bound and loosed)!

But just think of how divided we would be if man had this right or usurped this authority to make changes! Oh yes, they have usurped that right haven't they, and we now have over a thousand different so-called churches in the world today instead of the one the Lord established and that he prayed would remain one. Once someone starts usurping this right, and once people accept them as having this right, there is very little control over where they go!

Mankind has always been good at leaving or disobeying God's will. It has happened all through history. It began almost immediately after the church was established! And after all of these years, most of the so-called religious world

no longer even pretend to follow the apostles' doctrine. I know that and have come to accept that. Jesus let us know in Matthew 7:13-14 that we need to enter in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and many will enter there, but narrow is the gate and the way that leads to life, and few will find it.

I may accept this fact, but I sorrow over it! Even more disturbing to me, is that in the church of Christ, which has rallied around the motto that we will "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent," some desire to leave. Some have left God's will, the apostles' doctrine. They have followed after man's ways, and have even gone so far as to be involved in activities with those who left God's will long ago!

Some have divided the church by adding such things as individual cups and/or loaves to the Lord's Table, Sunday school, and other things. Some baptize babies, (those unable to believe), and/or teach other Calvinistic doctrines. Some try to invent ways to use women to teach beyond the areas the Bible has prescribed. Some, decided they could have men from religious groups who had left the truth long before take part in their services, to teach and so on.

At one congregation, trouble began raising its ugly head! I found out various things in talking to some of those who were there and to different evangelists who became involved in what became a really bad situation. As is generally the rule, the trouble did not just come out of nowhere. There were many signs that problems were coming but they were mostly ignored. By the time people became alarmed and acted, it was too late.

Over a period of time, other families from different congregations began attending there, which began to change the makeup of the congregation, mostly to much more liberal views. Some began pushing the view that silence of the scriptures gives permission. Of course, this opens up man's ability to add to, take away from, or change things we find taught and practiced by the apostles and those who followed their doctrine. Though Bible history shows us that these types of actions did not work out well for those in the Old Testament, some at this congregation began trying to make some of those changes.

Of the many issues that could be discussed, I understand Calvinistic doctrine was taught publically, including insinuation that babies were born spiritually dead. When the teacher was questioned, they discovered he taught exactly what he believed. This should have not have come as a big surprise because well before this happened different preachers had warned some to watch out for this man, saying that he was a Calvinist and that he was trouble.

With all this happening, some of the congregation arose up against these things and tried to halt the false teaching, as they should have. The elders chose to protect this teacher, seemed to try to cover up that such teaching happened, and

threatened to disfellowship any who would take to task or try to correct this brother. On top of this, the elders also refused to let various preachers have any access to this brother to discuss his beliefs. Eventually, for conscience sake, around 55 members left that congregation. The church divided!

Divisions such as this happen in various ways. Sometimes like this, sometimes in reverse, where leadership tries to stop or correct those who persist in error, and sometimes it just happens due to a lack of love between brethren. Error is always involved. Regardless, these types of problems do not happen in a vacuum. They are almost never isolated. The troubles are almost never limited to just the one congregation. Normally, the seeds of trouble and error are scattered amongst us, because close family members or friends in the church are scattered across this nation. They may only hear one side, or choose to hear only one side of what has happened, and then try to uphold or protect their kin or friends.

Sadly, it is usual to have a few preachers trying to say that these problem groups are satisfactory and that we should just accept them as they are and leave them alone. Some push for unity, seemingly at all costs, even to the acceptance of error. Thus, we have fellow Christians who will visit the services of an erring congregation, some preachers who will hold meetings for them, and some congregations that will use preachers from this problem group for their meetings, etc., all allowing seeds of division and error to spread. Hopefully, most of this is due to some being uninformed. Regardless, many individuals and most congregations correctly chose and continue to choose to have no fellowship with this problem congregation.

An argument for church autonomy is made many times to defend or to support such problem congregations, saying that they have the right to choose to worship or teach as they see fit. They are correct in the sense that we have no authority over them, but just as correctly, we do not have to accept and should not accept their error.

In all of this, I see so much error. I see sin, and more seeds of sin being sown. I see misunderstandings and faulty attitudes, and I see an immense danger to both individuals' souls and to the peace and unity of the church. Though the particular congregation you may attend may be at peace, a few years, a few deaths, Christians moving into the area, Christians moving out of the area and so on, and the makeup of the congregation is changed. Actually, chances are pretty good that people from this problem congregation or others by Internet are in contact with and possibly trying to indoctrinate someone at your congregation. With the Internet, no church or church problem is far away. We have to be aware of problems and be on guard. End of part 1. 5636 Fattoria Blvd., Salida, CA 95368



"THINGS KNOWN & continued from page one

of Jesus Christ from the dead. To the Athenians who worship a god unknown to them, Paul declared, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

While there are many that scoff at the judgment, when that day arrives there will be none that so act after the fact. The judgment day is often spoken of as the Great Day Of Judgment. It will be a great day because the value of any day is great or passes into insignificance because of the Judgement Day. Christian people live as we do because we know about the Judgment Day. The Day of Judgment may be closer than we realize. But, near or in the distant future, it will come and we should prepare ourselves to be judged.

