



BEACON

A PUBLICATION OF BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST

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January

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Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

January 2, 1992

Number 1

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Wasting Time in Bible Class

Dan Jenkins

Have you considered that Bible knowledge for the average person, both young and old, is gained entirely from our Bible classes? Most of our homes have failed in teaching God's Word, and if dedicated Christian men and women were not willing to give of themselves, there would be no knowledge at all. The ninety minutes spent each week in Bible class represents less than 1% of a person's time and emphasizes the urgency of not wasting time in our classes.

Paul's statement, "redeeming the time" (Col. 4:5), is certainly applicable in this area. The word "redeeming" means to buy up the opportunity, turning each one to the best advantage. Opportunities abound every time classes assemble. It is up to us to seize each of them for that time can never be lived again.

We waste our time in Bible classes when we fail to teach the Bible. We should examine our planned program to insure that it is Bible centered. We should examine individual lessons to insure that each one teaches the Bible. Sometimes we think that small children cannot be taught the Bible, but such is wrong. Paul says that Timothy had known the Scriptures since he was a child (the Greek says "babe")! Even small children can be taught the Bible, instead of just having "busy time."

We waste our time in Bible classes by not having teachers who live the Bible. Both young and old judge the lives of their teachers. An unholy life can undo hours of Bible teaching. Remember that Jesus began both to DO and to teach (Acts 1:1). He rebuked teachers of His own day because they failed to show in their lives the very principles they taught (Mat. 23). Imagine the harm done to a teenager who discovers the hypocrisy of the teacher he has long idealized. It is a waste of time to let that kind of person teach!

We waste our time in Bible class by misusing those precious minutes that we have. To allow classes to habitually start late, to let long announcements dominate the class, and to have social visiting delay the beginning of the actual class steals from each student opportunities to learn God's Word. Teachers, have you had a look at how much time is actually devoted to imparting God's truths? Has handwork robbed us of time that could have been spent better? Elders, have you looked at what is actually happening in your classes? Are we really redeeming the time by seizing the opportunities that are ours?

Finally, we waste time in our Bible classes by failing to apply the lessons to the lives of the students. Knowledge is not an end; it is the means to an end. The purpose of Bible classes is not just to teach the Bible, but to change lives by teaching the Bible. It is not enough to know the twenty-third Psalm. We must know the Shepherd

and have Him walk with us through death's valley. It is not enough to know the church is His bride. We must daily walk as His bride!

Brethren, let's teach the Bible in our classes. Let's use every possible minute of the class to teach the Bible. Let's apply the Bible to the life of each student. To fail to do any of these is to waste our time in class. May God help us to "redeem the time."

via "The Sword" Oxford, AL

"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Mat. 23:8).

Parents, Not Teachers Have the Responsibility for the Total Training of the Child

Roy Deaver

Humanism holds: (1) that the universe is self-existing, and was not created by God; (2) that man is the product of a "continuous process" called evolution; (3) that value is determined by consideration of relationships to human needs; (4) that religion must be judged by science; (5) that "time has passed for theism;" (6) that "the distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained;" (7) that the complete realization of human personality is the end of man's life, and therefore seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now; (8) that there is no place for the old attitudes involved in worship and in prayer; (9) that the concept of the supernatural is to be rejected; (10) that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life, and the intelligent evaluation, transformation, control and direction of such associations and institutions, with a view to the enhancement of human life, is the purpose and program of humanism; (11) that "the religious forms and ideas of our fathers" are no longer adequate; (12) that man must realize that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams.

Humanism plainly teaches that: (1) there is no God; (2) there is no such thing as the soul; (3) there is no salvation; (4) there is no life after death—no Heaven, no Hell; (5) there is no objective moral standard—that moral values are determined by human experience.

One of the institutions which Humanism is determined to capture, control and restructure is the school—our schools. Humanism deplors the old concepts of God, the church, the Bible, salvation, sin, the soul, Heaven, Hell and immortality. Humanism thinks of religion as being a mental disease, and considers "...any child who believes in God" to be mentally ill. It is determined to make our children in its own image, and plans to use the educational system to do so. Charles Francis Potter, Unitarian minister and signer of the *Humanist Manifesto I*, wrote in his book, *Humanism, a New Religion*, as follows:

"Education is thus a most powerful ally of Humanism and every American public school is a school of Humanism. What can the theistic Sunday schools, meeting for an hour once a week, and teaching only a fraction of the children, do to stem the tide of a five-day program of humanistic teaching?"

Humanists claim that this (making the child in its image) is the unique responsibility of the school—not the responsibility of the parents. It is their view that the school can call upon the parents, if they are needed.

However, this is not the picture that is set forth in the Scriptures. Whatever else is wrong about Humanism (and practically everything about it is wrong), it is certainly wrong in its concept of the mission of the schools. The Bible teaches that God has given to parents the responsibility of teaching, training, developing the child, and God intends for this job to be done in harmony with and according to divine instructions. It is the parents who can call upon the schools to help them to do the job which God has given the parents to do.

In Ephesians 6:4 Paul says: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." In chapters 5 and 6 of Ephesians, Paul discusses many matters concerning the home. In chapter 5, verses 22-23, he discusses the right attitude of the wife toward the husband, and the right attitude of the husband toward the wife. In chapter 6, verses 1-4, he discusses the right attitude of the children toward their parents, and the right attitude of the parents toward the children. Verse 4, in a very special way, stresses parental responsibility in the education of the children. Obviously, it is important that careful and constant and

prayerful attention is given to the matter of proper education for our children.

