

NEW ONLINE RADIO STATION

A faithful brother, under the oversight of the elders of the Spring, TX, congregation, has launched an Online radio station dedicated to broadcasting the Gospel in all its truth, glory, and power. Take a listen at ...

<http://www.live365.com/stations/rfisher68>

NEW WEBSITE: The Scripturecache

Please visit Dub's new Website for a collection of almost 400 articles and MSS written by Lavonne, Andy, and Dub, with more being uploaded all the time:

<http://thescripturecache.com>



The Northpoint Lighthouse

Volume 11, Number 20
May 17, 2015

THAT YOU MAY KNOW...

Let us pray for...

Alice Haddon—fighting cancer (Sheri's friend)

Ann Henderson—fighting cancer (Sheri's aunt)

Lester Kamp—fighting prostate cancer

Mike Mallett—fighting leukemia (faithful brother in Evant, TX)

Judy Reid—continued recovery auto accident (sister in NJ, planning to move here)

Jeffrey Reid—Judy's son, with whom Dub will be studying (he has embraced Islam)

Brian Ritter—fighting rare autoimmune disease (son of Rick Ritter, Gospel preacher)

Don Smith—faithful brother in Ohio prison who is teaching fellow inmates daily

Tim Smith—fighting chronic physical problems from auto injuries (Gospel preacher)

Megan Zies—pregnancy difficulties (Tonya's friend)

Joshua Aidoo—Gospel preacher in Ghana we support

Samuel Bagsangi—Gospel preacher in Philippines we support

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Classes	16
Sunday AM Worship	16
Sunday PM Worship	16
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	18
Contribution	\$751.00
Contribution average (2015)	\$957.68

Internet Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast, beginning at approximately 10:45-10:50 a.m. and 1:12-1:15 p.m., via Internet through our Website, www.northpointcoc.com.

Preacher, *The Lighthouse* editor

Dub McClish

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Sunday

Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship 7:00 PM

On Church GROWTH

There has been much discussion among brethren in recent years about "church growth" and especially about why the church is not growing as rapidly as it did fifty years ago. Some point to the Jerusalem church in the early years (Acts 2-6) and seek to recreate the amazing numerical growth of that brief span. The Lord's church enjoyed a marvelous numerical growth in the first half of the 19th century as the plea to restore New Testament Christianity swept through our young nation. Again, the church led all religious groups in growth for a few years in the middle part of the 20th century. Even now, there are some areas of our world (e.g., India and Africa) where the Gospel is still being eagerly received.

There is an observable principle that explains both rapid growth periods and periods of little or no growth: The fields are not equally ripe for harvesting everywhere at all times. Some places will be "in season" while others are "out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). The circumstances in Jerusalem that led to the exceptional growth in a short time will never be duplicated or repeated (God had been providentially preparing and pointing to Pentecost for centuries). Likewise, peculiar circumstances led to the great reception accorded the nineteenth-century restorers. Also, there were some peculiar conditions prevailing in the middle part of the past century that no longer prevail. While the same Gospel was preached in both Jerusalem and Athens in the first century, it did not produce the same results in both cities. It is folly to use either Jerusalem's or Athens's reception of the Gospel as a pattern for now or any other age or place.

Emphasis on the numerical growth of the church as an end is foreign to the New Testament. The emphasis, rather, is on preaching the Gospel to as many lost souls as possible and letting growth, whether it be large or small (or even none), come as it will. This fact is demonstrated both in the wording of the Great Commission and in the record of its apostolic execution.

Sadly, numerical growth has become the summum bonum to some brethren. To them, large numbers equal "success." Many now accept large numbers as the

evidence of God's blessings. They fail to realize that the same "logic" implies that God is blessing a host of heretical religious bodies more than He is His church. Sooner or later, when numerical growth is the end, almost every means of achieving (and maintaining) it will be employed.

The steadily increasing emphasis among brethren on such devices and gimmicks for growth over the past few decades thus testifies. The building of "family life centers," the use of professional singing groups, the conducting of "fall festivals," the preaching of a feel-good, no-fault, no-guilt "gospel," and a score of other come-ons for young and old are all symptoms of the growth mania. Many congregations are involved in the "social gospel" of modernistic denominations with classes for the general public on everything from financial management to auto repair. Of such things the Gospel knows nothing. Rather, these things constitute a "different gospel," which Paul so strongly condemned (Gal. 1:6-9).

This *lust-for-growth* seed cannot avoid the rotten harvest of apostasy, which it has increasingly reaped. Let us plant and water the seed of the kingdom and leave the growth to God (Luke 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:6), rather than trying to force numerical growth by worldly formulas.

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX

Ancient Wisdom

“Absolutely blown away.” This was the reaction of microbiologist Freya Harrison and her colleagues to the effectiveness of a new eye remedy they came across. However, it was only “new” in the sense that it was new to them. They found this eye remedy in *Bald’s Leechbook*, a medical volume written in the **10th century**. The effectiveness of this particular remedy has led Harrison and others to plan testing of other ancient remedies long forgotten.

Every generation seems to operate under the assumption that previous generations have been inferior and ignorant. And the older that previous generation is, the more inferior and ignorant it is assumed to be. This is, of course, foolish reasoning. Job observed, “With the ancient [or ‘the aged’] is wisdom; and in length of days understanding. With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding” (Job 12:12-13). It is true that generations who build on previous knowledge can arrive at new attainments not possible for previous generations. But such is only possible when people value and learn the wisdom of those previous generations.

There are those who try to attack the Bible because of its age. “Why would I pay any attention to a 2000-year-old book?” “We’ve learned so much since the Bible was written!” “The Bible is irrelevant to today’s modern world.” But if experts have learned that the wisdom of ancient generations should not be disregarded, how much more is this true of the wisdom of the Ancient of Days?

“God...hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son” (Heb. 1:1-2). For all the changes one might observe, humanity has been in its final era, the Christian Age, since the first century. And God has spoken to address man’s needs that will persist throughout this era until eternity begins, and He has done so through the Bible:

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue (2 Peter 1:2-3).

While mankind may have indeed learned much in the intervening centuries, God already knew it. If an ancient medical volume can impart knowledge for addressing man’s physical needs today, how much more can the Omnisciently-informed Word of God impart knowledge for addressing man’s spiritual needs today? “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 for your souls...” (Jer. 6:16).

—Lee Moses
Union City, TN

PREACHING *Contrasts*

Preachers of yesteryear possessed the conviction that they had a message for the denominational world. Their convictions were so strong that their preaching often led entire congregations out of denominationalism. As a young preacher, in a little town in Oklahoma, I baptized all the members of the Methodist Church, save nine. The Methodist preacher stood on the bank of a pond and wept while I baptized his organist.

We have almost lost our convictions concerning the Gospel. We are preaching the restoration plea with an air of apology. There are many today who would call Paul a “traditionalist” and a “proselytizer.” They would tell him that if Apollos and the people at Ephesus who had accepted John’s baptism were sincere and satisfied, he should have let them alone. Suppose Paul had said to these people at Ephesus who had received John’s baptism,

It makes no difference what you do just so you are sincere. The baptism of John is as good as any other baptism if your heart is right. You may leave this matter to each individual to act as his conscience directs.

Paul would not dare preach such a thing and neither should we.

—G. K. Wallace
Deceased

[Ed. note: Amen, brother Wallace. Many pulpiteers need to heed his words. DM]