Our fate shall be determined by the Word of Christ. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12 :48). The standard by which we shall be judged is clearly stated and shall be the same for all mankind because, "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). We have the power to reject Christ and His teaching now, but in the last day, that prerogative will not be ours. How sad will be the judgment day when those we have known and loved deeply in this life shall be turned away from the Lord. Presently He is our Savior; however, He shall then be our judge. His pleading which has failed to touch many hearts leaving them cold and indifferent will cease at Judgment Day.

WE KNOW WE SHALL BE RAISED FROM THE DEAD

Resurrection will come upon all without regard to the manner of life we have led, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (Jn. 5:28-29). By resurrection, death will lose the hold it has maintained on humanity since the days of Adam. The Apostle spoke of Christ after this fashion, "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (I Cor. 15:25-26). While there are those that make a habit of going door to door and spewing out the venom of the Devil, declaring that the wicked will not be raised. Was Christ truthful in His statement or was He (for some reason unknown to me) deceiving us? Did the Apostle Paul intentionally lie about the matter of Christ destroying death or are his words a factual representation of the plan of God in this matter? I leave it to you to decide the question. It goes without saying, we must let God be true, but every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

WE KNOW CHRISTIANS WILL HAVE A HEAVENLY HOME

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. "(II Cor. 5:1). We have seen already (II Pet. 1:14,) that the word "tabernacle" has reference to the body. The body is the temporary dwelling place of man as the tabernacle was a temporary place for the children of Israel to gather in worship where the sacrifices were offered. "Dissolved" refers to death "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," so the body shall "return to the earth as it was." (Gen. 3:19, Eccl. 12:7). The "building of

God” assures us that we have a permanent structure in which to dwell “eternal in the heavens.” Again, the illustration has reference to the Israelites who upon possessing the Promised Land enjoyed serving God in the Temple, which was not and could not be moved about. Because we have the promise of such a dwelling place, our affections are lifted from this land. To some who had obeyed the Gospel and were walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4,) Paul wrote, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth.” (Col. 3:1-2). Where does Christ sit? “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which was taken from you into heaven, shall so come as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). Since we desire affectionately the better house we groan to make it our own. “For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our house which is from Heaven.” (II Cor. 5:2). The sweetest word falling upon the human ear and gracing the heart of human beings is the word Heaven.

WE DO NOT KNOW HOW LONG WE SHALL LIVE

The practice of medicine has advanced far beyond what was imagined when I was born. People are living longer and longer. As a youth people in their sixties were regarded as old. Today many enjoy their most vibrant years at that age. The Social Security System is threatened because there are so many old people. Don’t presume too much. “Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there for a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away ...such rejoicing is evil.” (Js. 1:13-16).

WE DO NOT KNOW WHEN CHRIST SHALL RETURN

Jesus taught that men will carry on life as they always have because people do not know the hour He shall return to this earth (Mt. 24:36-39). Furthermore, the angels lack knowledge of the hour of Christ’s return. And, in addition to that, while Jesus was on earth the Father had not revealed to Him when that time would be. The appointed time when Christ will return to the earth is information the Father reserved in His own mind, the revelation of which will come in due time. It staggers our intellect to think there is something that Christ did not know. Whether He knows that now sitting at the Father’s right hand we aren’t told. However, one thing is suremen do not know. Therefore, those who have set dates for the Lord’s return in the past are demonstrated as false prophets. And, those of our time who point us to various signs of His coming are playing with our gullibility. Let’s be determined that we are not going to fall for these fabricated perversions. The important thing is for us to be ready when that grand appearance happens. “Behold now is the day of salvation.” (II Cor. 6:2). If you are out of step with Christ, we encourage you to take the steps necessary to make yourself right with God. It would be a happy time for us to sit down with an open Bible and show you the way of salvation. Contact us at one of the telephone numbers or address above. Barney Owens- OPA

Life Lines

*You learn more from listening than from talking.
You already know what you are going to say.*

• • • • •
DANGEROUS NATIONS continued from page two

It is said that one time Jack the Frog got stuck in a rut while he was playing with a friend. After jumping and jumping and trying to get himself out, his friend finally went to get some help. When the friend returned, he was shocked to find Jack sunning himself on a log. “Jack,” his friend inquired, “who helped you out of the rut?” “No one,” said Jack. When he was asked how such was possible, Jack responded, “A car was coming and I had to get out!” Likewise, when we find ourselves in a spiritual rut, we will not have the incentive to repent and start moving in a different direction unless we first see our need to do so. That need becomes obvious when we realize that it is our spiritual survival that is at stake (Rev. 2:4-5).