We must be concerned about providing for our children (and for other's children) the very kind of education which the Bible prescribes. May we note again Ephesians 6:4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Observe that these remarks are addressed to "fathers." This ties in with the fact that he is the "head" of the family, as Paul had discussed in the paragraph preceding. This passage very specifically stresses the father's responsibility in the education of the children. And, in view of the closeness of the relationship between husband and wife, which closeness Paul had discussed in Ephesians 5:22-23, it is clear that the Christian mother also will be vitally concerned.

via Olathe, KS

Whether There Be Prophecies They Shall Fail

1 Corinthians 13:8

Tommy Alford

From the times of old until the present time people have been enthralled, yea, mesmerized by the words and predictions of prophets. They gaze at the stars and give people their horoscopes; they predict of floods, earthquakes, wars and other catastrophes, and if they occasionally (by the law of average) make a somewhat accurate prediction, then their words are held in esteem from that time on. Because of man's insatiable curiosity, these prophets profit. Truly, many today would be happy to exchange places with the mythical Pandora and open her box.

However, when people claim that these pseudo-prophets speak by the power of the one true God, then this is quite a serious thing with serious consequences. It should be obvious that just because someone claims to be a prophet or because others claim him to be does not a prophet make him. The Bible warns us in 1 John 4:1 where it says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

One might ask, "But how can we try the spirits to see if they are of God or not?" To do this of course we must weigh the words of this person on the scales of truth; the truth is the Word of God (John 17:17). We want to realize that the prophecies of God, by and large, do not deal with the mundane, but rather with the lofty; the Bible itself is not a textbook of science, history, medicine, or prophecy, though it contains portions of all of these. Rather, the Bible is the revealed will of God toward man; it is what God wants man to know, not always what man wishes to know.

God has made use of many prophets in revealing His Bible to us: these prophecies for the greater part deal with the salvation of mankind which of course is the main purpose of the Bible. Nonetheless, almost 2,000 years ago the Spirit by the apostle Paul said, "but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail;...But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. 13:8-10). God's Word has been complete or perfect for 1,900 years; there are no new revelations because Christ has come and shown us the way. There are no new prophets of God today because they are not needed. But there are false prophets. BEWARE!

2827 Mud Creek Road; Adger, AL 35006

Wednesday Schedule

- 1-8 Reading: Chris Mathews
Invitation: Tony Liddell
- 1-15 Reading: Chris Lightner
Invitation: Chris Galle

Mark Your Calendar

Bellview Lectures—"Current Crises Challenging The Church," Saturday-Wednesday, May 9-13, 1992.

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

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January 9, 1992

Number 2

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Courageous Christians Say "No!"

Curtis Cates

In this day of compromise, degeneracy, immorality, license, rebellion, and situation ethics, the respect for the absolute biblical standard of ethics and moral conduct is coming under increasing, relentless attack. If the child of God is to go to heaven, he must live a life of conformity to the challenging, lofty Word of God (through God's help, providence, and grace) and of nonconformity to the world (Rom. 6:1-5; 12:1-2). It is the faithful unto death who will be crowned (Rev. 2:10). Faithfulness demands the ability to say "NO!" The number of homes destroyed, of prison inmates, of lives ruined, of congregations weakened is steadily increasing. Those who would go to heaven must develop strong uncompromising character.

SOME BIBLICAL CHARACTERS NOT HAVING THIS COURAGE. For our example, the Holy Spirit recorded numerous biblical characters who were not strong enough to say "NO!" Adam and Eve were too weak to say "NO" to the forbidden fruit; they said "yes" to Satan's temptation (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-14), bringing suffering and death unto the world (1 Cor. 15:22). Note the warning in 2 Corinthians 11:1-3. The Israelites refused to say "no" to lusts in the wilderness; thus, they perished before reaching the promised land

(1 Cor. 10:1-12). Think of the ruin and suffering which came to and stalked David when he did not say "no" to fleshly lust and temptation (2 Sam. 11:2ff), as well as the wise man, Solomon, who became a ruined fool (1 Kin. 11:1-11), losing his very kingdom.

OTHERS POSSESSED GREAT COURAGE. For our encouragement, the Holy Spirit revealed a number of godly men and women who had the courage to say "No." Refusing to be conformed to the world, Vashti said "No" to immodesty in dress (though it cost her the queenship) (Est. 1:1-22), Joseph said "No" to the advances of Potiphar's wife (though it cost him his freedom) (Gen. 39:7-23), Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (Dan. 1:7) said "No" to bowing down before the golden image (though the punishment was the burning fiery furnace) (Dan. 3:1-27), Daniel said "No" to the prohibition to pray to God (though the penalty was to be thrown into the lion's den) (Dan. 6:4-24), the apostles said "No" to the command not to preach the word (though it meant a beating by the Sanhedrin and possible death) (Acts 5:27-29; 40-42), and Paul said "No" to the demands not to preach the whole counsel of God (though it meant being counted an enemy and being persecuted, even by brethren) (Acts 20:23-27; Gal. 4:16).

“Rise up, O men of God!” Equip and fortify yourselves in moral and doctrinal purity (1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 13:5).

4400 Knight Arnold Rd; Memphis, TN 38118

Directing Young People to God

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Perilous Pitfalls to Youth

(1) Drinking is peril personified. It is a guaranteed way to get hurt physically, mentally, emotionally, economically, psychologically, socially, morally, and spiritually. It has slain its millions. It respects no ages. It is a killer whether the imbiber be nine or ninety. Youth see it glorified in countless advertisements on TV and in other media. They see it served by their parents to every guest in the home. They see the champagne flow freely when a sports team wins the World Series, the Super Bowl or the NBA Championship in basketball. When parents and peers drink regularly it becomes an almost daily temptation to join the “Happy Hour” cult of drinkers. The Bible says to avoid it like a plague (Pro. 20:1; 23:20; Isa. 5:11-12; Hab. 2:15; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Pet. 2:11).

(2) Dancing is deadly. Its popularity is not exercise but sexual stimulation. It inflames passions that can only be satisfied by overt immorality. Dancing has a ready affinity with petting and then fornication. It is a fatal feeder to such. Only naive church members fail to see what fuels its immense popularity. Forty-four young men were once asked what their thoughts were toward their dancing partners. Forty-one said they had unholy thoughts. When girls are willing, fornication will be the reaped result before the night is history. Dancing is a sure prelude to passionate department later. Lascivious means “the unchaste handling of males and females.” Need I say more?

(3) Gambling is a sure bet to poverty and perdition. Brother Garland Elkins and I wrote a 1989 tract in which we heavily documented that very accusation toward the egregious evils of gambling. It is “robbery by consent” it violates the Golden Rule, the work concept, the prohibition that we refrain from covetousness and every definition given to Christian selflessness.

(4) Parking and petting is a sure way to overt unmoral behavior. There is a mighty thin line between petting and fornication. Like dancing, petting is a passionate prelude to fornication. Petting is not satisfied with just petting. Each advance calls for another and another.

(5) Mixed swimming is a regular flesh parade with girls about ninety per cent undressed and boys about ninety-five per cent undressed. Modern beaches allow men to look and lust at what previous generations of abandoned men paid to see in X-rated theaters. Water and exercise are not nearly as alluring as scantily clad men and women parading before the lust-filled eyes of each other. The situation is sinful from the word go.

(6) Reckless driving is as lethal as language can depict Jehu is not the last person who drove furiously (2 Kin. 9:20). Job 5:4 mentions children of the foolish who are “far from safety.” David declared that a “horse is a vain thing for safety” (Psa. 33:17). How much more is a high powered automobile with a brainless driver at the controls. Put a few beers into him and he is an unleashed demon on our highways. More than once I have been wrecked because of a drinking or drunken driver. One such driver left the scene. When apprehended he claimed he did not remember leaving the scene of a wreck. The authorities let him sober up behind bars. Reckless driving is as foolish and fatal as playing Russian roulette. Death is in the making.

(7) Drugs, inclusive of alcohol, are the modern curse of human society. A few years ago it was marijuana, LSD, the Uppers, the Downers, heroin, etc., which made the headlines. These are still with us but cocaine has become the headliner in drug trafficking and participation during the 1980s and now into the 1990s. It is the drug of the elite and big money fuels it. Those who are addicted to it from the poorer side of the tracks will loll, rob and sell their bodies to make possible a continuation of their utter dependence upon cruel and calloused cocaine. It mangles minds and strangles spirituality. It is a merciless killer. A “hands off” course toward it is wisdom personified.

(8) Nicotine is another popular drug of our society. It is accepted by many as being polite and prestigious. Doctors are giving it up personally. Men are turning away from it because of its lethal potential. Women and girls are adding greatly to the numbers of present smokers. More and more of them will die with lung cancer, throat cancer or lip cancer. Emphysema will take its tremendous toll among them in the future. There is nothing about

tobacco usage that marks it with any maturity at all.

P.O. Box 464; Ripley, TN 38063

Sleepy Confusion

Dale Jenkins

Perhaps you heard the story a couple of weeks ago. It was one of those cute little stories they put on as trailers at the end of newscasts. Just about all the major news outlets picked it up. Vickie Childress of Florida was having an asthma attack in the middle of the night. She reached under her pillow to get her “breather” for some relief. The breather was not the only item under her pillow. For protection she also kept a gun there. You guessed it—she got the wrong item, pulled the trigger and shot herself in the face. The commentator closed with the note that she was to be getting out of the hospital that day. And that her asthma problem was cured.

When the interview mic finally found the embarrassed Ms. Childress she attributed the accident to “sleepy confusion.” I’ve kept that little story in the walls of my computer for several weeks now, knowing that there must be some spiritual lessons we can learn from it, so here they are.

Sometimes I view “goings on” within some churches and shake my head in disappointment or disgust. Churches who allow visitors to go unnoticed, and make void the opportunity to impact their souls. Churches who in their sleepiness allow false teaching to go unchecked. Churches who keep vain traditions and ignore the Word. Churches who in sleepy confusion are more interested in fighting each other and shooting their own faces off than in reaching the world with the gospel and in watching for the Lord’s return.

“And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. 13:11). Churches who in sleepy confusion forfeit their ministry to a world hungering for Jesus, looking only inwardly, and become empty monuments to the sleep of death. “Consider *and* hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the *sleep of death*” (Psa. 13:3). Let us become increasingly mindful of Paul’s warning: “Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober” (1 The. 5:6).