This “nation” often occupies territory in our lives because of apathy- a lack of interest and not being zealous of the things of God (Tit. 2:14). It can also be the result of resigning ourselves to failure, so we simply accept mediocrity as our fate. Wasn’t that the problem with the one talent man in Matt. 25:14-30? His real problem was not only slothfulness, but a lack of courage and faith to face up to his duty. If we have a problem with lukewarmness, the Lord tells us what we need to do. . . “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. 3:19).

CONTAMINATION

Since the church is only as pure as those who make it up, each member has the responsibility to keep himself “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). Sometimes it is through contamination that impurities find their way into our lives and even spreads among brethren. This suggests an influencing for evil that comes through contact with something that possesses a polluting effect. Remember that we are warned that “evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33/ASV).

Also, when it comes to contamination, don’t underestimate what we might view as “little things.” Simply a bad attitude, for example, can contaminate us like radioactive material, causing the problem to spread into other areas of life. Did you know that the famous Cuckoo bird never builds its own nest? When it finds another nest with eggs in it and no mother bird around, it quickly lands, lays its eggs and flies away. The Thrush, whose nest has been invaded, comes back and hatches the eggs. What happens then? Among four little thrushes, one large cuckoo hatches and a battle begins. As the cuckoo grows even larger, he eventually throws the smaller birds out of their nest. That is a perfect picture of how sin often works! It enters into our lives, deceiving us into thinking that it is a small and insignificant matter, but then it grows like a cancer until it consumes us. Indeed, it is a dangerous thing to ever “give place to the devil” (Eph. 4:27) because all he needs is a foothold to bring hurtful things into our lives.

DENOMINATION

When the church is viewed as just another denomination, people fail to appreciate it for being the divine institution that it is. That is exactly what is taking place, as we see

the efforts of some to “denominationalize” the church. However, if we truly view it as the Lord’s church (Matt. 16:18), we will understand the need of following the divine pattern in all things pertaining to it (1 Cor. 11:2). Indeed, when we borrow from denominations their unscriptural practices, the church is robbed of its distinctiveness and other glorious features that make it the unique organization that it is. How sad! Some have drifted so far from the truth into ultra-liberalism that they have no legitimate claim to any connection to the Lord’s church. For one thing, they really don’t believe that baptism is “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). One such man is on record stating that baptism is essential to salvation “if a person knows that God wants him to be baptized.” What a pitiful position! I could just as well argue that repentance is essential to salvation if a person knows that God wants him to repent. No, repentance is necessary because God has commanded it of all men (Acts 17:30; Luke 13:3). Likewise, baptism is essential because the Lord has commanded it as a condition of salvation in His gospel (Mark 16:16; Acts 10:48). Just as God demanded that Israel separate themselves from those idolatrous nations (Deut. 7:5-6), that same principle of peculiarity applies to the church (1 Pet. 2:9). Let us beware of these dangerous “nations” facing the church today!

Bonds of Matrimony

FORD-HERNANDEZ- December 18th 2010, Brother Phillip Ford of Springfield, Missouri and Sister Lindsey Hernandez of Edmond, Oklahoma were joined together in holy matrimony. Friends and family gathered to witness and bless the event in the Village, Oklahoma. The wedding was beautiful and well attended. I had the honor of officiating at the service. The couple now makes their home in Springfield, Missouri and attends the Mission Hills congregation there. I know I am not alone in the high hope I have for this new home that it will be a strong Christian family that will be a working force in the Church of Christ for many years to come. May God bless brother and sister Ford in their new life together. - Clint De France

Our Departed

CRAWFORD- Clifford Stanley Crawford departed this life on March 22, 2011, at the age of 92. He had been a member of the Neosho, MO West 60 Highway congregation for many years. He leaves behind his wife Emma of 46 years, 2 sons, a stepson, 2 stepdaughters and their children. His declining health had prevented his attendance for over a year. He was always willing to talk about church matters and seldom did I visit him that I did not come away with a better appreciation of the things that God has given us in matters of religion. He will be missed by the congregation and community alike for his years of service to others. C.N. Nichols