Is the church in a stupor?

Route 6 Box 28; Hamilton, AL 35570

Wednesday Schedule

- 1-15 Reading: Chad Lightner
 Invitation: Bill Crowe
1-22 Reading: Nathan Liddell
 Invitation: Hairston Brantley

Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy to the Cline family in the loss of William S. “Pappy” Cline (Bill’s father) who passed from this life Dec. 28, 1991.

Sick and Shut-in

Home: Alberta Cozad, the Malone’s, A.J. Simmons, LaVanda Egan, Ida Williams, Floy Dell Lindesmith and Mary Muldoon. Alpine Adult Care Center—Inez Prosser.

Hospitals: Malcolm Pierce—316, Sacred Heart; Bob Duncan—Lloyd Noland, Birmingham; Clifford Smith-Armiston. Joe Gilmore to have surgery on January 14. Remember in prayer.

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Volume XXI

January 16, 1992

Number 3

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Every Member Doing His Part

Windell Gann

The Lord's church is pictured for us in the New Testament under several different figures. It is an army, a temple, and even a bride. But a favorite figure portrays God's church as a spiritual body. Christ is the head in this figure (Col. 1:18) and the singleness of unity of the body is important, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12).

Just as one verse stresses the unity of the body, the next verse may be emphasizing the diversity of the body members and the important contribution each makes to the function of the body (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:4; 15-16). As one begins to grasp the composition and intricate systems of the human body, he appreciates the spiritual points being taught by the Holy Spirit.

Lessons from the Human Body

First, the physical frame and the faculties of the human body are indeed astounding. Nothing so complex and complete could result from mere chance. Even an uninspired man must stop and take note of man's sublime being.

Our appreciation for God's handiwork in the creation of our physical bodies can then be extended to the spiritual body which is His church. Man is made ever more aware of the importance of each

aspect of his physical body as medical science advances and in like manner our love and appreciation of the Lord's church and every member of it grows as we study His Word.

One Mind Controls All Members

All actions that our bodies make are caused by electric impulses from the central nervous system to our muscles. These impulses are controlled in such a way that coordination of movement is made possible. One can gain an even better appreciation for this process by observing someone who cannot control his actions due to a disorder of the nervous system or who has lost his ability to use a limb altogether due to a severed nerve. Since Christ is the head, the body (the church) should move at His impulse.

Christ's prayer that we "may all be one" will not be attained by conforming to one another's point of view as are the attempts made today, but can only result when all are controlled by the directions of Christ.

Each Member Has a Function

The Lord wants each member to realize his importance to the body. It is essential for us to know this so we can fully bear our responsibility. One should carefully read 1 Corinthians 12:14-27. Perhaps a part of our problem in

losing so many members from the body of Christ is the feeling of insignificance shared by many members. Too many members (parts of the. body) fail to realize their importance.

Paul says in verses 15-24 that the foot has its function; the ear, the eye, and all the internal hidden members have their functions. Each is important and the body cannot survive unless all the functions are carried out. Each Christian in the Lord's church today needs to be aware of his place. What contribution each can make, though it may seem insignificant, is important and necessary. We are realizing today there are no vestigial members of the physical body and this spiritual truth now needs to be learned.

Every Member Has a Contribution for the Body

The background of the passage in Ephesians 4:15-16 has to do with spiritual gifts the various members possessed, but the application is true today with regard to the natural contributions each member can make to the body of Christ: "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

The Lord referred to His disciples as the salt of the earth and light of the world. God has entrusted these with His message. These are descriptions of the typical member of the body, not just the preachers or the elders! We cannot leave our function to others.

Conclusion

Have you buried your potential for service as did the one talent man? Have you deceived yourself into thinking attendance at your spiritual feeding time (worship) is your only function as a member? Considering your present activity would your absence from the body be felt or would you have to be replaced if you had to leave? Are you doing nothing because you do not have the ability to do some specific task that another member can do?

Can you claim to be putting the kingdom first (Mat. 6:33) while you take time to accomplish various secular tasks but fail to accomplish anything for the Lord? Every member of the body is a functioning member. Every member is important. Have you found your function? Are you performing it?

Via Olathe, Kansas

New Address

Greg and Pam Lewis 1705-B Hoio Circle; Wahiawa, HI 96786

Dean's List

Rachel Garrett, daughter of Charles and Lantice has been placed on the dean's list at Freed-Hardeman University. She is a biology major.

Restored

Daniel Barker was restored on 1-5-92. We rejoice with Daniel. Please remember him in your prayers and encourage him in the Faith.

News

Linwood Bishop of Coleman, Texas, longtime faithful Gospel preacher passed from this life on Thursday, 1-9-92, and was buried on Saturday.

Baptized

Hezekiah Green, Jr. (baptized 1-8-92). Please add his name and address to your directory.

Hezekiah Green, Jr.
6470 Bellview Pines Place
Pensacola, FL 32526
944-5913

Susan Hollowell (baptized 1-12-92). Susan's apartment was damaged and the contents destroyed Sunday by a fire in the apartment below theirs. They found out upon their return Sunday morning. They are in need of

furnishings of all kinds, linens, utensils and clothing. Call the office for sizes. Remember this family in your prayers.

Restored

Champ Hollowell was restored and placed membership with the Bellview congregation (1-12-92). We rejoice with him and look forward to working with him in the future. Please add his address to your directory. Champ Hollowell 32545 W Carrier Drive; Lillian, AL 36549.

Wednesday Schedule

1-22-92	Reading: Nathan Liddell Invitation: Hairston Brantley
1-29-92	Reading: Preston Silcox Invitation: Tim Lamb

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January 23, 1992

Number 4

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Teens of the Text

Jimmy Clark

“And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin” (Gen. 17:24-25). The giving of ages in the Scriptures tends to be overlooked. More than likely one would remember that Abraham was 99 before one would remember that Ishmael was 13. The point is that the text of the Bible does reveal some information about certain people at the time that they were teenagers. The teen years are very important ones and on occasions can be very volatile. Consider three other teenagers mentioned in the Scriptures who can help teens today.

1. *The Trustworthy Son: Joseph.* “These *are* the generations of Jacob. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father’s wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report” (Gen. 37:2). When Joseph was seventeen, he was given the same responsibility to feed the flock like his older brothers. He was capable of doing the work and faithful in the execution of it. He was trustworthy to both his father and the Lord in his teens. He faced trying times ahead (Gen. 37:28; Gen. 39:10-20; Psa. 105:17-19; Gen. 40:23-41:1) and still upheld his trustworthiness. He

becomes an early picture in the Bible of what God is looking for in a teenager, as well as one in his twenties, thirties, and beyond.

2. *The Treasure-Building King: Uzziah.* Teens can be helped by looking at examples to imitate, and also by looking at examples which stumbled. It is said of Uzziah, “Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who *was* sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah” (2 Chr. 26:1). There are some good things said about Uzziah. “And he did *that which was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah did. And he sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper” (2 Chr. 26:4-5). Nevertheless, as Uzziah began to amass victories over his enemies (2 Chr. 26:4-5), wealth (2 Chr. 26:8, 10), fortification (2 Chr. 26:9-10), and an army with great capabilities (2 Chr. 26:11-15), the text states, “And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to *his* destruction” (2 Chr. 26:15-16). The hearkening lad became a haughty leader because he allowed this thing to affect his thinking. What teen does not need to learn this?

3. *The Three-Month King: Jehoiachin.* “Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother’s name was Nehushta, the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did *that which was evil* in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done” (2 Kin. 24:8-9). Jehoiachin could have been different from his father, as Jonathan was from Saul and as Hezekiah was from Ahaz. His reign is one of the shortest in the history of the kings. He had a great future ahead, if he had submitted to the will of God. Read Jeremiah 22:3-5. If he had realized the consequences of the course he was following and turned from it, his reign would have been much longer and his life more blessed.

Teens can learn important lessons and these are very important.

P.O. Box 425; Athens, AL 35611

The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb

Gary Colley

During a recent Gospel meeting it was requested that we have a question and answer period during each service. This was the general practice of former years and we rejoice to see those interested in its return. It is beneficial to those whose questions are answered by the Bible and in understanding the thoughts of the audience and their needs.

One question answered concerned the prophetic words of Isaiah 11:6-7, “And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.” The question was, “To what does this refer? Is it literal language?”

The rationalist and premillennialist refer to this literally as what will happen in the “coming millennial period,” or that perhaps it has already literally happened in the time of Isaiah. Evidently they think, in some unknown way to us, this would be beneficial to mankind for the wolf to dwell with the lamb literally, etc., but when asked of what possible benefit this could be to man they have no answer.

Clearly, this beautiful and figurative language is prophetically to be understood. The several metaphors and allegorizes are spoken while looking forward to the rule of Christ. The lessons pictured of peace in the kingdom of Christ are to be learned from these rich truths.

The wolf is known for being an uneasy, ravenous animal, which attacks the sheepfold! The lamb is usually devoured by the wolf. The leopard follows or stalks a kid in order to overcome and finally kill. It is a known fact that the lion, the king of the beast, is able to kill and carry away an ox. For these to “dwell” or “lie down” together would represent one of the greatest of changes in the known practices of these animals.

From the context we understand that the Messiah is described as the “shoot out of the stock of Jesse” (Isa. 11:1) which shows that He is from the Royal Family of David, son of Jesse. Centuries later, Christ came, as also predicted in Micah 5:2. These figures represented men who conducted their lives like these animals.

Then is given the description of the Kingdom where men who formerly acted like wild beasts, as Saul of Tarsus, would grow tame, with peace and resulting in Christ, in the church! “for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). This corresponds with Jesus’ giving of the Great Commission and saying in the Sermon on the Mount, “the meek: for they shall inherit the earth” (Mat. 5:5), that is, by their teaching. Even the angels said at His birth, “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased” (Luke 2:14). Among those who formerly were as dangerous as deadly reptiles, after conversion and entering the Kingdom, the most helpless are safe, because of the wonderful effects of the Gospel in the hearts of men under our Saviour’s rule (Rom. 6:16-18).

We exhort all who have not entered the Kingdom by obedience (John 3:5) to obtain these blessings for themselves!

Via “The Messenger” Coldwater, MS

Sick and Shut-in

At home—Alberta Cozad, Lavanda Egan, Malcolm Pierce. Rubin Malone. A.J. Simmons, IJnda Parker.