KIMBLE- Mary Maxine Kimble, of Wesson, Mississippi, was born in Lincoln County on Nov. 10, 1923 to James Edwin and Eunice Belle Smith Norton. She passed away on April 6, 2011 at the age of 87. Ernest Ray Kimble was born

in Copiah County on March 8, 1920 to William Wiley and Clara Anding Kimble. He died on April 11, 2011 at 91 years of age. Ernest and Maxine made it through this world together, being married for 67 years, and now they have entered into their rest with only a few days separating their deaths. They are survived by two children: A son, Ernest Randall Kimble; a daughter, Judy Regenia Dickinson (this writer’s precious wife). They were blessed with four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Maxine is also survived by a brother, David Norton. Ernest had six brothers and four sisters who preceded him in death. Maxine was baptized into Christ in 1939 by her uncle, T.E. Smith, and Ernest obeyed the gospel in 1943 under the preaching of H.E. Robertson. They were faithful members of the Hillcrest congregation in Brookhaven. John Smith and Mike Smith officiated on both occasions. Bro. Mike stated that Ernest was the kindest man he had ever known. As I watched him through the years, I was amazed at how he excelled at a variety of things in life. He was, for example, the owner of Kimble Auto Parts until his retirement, as well as a mechanic, a carpenter, and a great cook. Bro. John emphasized how Maxine was a wonderful homemaker. She, too, was a great cook, making some of the best cornbread that you ever put in your mouth. She was, indeed, an example of the “virtuous woman.” As Prov. 31:28 declares, “Her children arise up, and call her blessed.” While we are going to sorely miss them in the days ahead, we look forward to the hope of a glad reunion day! Their earthly remains were laid to rest in the Hillcrest Cemetery to await the resurrection. - Billy D. Dickinson

YOUNG- DJ “Douglas” Young was the eldest son born to the late Dallas and Lee Ethel Phillips Young on July 9, 1934 in Bell County, Texas. He received his education from Sam Houston High School in Huntsville, Texas. Reared in the Church of Christ, he accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized under the leadership of bro. Eugene Derrick. In October 1952 at the tender age of eighteen, Doug was enlisted in the United States Army. He honorably answered the call to duty, serving with great valor and distinction in America’s armed forces. It was here where DJ adopted his first name Douglas. He served as a Private First Class with the United States Army until October 1954. Shortly after his tenure in the military, Doug married the late Eva Lee Jones Young on August 18, 1957 where they resided in Kansas City, Missouri until they made their final move to Houston, Texas. Together they raised two daughters Odella and Renitta. Doug spent much of his life as an Evangelist. In his unceasing efforts and extensive work in spreading God’s word from coast to coast, Doug was a remarkable servant and dedicated preacher of the gospel. He preached, taught, nurtured and studied the Bible with the Northeast Church of Christ congregation and many other churches of Christ around the United States. He departed this life in quiet sleep April 11, 2011 at his home surrounded by his daughter Renitta and great-grandchildren Ca’Ress, Chris and Sasha and a host of friends. He leaves to cherish

his precious memories his two daughters, Odella Powell of Kansas City, Missouri and Renitta Powell of Houston, Texas; five sisters - Zeddie Bowen of Montgomery, Texas; Hattie Bell Doyle of Oregon; Ruthie Holcombe of Houston, Texas, Calniece Young and Henrietta Young of Huntsville, Texas; two granddaughters, Celene Powell and Celeste Powell both of Kansas City, Missouri; three great-grandchildren, Ca'Ress Hendrix, Chris Hendrix, Jr., and Sasha Hendrix of Houston, Texas, and a host of nieces and nephews. -Submitted by Fred Johnson

Announcements

PREACHER WANTED

The church in Seneca, MO is looking for someone to work with them in building up the church. Seneca is located on the Oklahoma line just inside Missouri. They are small in number but are able to supply full support. Contact Gary or Mike Green at 417-766-3323 or 417-451-0324.

The church at Dora, MO is looking for someone to work with them on a full-time basis. They are able to supply full support. If interested contact Marlet Howard Route 1 Box 4092 Dora, MO 65637 or call 417-712-1115.

Field Reports

Paul. O. Nichols, 14327 Rosehill, Overland Park, KS 66221, pon.wjn.ks@juno.com, May 6 - I am happy to report that my hip replacement surgery in December went well, and I have recovered enough to be released by the doctor to travel at will and to drive again. My first meeting was at Valliant, OK., April 3-10. It was good to be with the brethren there once again, and to have several of my fellow preachers to attend and help make the meeting what it was. William St. John and Bruce Roebuck were from the Paris, TX congregation, Jerry Dickinson came from Texarcana, TX, and Jim Franklin came from Lebanon, MO. Their presence and assistance in the meeting was greatly appreciated. Cecil Tidmore, one of the leaders of the Valliant congregation, and an old friend of mine from the days when both of our families lived in California, had lost his good wife, Billie a short time ago. He and I could empathize with one another because of the mutual loss of our life's companions. This year I have meetings scheduled for Stockton, CA; Bakersfield, CA; Atwater, CA and Neosho, MO. I am happy to be back in the evangelistic field, and appreciate these invitations and look forward to preaching the Gospel in meetings once again.