Alpine Care Center—Inez Prosser

Out of town—Bob Duncan has gone home after surgery. Joe Gilmore had successful surgery on 1-14. He should go home soon. Leo Myers (Floy Dell Lindesmith's brother) VA, Jackson, MS.

Wednesday Schedule

1-29-92 Reading: Preston Silcox
 Invitation: Tim Lamb
2-5-92 Reading: Hezekiah Green
 Invitation: Mike Peters

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

January 30, 1992

Number 5

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
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Bill Gallaher

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MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Fishers of Men or Keepers of the Aquarium?

Eddy Gilpin

Matthew 4:19 records where our Lord extended an invitation and made a promise to two of His would-be disciples, Peter and Andrew. He invited them to "Follow me," and promised to make them "fishers of men." As fishing was their occupation, He used an analogy that was crystal clear to them. Their task would become even more obvious in the days ahead.

Although Jesus was not speaking directly to anyone living today, the principle of being "fishers of men" is encompassed in the Great Commission (Mat. 28:19-20). Thus, all who are Christians must be "about their Father's business." The conversion of the world has been left in the hands of those who are members of the church of Christ. Therefore, we must be "fishers of men."

In considering the foregoing, while surveying simultaneously the condition of the Lord's church and the cause of Christianity in and upon the world, one wonders why the body of Christ is declining without and decaying within. Could it be that God's plan is not working? Or, it is more the case that God's plan is not being worked? Thus, the question is posed: "Are we fishers of men, or merely keepers of the aquarium?" The commission given by our Lord to "Go

ye therefore, and teach all nations,...Teaching them to observe all things" (Mat. 28:19-20) is the divine pattern for the spreading of the Gospel. Christians (all Christians) are to teach and baptize others. They are also to teach these new converts to teach and baptize others. Thus, the genius of the divine plan can be seen. However, when children of God are content to sit passively and comfortably while a lost and dying world passes unwarned into eternity (Eze. 3:17-19), the brilliance of this Messianic method passes by unheralded.

Too often the church as a whole is too anxious to cast in its lot with the "noise, nickels and numbers" association. Elaborate facilities are erected, maintained and showcased with a conscience-easing mental message that says to the community "Come to us and we will teach you." Although buildings are an expedient and perfectly scriptural to have, all too often they become the centers of our evangelistic efforts. We become so involved in "keeping the aquarium" that we neglect the "fishing of men."

The divine precept of seeking and saving the lost has, in many cases, been replaced with the idea that the bigger and better the facilities, the more "drawing power" a group has. The Bible reveals that the Gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16), His Word is the drawing force (John 6:44; 2 The. 2:14), and each individual Christian has a

responsibility of going to the lost with the soul saving message (Mark 16:15-16). Jesus has said that we must be “fishers of men” and not mere keepers of the aquarium. His way will save us from much heartache, failure and despair and will insure the purity of New Testament Christianity for generations yet to come.

Romans 14, Careful How You Use it

Bill Jackson

Throughout the history of the church, as various false doctrines and hobbies have arisen, there is usually a passage or two that takes a terrible beating at the hands of those who are in deviation from the Truth. Basic to this point is the idea that false men will always seek to **MAKE THE WORD FIT THEIR OWN PARTICULAR VIEWS!** In thus “forcing” such, they abuse the Word. Presently, Romans 14 is being subjected to the worst kind of mishandling and abuse, and saddest of all, from those who claim to honor God’s Word as it is, the all sufficient guide for us (2 Tim. 3:16-17). As to Romans 14, we’ve said, “Careful how you use it!” That, of course, would be a proper warning concerning all of the Word. We are charged with rightly dividing (handling aright) the Word (2 Tim. 2:15). It is a mark of the false teacher to handle the Word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2). Our object must be to teach the Truth, and all the Truth, and nothing but the Truth and in all conceivable circumstances. In Romans 14, we find the apostle Paul dealing with two matters of liberty—eating of herbs and esteeming the days—and in assuring that each man is allowed the liberty God gave him, there is constant care given to the point of not judging a brother in these, allowing liberty, walking in love, following a peaceful course, edifying one another and giving no offense. But we see Romans 14 so abused today when it comes to the fellowship some propose for the church of the Lord and denominational bodies, with the approval in mind as regards blessing the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. Romans 14 is thus abused in these ways:

(1) Paul is speaking of those who are brethren together in the Lord, and those in sectarianism are not contemplated at all. These in Romans 14 were members of the body of Christ, and more, in the congregation at Rome.

(2) The matters under discussion were matters of **JUDGMENT AND LIBERTY** and did not center on positions of doctrine, and as regards worship, etc.

(3) The emphasis on god’s being judge, and a man’s standing right before his God, even if other men did not follow his course, again centered on these items of liberty and freedom, and were not matters of faith and doctrine.

Have we come to this, that men no longer care to note the Bible passage, its context, its subject, and especially do they no longer care whether a context is speaking of matters of faith or matters of liberty? We **MUST** care, if we are to be faithful to the Word of God!

Tardy

James Meadows

Webster defines “tardy” to mean “moving with slow pace, motion or progress...acting, occurring, or developing after the expected, hoped for, or proper time.” He further says “tardy applies to failure to arrive at a time set, sometimes through lack of punctuality, negligence, or tendency to dawdle, sometimes through unavoidable delay....”

Tardiness is listed as “failure to arrive at a set time” and four reasons are given.

First, it may be “through lack of punctuality.” Punctuality means “the quality or state of being punctual; esp.: the characteristic of being prompt in keeping engagements.” Every Christian ought to be courteous and honest toward every appointment or engagement, whether it be with the Lord or with men. Be on time!!!

Second, it may be “through negligence.” Negligence means “the quality or state of being negligent, a failure to exercise the care that a prudent person usually exercises—opposed to diligence.” The person who is tardy “through neglect” commits sin. Jeremiah said, “Cursed *be* he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully” (margin, “negligently”—Jer. 48:10). Christians are admonished to serve the Lord with diligence (Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 8:7; Heb. 6:11; 2 Pet. 1:5; 3:14).

Third, it may be through “tendency to dawdle.” Dawdle means “to waste time in idle lingering: spend more time than is necessary or usual in doing something.” If one is tardy because of a “tendency to dawdle,” one commits

sin. Christians must not waste time!!! “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:15-16).

Fourth, it may be through unavoidable delay. Something “unavoidable” cannot be prevented or shunned regardless of the degree of care exercised. Such cases of tardiness God sees and accepts.

Brethren, tardiness due to “lack of punctuality, negligence, or tendency to dawdle” is not a light matter. It is serious enough that many of you need to determine to overcome it.

Editor’s Note: Let us all determine to be careful to be on time (or a little before). Too many are coming in “tardy” to Bible classes and to worship. Set your goal to be in your place on time that you might avoid causing an interruption and the loss of other’s time and concentration. Thanks!

Sympathy

We express our sympathy to the families of those who have gone into eternity.

A. J. Simmons, member at Bellview, passed away, Sun., 1-26-92, and was buried Wed., 1-29-92.

Inez Simmons, member at Bellview, passed away Tue., 1-28-92, and was buried Fri., 1-31-92.

Raymond Weekley, brother of our William Weekley, passed away Fri., 1-25-92, and was buried Thur., 1-30-92.

Wednesday Schedule

2-5-92 Reading: Hezekiah Green
 Invitation: Mike Peters
2-12-92 Reading: Jeremy Caine
 Invitation: Jerry Fillingim

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

February 6, 1992

Number 6

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Putting People First!

Jerry Jenkins

A few days ago while flying from Buffalo, New York to Birmingham, I picked up a magazine and was impressed with this statement: "Experts who teach about quality performance divide service into two major categories; material service and personal service." Since all Christians desire to imitate the example of our Savior and be a servant to our fellowman as ourselves; we should always be interested in the topic of "Service."

For this church, at least it would appear to me, material service would include: church building, church grounds, facilities, song books, hand-outs, schedules, etc. Personal service is about people! One may have the finest facility ever constructed, the most commodious parking lot ever paved, and yet if he forgets people, failure is on the horizon.

Brethren, this church is in the people business! I cannot remember attending a service when visitors were not informed of gratitude for their presence, however, if this is the extent of our concern, in our grocery-store culture, our visitors will shop elsewhere.

Visitors will not remember the sermon, but they will remember their reception. Here are some suggestions that will indicate we are "PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST."

1. Be sure to greet every visitor warmly and genuinely.
2. Be alert to mothers with small children and help them get in and out of the building.
3. Show all courtesy in assisting visitors to classes, the auditorium, rest rooms, and back to their automobile after services.
4. Be real. Be sincerely concerned about their needs, where they are going, their families, etc.
5. Be thoughtful in the service. Sing, smile, and do not distract by improper behavior.
6. Those serving as ushers should be very sensitive to visitors. Your attitude may reflect whether a church is a caring place or a place of unconcern.

USAIR last year introduced a program called "Putting People First." This program developed by Total Manager International of North America, is a two-day seminar where customer-services employees as well as management and support staff are given practical training to help USAIR deliver quality personal service to all. If this giant industry realizes the value of people, surely those of us who were informed by our "boss," love your fellow man as self, will want to "Put People Ahead of Ourselves!"

“And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”
Matthew 22:39

“That He May Run That Readeth It”

Bob Duncan

In Habakkuk 2:2, the Lord told His prophet: “Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.” This probably means the writing is to be so plain that one running past might be able to read it without even slowing down. Herein lies a lesson for those of us who teach and preach. Our teaching should be plain enough to be understood without any difficulty. It is a tragic mistake to couch truth essential to man’s salvation in language that is difficult to understand.

The teaching done by Jesus while He was on earth was easily understood. “If ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). Is there anything hard to understand about that? “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Is that plain enough? “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 10:32). Any question about the necessity of confessing Jesus before men? “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Is that not plain enough for one to read and understand while running? If Jesus used language that plain and simple in His teaching, why should His preachers hide the truth in obscure words and phrases?

The message Habakkuk was to write so plainly it might be read by one who was running had to do with a condemnation of sin. God’s man never has a right to be ugly or rude in dealing with others, even with those who are guilty of sin. But it is his duty to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2). This also should be done in language so plain “that he may run that readeth it.”

One other thing needs to be said about the teaching and preaching that is sometimes done. It is possible for one to teach the truth, and teach it plainly, without his teaching’s being acceptable to God. In Acts 20:20, Paul told the Ephesian elders that he had “kept back nothing that was profitable” unto them. In verse 27 he said: “I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” One may preach the truth, nothing but the truth, and no error at all, and still not be a faithful preacher. Some preach the truth, and nothing but the truth, but neglect to preach any truth that is unpleasant for their hearers to hear. This kind of preaching brings them great popularity, but is not after the apostolic order. It leaves people satisfied in sin, without any desire to do any better than they are doing.