Clint De France, 5021 Taft Blvd #3211, Wichita Falls, TX 76308, Cdefrance87@yahoo.com, May 4 This Spring season of meetings was very successful. I have enjoyed meetings and preaching in Mississippi, Texas, Georgia, Missouri, Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee and Oklahoma. These efforts have resulted in 4 baptisms and a few confessions. I go to Blue Springs, KY May 8-15 and then to the California Memorial Day Meeting. I was particularly blessed to attend

the study in Mid-Missouri hosted by the Rice Road Church of Christ. It was a spiritual feast. A wonderful attitude prevailed and the truth was upheld. The videos of those presentations will be available on www.christianlandmark.com. It was also my pleasure to participate in a mission meeting in Lamar, MO with brother Brett Hickey. Pray for that effort and its continued follow up. I will be home through June and July and begin my meetings again in August

Clint De France, 5021 Taft Blvd #3211, Wichita Falls, TX 76308, Cdefrance87@yahoo.com, May 4-1 have been lazy in sending in reports so I will offer two. 2010 was a productive and extremely eventful year. I was privileged to hold several meetings across the United States and express my greatest appreciation to the congregations for their hospitality shown to me while I was with them. Those efforts resulted in 7 baptisms and many other responses. We thank God for this and give Him the glory. In the mid-summer Brother Shahe Gergian and I held a tent meeting in Columbia, MO. It was a marvelous success. In five days we had close to 30 unique visitors from the community and two of them were baptized. We encourage this old method of evangelism that is still very effective. Perhaps the most drastic change in my work for this year was my move to Wichita Falls, TX. It was saddening to leave the brethren at Columbia. The growth and blessing that they have given to me cannot be measured. But I am confident the Brother Shahe and Sister Elizabeth Gergian, who now live there, as well as the church there, will continue the work with zeal and faithfulness. I commend the church in Columbia, MO to all for its faithfulness and conviction and will always love and cherish the brethren there. Since early August I have been living in Wichita Falls, TX and laboring with Jimmy Cating in a good work. Since arriving we have seen 8 leave digression and there is much more work to do. The church here is in a time of wonderful growth, unity and blessing by God. They graciously assist me in my travels and allow me to hold as many meetings as I desire. I thank all the churches who have supported me for allowing me to preach the Gospel. Earlier this year I traveled to Penza, Russia where Mike Criswell and I held a meeting for the congregation there. The band of Christians that meets in that place is very faithful and active in seeking to spread the gospel in their community. We studied with them about the authority of the Bible and moral issues of Christian living.

Bennie T. Cryer, 4635 Larkin Rd., Live Oak, CA 95953, email, jobenc58@yahoo.com We were privileged to have Duane Permenter and his wife, Laurie in our home for the last few days. He preached a masterful sermon for us in Olivehurst on Tuesday evening and another one Wednesday in Yuba City. We enjoyed being with them again and hearing about the work in Zambia. We look forward to being in Tennessee for a few days the latter part of June and preaching at the regular services of the Lawrenceburg congregation and also at Chapel Grove where we have worked with them many times in days gone by. We also look forward to being with Bill Ferguson and working with him in the annual 4th of July meeting in Sulphur, OK along with the brethren there at that congregation. We hope and pray that you will include in your plans to attend all or part of this meeting. This meeting will begin Wednesday,

June 29th and close after the morning service on Monday, July 4th. May the Lord bless all of you in his vineyard.

Don L. King, 1147 Sherry Way, Livermore, CA 94550, old_paths@juno.com May 13 We are enjoying being home at this time. Spring is here and California is beautiful. Recently, we have heard Cullen Smith preach and Duane Permenter begins a short meeting at Fremont this evening, Lord willing. We look forward to that. Duane has made a number of trips to the Philippines with me and we have always enjoyed being together. In addition, we were glad to have been able to make a trip to Zambia last October to be with Duane in his work there. That work was an encouragement to us and we look forward to the church being there for a very long time. The church here is doing well and we are at peace. We thank the Lord for His great blessings. Brethren, there are some Filipino preachers who need support. If you are interested, let us know. We will furnish you with their information so you may support them direct. The building payments in Hawaii also need to be considered. Can you help in that? The payment is \$1400 per month. Lord bless the Brotherhood.

Ronny F. Wade P.O. Box 800337 LaGrange, GA 30240 rfwade@charter.net May 10 Since last reporting we have enjoyed gospel meetings at Hamilton, OH where brother Richard Bunner lives and labors. We had a great meeting with good crowds and one baptism. Richard is a tireless worker and is well respected by the church. We next were at Athens, AL where Brother Bobby Pepper has lived and worked for years. It was a pleasure to be with these good people again. People from the local area as well as some from surrounding churches greeted us at each service. In April we were at Lee Summit near Lebanon, MO and Seneca, MO. At both places we had wonderful crowds and cooperation from neighboring churches. This past week we closed a meeting at Floral, AL. The congregations in the area supported the meeting in an outstanding manner. Two responded to the invitation and the association with those in that area was uplifting and encouraging. Lord willing we go next to Mitchell, IN then to Greenville, SC June 12-19. The work here in LaGrange continues. We are at peace and striving as best we can to get the gospel to this and other communities in this area. Last week we heard Brother Jerry Dickinson at Napoleon, AL. Jerry did his usual fine job presenting the truth.

P. Duane Permenter, 1705 Pecan Dr., Cleburne, TX 76033, May 1-It was a pleasure to hear Carl Johnson in a meeting at Arlington, TX recently. It has been many years since I had heard Carl and it was truly a delight. It has been our privilege to follow up with some of the TV leads in the area. We are praying that we will see some changes in people through this effort. I preached at El Reno, OK and gave a report about the work in Zambia to those gathered. The love and concern of these good brethren for the work of the Lord is greatly valued. I have also worked with the Edmond, Oklahoma congregation for a few days to help them. They supported me for eight years in the work of Zambia, and it is a privilege to labor with them. It was also a privilege to visit with at Midland, TX and Tucson, AZ. I appreciate the hospitality of both these places. Midland was our home before moving to

Zambia for seven years. It was good to revisit the brethren at that place. My schedule has been modified and is: Allen, TX, June 22-26; Chapel Grove, TN, July 10-17; Fairbanks in Houston, TX, July 24-31; Mozier, IL, August 7-14, Collins, MS, Sept 25-Oct 2; Kansas City, MO, 85th and Euclid, Oct 5-9; Liberty, KY, Oct 12-16; Ceres, CA, Oct 23-30; Clovis, CA, Nov 6-13. God bless the brotherhood! Duane_and_laurie@yahoo.com

Eric J. Stone, 94-371 Ikepono St. Waipahu, HI 96797, ericstone101@yahoo.com Howdy and Aloha, to all my brothers and sisters in Christ. After many months of planning and prayer the Lord has blessed our family and gave us safe passage to the island of Oahu in Hawaii by the most direct means possible (San Antonio - Chicago - Seattle - Honolulu). We arrived on April 4th and quickly got to work. Our first task was to get regular services started again to include Lord's day evening and Wednesday evenings. Our first worship service went very well with 26 in attendance. The brethren were much too kind in welcoming our family back to the island with a pot luck lunch. Bro Edimar has done fine job continuing the worship services in Bro Danao's absence and is such a great blessing to have him and his family committed to working with us that we may all grow in strength and number. The vast majority of our time has been spent remodeling the house and attached church room. While we were waiting for some of our things and furniture to arrive from Texas we started tackling the flooring. The house and church room have been finished with new laminate wood flooring. It looks great! You will have to come visit and see it. This old house has been full of surprises to say the least! There is so much more that will need to be done eventually, but already such an improvement. The brethren from the Glendora congregation in San Antonio were such a blessing. They helped us with our garage sale, helped us pack, helped fix the house, gave us two going away parties, and gave us a very special gift. Our favorite hymns framed with the history of each songs writing. For me, "Let the Lower Lights be Burning", and Tara, "It is Well with my Soul". We love to sing and this was the perfect gift. Leaving our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ was so much harder than I expected. We love and miss you! We are doing our best to get up to speed and have our finger on the pulse of the economy here. Anyone considering moving to Hawaii should give me a call so I can be on the look out for work. The addition of even one more strong Christian family would be HUGE! Please let us know if you are making vacation plans to visit Hawaii. We look forward to worshipping with you. We are so thankful for this opportunity. It is truly beautiful in the mountains, the ocean, the trees, and plants and our Father made it all. This is a place where His hand is magnificently evident at every turn. We thank God several times a day to be asked to come to a place so beautiful.

Billy D. Dickinson, 2850 N. Oakland, Springfield, MO 65803, bddickinson@juno.com, April 29- My meeting schedule for this year got off to a slow start due to the blizzard of 2011. Yes, we did have blizzard conditions in this part of the country. Back in February it snowed at least 18 inches here. I was supposed to hold a meeting in Fort Worth, TX

(Fossil Creek), but I didn't make it any farther than Texarkana. The meeting would have taken place on that "Super Bowl Weekend," but the road conditions in the Dallas/Fort Worth area prevented us from having it. I'm sure that most of you recall the news reports about all of that, especially as it related to the Super Bowl. Hopefully I can make that up by holding them a meeting sometime in the future. In fact, as I make my way back on a trip to visit my folks in Houston, I'm planning on preaching for them the Sunday of May 29. In March I returned for a meeting in Temple, GA. We had good crowds with several congregations represented from both Georgia and Alabama. A number of preaching brethren were also in attendance- Ronny Wade, Rick Martin, Don Snow, Don Jackson, and possibly others. The hospitality was grand and I enjoyed being with them. I participated in the study at Columbia, MO on March 18, delivering a discourse on the errors of Institutionalism and answering questions from the audience. I was only able to make it that one night because my mother-in-law was gravely ill and we thought that we might have to make a quick trip to Mississippi. As it turned out, she passed away a little later on April 6, and then my father-in-law died on April 11. [The obituary for Ernest and Maxine Kimble is forthcoming] I can assure you that no one has had better in-laws than I. We are going to miss them greatly, but we are comforted by the hope that we have in Christ! Our Spring meeting here at Jamesville took place last week with Bruce Roebuck. In spite of stormy weather, we had great crowds from service to service. Bruce preached his heart out and left us built up in the most holy faith. I am looking forward to the following two meetings: July 6-10 at Joplin, MO (Leawood Village) & July 24-31 at Goshen, OH.

Stan Owens 8432 Cox Rd. West Chester, OH 45069-May 11th It has been my privilege to recently hear Clint DeFrance, Joe Hisle, Ronny Wade, Philip Scott and Jimmie Smith preach the Gospel. In January my family and I once again enjoyed the hospitality of the Dothan, AL congregation that ended with the beginning of a new year. I then journeyed to Manteca, CA and was glad to be a part of a wonderful meeting. Crowds were great and the singing was excellent. I made my home with Melvin and Lynette Lee at the beginning of the week, and then when Ann flew in we stayed with Ivan and Gina Costa. I could not have been treated any more royally at either place. I really enjoyed getting to know Greg Cordosa, who labors with the congregation. It was humbling to have preaching brethren Richard DeGough, Don King, and Roger Boone during that meeting as well. In Longwood, FL I made my home with the Bumbalough's. Brother Dennis labors with that congregation, and it was wonderful to see so many that I had not seen since my childhood. The meeting closed with a young man being baptized into Christ, and for that increase, we are truly thankful. I have also spoken at Bedford, IN, Bandy, London, and Lexington, KY one or more times and have always been treated excellent at those places. I look forward to my upcoming meetings at Hillcrest, MS in June and Mountain Grove, MO in July. Keep The Faith.

Wyn Baker mrbwyn1@suddenlink.net. 229 Orchard Street, Wayne, WV 25570 (304) 633-7354. May, 16, 2011. We extend warm greetings to all in the brotherhood. The work

in our area continues to maintain in number and spirit. Our Gospel meeting in March with Barney Owens was well attended and successful. We had a number of community visitors present at the services, as they were able to hear some excellent sermons revealing Salvation through the Gospel of Jesus. For members of the church, this meeting was very uplifting in bringing us back to the roots of our existence as the church and the reason for the hope that lieth within us. Our thanks to Barney for his excellence in study and presentation, and we certainly look forward to having him back in the future. Our gospel meeting in April at Chestnut Ridge Kentucky was a wonderful time of worship and fellowship in the Gospel. We had excellent crowds at every service during the week and it was estimated that over 50 visitors from the community attended throughout, finishing on Lord's Day with a total crowd of 130+. I was so impressed with the leaders, the motivation and work ethic of this congregation, and their encouraging spirit to get people to come out and hear the gospel. It was good to be with brother Philip Scott and his family once again. Philip is a dear brother, and his standing influence within this congregation is clearly seen. We surely expect great things for Chestnut Ridge in the future, and our prayer is that their works will continue to expand the borders of the Lord's church. In the coming weeks, we look forward to attending the 4th of July meeting in Springfield and also visiting our home congregation in Houston, MO. May we ever move forward in this greatest work on earth and may we ever be thankful to our Lord for the blessing we have in being members of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Tired Little Hands

Two tired little hands are resting tonight,
More sweetly than ever they knew;
They're folded in rest-they're
motionless now, The long, painful battle is thru'.

They're wrinkled and gnarled, those two little hands,
A long life of hardships they show.
The hours of toil and missions of love,
And good deeds where ever they go.

They're resting tonight-they're tired and they're worn,
They're frail and so twisted with pain.
They finished their task, and peacefully still,
They rest with the one who was slain.

A story they tell, well written and true,
A life unselfish and kind.
Their motto was: "others", they helped all they
knew, The greatest of joy they could find.

They're gone from me now, These two little hands,
That lovingly cared for me here;
I'll never forget the things they
have done, And hold them in memory so dear.

Methinks that tonight, from yon distant shore,
They beckon me over the tide;
They're lovely again, and gloriously fair
They beckon me home to abide.

— M. Lynwood Smith June 2, 1955 —

Written in loving memory of "grandma Griffin" who went to be with Jesus June 2, 1955. She was 88 years of age and ready to go home. Dedicated to all the family.

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THE BACK PAGE . . .

THE RESULTS ARE IN

BY CARL M. JOHNSON

In the late 18th century, philanthropist Robert Raikes of Gloucester, England, was shocked by his discovery of a deplorable situation that had developed in England on Sundays. The streets were filled with wild, ragged children who were at play instead of in church. Raikes observed that the children spent their time making noise, rioting, "cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place" (The Sun Will Shine Again, Someday, Ronny Wade 24). Raikes concluded that parents had not only failed to instill the principles of Christianity into the minds of these children, but undoubtedly they were clueless as to what those principles were themselves.

Rather than trying to reform the parents, Raikes decided to gather some of these children together to teach them reading and the Church Catechism. He subsequently announced to the world on November 3, 1793, in a column in the Gloucester Journal that he planned to educate these children through a network of educators, and thus he began the modern Sunday school movement.

It was unheard of in that day for parents to hand their children over to others for Bible instruction, and it was considered inappropriate. Many people still understood the distinctive roles God ordained for the institutions of the family, the church, and the state. For example, God does not intend for the family or the church to carry out the death penalty because He has given the sword to the state (Rom. 13:1-14). Carrying out church discipline is given to the church, but not to the family or the state. The primary responsibility of educating children is given to the family, but not to the state or the church. The father, with the God-ordained assistance of his wife, singularly bears the responsibility for the training of his children (Eph. 6:4), and he cannot transfer or delegate that responsibility to anyone else. He is not the sole teacher of his children (they will be edified in the assembly, etc.), but the sole responsibility for that teaching is his. An otherwise legitimate action can be sinful when someone who has not been given the authority by God performs it. "There is no authority except from God and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Rom. 13:1).

Those who opposed Raikes' new methodology included Thomas Burns, a preacher from Scotland who objected to the practice because he was concerned Sunday school would cause fathers to abdicate their teaching role and transfer it to the school. The Archbishop of Canterbury pondered what should be done to stop the movement, and William Penn thought seriously about introducing a bill into Parliament that would suppress Sunday schools.

The Sunday school movement, however, began to spread quickly and soon the concerns of the skeptics were realized as parents decided it was more convenient to let other people teach their children than to do it themselves. Furthermore, most of the teachers were women, and the children were segregated into classrooms according to age.

It appears that Raikes' had only good intentions. He identified a genuine problem and sought a practical solution. He instituted a method, however, that cannot be found anywhere in Scripture, and his program became a stepping-stone for the plethora of unchristian innovations that have been introduced into the religious world since then.

Scripture claims to be wholly sufficient and authoritative to govern in all areas of faith and practice. It is all the spiritual food we shall ever need (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Mt. 4:4; Deut. 8:3). Furthermore, when the Lord says, "My ways are not your ways" (Is. 55:8), He is contrasting superiority with inferiority. Why would anyone set aside something superior? Yet that is exactly what many with the spirit of Robert Raikes do when they think their innovation is somehow superior to biblical practice.

A number of studies have been done recently to show the fruit of Raikes' 200 year-old methodology. Research by Ken Ham and Britt Beemer published in Scott Brown's book, "A Weed in the Church," reveals that young people active in the Sunday schools and youth groups of the most conservative, Bible-believing churches across America are "lost while still in the fold" (Brown 38-39). Contrary to what most people believe, the research shows that students who regularly attend Sunday school are actually:

- More likely NOT to believe that all the accounts/stories in the Bible are true/accurate.
- More likely to defend premarital sex.
- More likely to accept that gay marriage and abortion should be legal.
- Much more likely to believe that God used evolution to change one kind of animal into another.
- More likely to view the Church as hypocritical.
- Much more likely to have become anti-church through the years (Brown 38-39).

These troubling statistics are just the tip of the ice burg of problems caused by people who have no confidence in the all-sufficiency of the Word of God, have abandoned the "old paths" (Jer.6:16), and have built their faith upon the novel, experimental, and sandy foundation of the wisdom of man. cmjthebackpage@gmail.com