All who preach or teach should determine to teach the truth, all the truth, and that so plainly “that he may run that readeth it.”

4207 Adamsville Parkway; Adamsville, AL 35005

Free Bible Correspondence Course

The church at Bellview will gladly send one
to you! Write:

Bible Correspondence Course
% Harold Maxey
20 Emory Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506

Repentance and Forgiveness

Bobby Liddell

God requires one repent of his sins before that one may obtain forgiveness. In the case of the alien sinner, God requires he: (1) Hear the Gospel (Rom. 10:17); (2) Believe in Christ (John 8:24); (3) Repent of past sins (Luke 13:3); (4) Confess his faith in Christ (Mat. 10:32-33); and, (5) Be baptized in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). In the case of the erring brother, God requires he: (1) Repent of sin (Acts 8:22); (2) Confess the sin (1 John 1:9); and, (3) Pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22).

Notice, in both cases, God requires repentance. Repentance is a turning from sin to God; i.e., turning one's back to sin and his face to God. Jesus said the men of Nineveh "repented at the preaching of Jonas" (Mat. 12:41). Jonah 3:10 says: "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil." Repentance is a turning.

Godly sorrow precedes repentance. Paul, by inspiration, penned the following: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10). Repentance involves a change of mind (brought about by godly sorrow) that results in a change of life. A godly life follows repentance.

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

New Address

Sister Wanda Batten's new address is: 6395 Millview Road, Pensacola, 32526. Please make this change to your directory.

Classes

Classes for young people meet on Sunday afternoon. Middle School to College age meet in Room 1 at 5:30 P.M. Bobby Liddell is the teacher. Those younger meet in the Auditorium at 5:40 P.M. William R. Cline is the teacher. Both classes dismiss at 5:55 and worship for all ages begins at 6:00 P.M.

Bring your young people. You, and they, will be glad you did.

Sentence Sermon

Those who throw dirt lose ground!

Sick and Shut-in

Add the following to those already announced.

Rubin Malone was to have surgery on Monday, Feb. 3.

Joe Gilmore has gone home from the hospital. He may be facing additional surgery in the near future.

Alberta Cozad has had some improvement in her condition.

Remember all our sick in prayer!

Wednesday Schedule

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 2-12-92 | Reading: Jeremy Caine
Invitation: Jerry Fillingim |
| 2-19-92 | Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Louis Herrington |

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

February 13, 1992

Number 7

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

“Is this Appropriate?”

Mike McElroy

Last Wednesday when I came home from work, my girls were wearing new spring play-clothes. At the supper table, Amy (our two-year-old) asked in reference to the shirt she was wearing, “Is this appropriate?” She wanted to know if she could wear it to Bible study. The word “appropriate” had not been used during the meal until she brought it up. We could not help laughing at such a big word being pronounced so precisely by such a little girl. But she already knows that some clothing is appropriate and some is not for going to the services of the church.

Some bigger folks would do well to ask the same question as they choose what to wear to Bible study or worship. We all seem to understand the importance of wanting to look our best in most of life’s activities. Appropriate dress is a requirement on most jobs. We dress for social functions by an understood standard. The reason dress is so important is that our attitude toward an activity in which we engage is expressed by the way we dress for it. We would not dishonor a bride and groom, or a dead loved one by dressing in an inappropriate way for the wedding or funeral. But God is entitled to our honor and respect above any other being. Does the clothing we wear to the assembly reflect the importance of honoring him? In view of what is customary in our society, each should ask Amy’s question

as he decides what to wear to worship: “Is this appropriate?”

But for a Christian, this is not just a Sunday and Wednesday question. A Christian should ask the same question with respect to whatever he wears daily. Both men and women would do well to ask, “Is what I wear appropriate for one ‘professing godliness’?” (1 Tim. 2:10). The fashions and standards of an ungodly world cannot be our guide. We are the “called out” (the literal meaning of the word for church). We are “his own special people” (Tit. 2:14—NKJV).

The question of what is appropriate for a Christian to wear is not as difficult as some have made it. If we are in fact living by a different standard from the world, our wardrobe should reflect that difference. The world has lost its sense of modesty or propriety; it no longer blushes at clothing that is too short, too tight, too revealing, too suggestive, or that calls attention to the wearer. Before Christians should blindly follow the trends of fashion, we should ask, “Is this appropriate?”

This same question could help us examine our speech and conduct. The Bible teaches us how “we...walk and to please God” (1 The. 4:1). “Walking” is a familiar Bible metaphor for conduct or manner of life. It would be well

worth your time to look up in the epistles the three or four dozen references to how Christians should “walk.” A study of these should refresh in our minds the sense of what is “appropriate” for Christians.

Amy’s question, “Is this appropriate?” is one of great utility for all who want to honor God and do His will in all things.

Leeds, AL

I Don’t Understand

Ronnie Hayes

I DON’T UNDERSTAND Christians who will not attend services whether they are regular services or Gospel Meetings, Gospel Singings and other special events that are going on.

I DO UNDERSTAND why our friends and neighbors will not come!!

I DON’T UNDERSTAND Christians who allow their children to do anything during services, sit anywhere and generally show no interest in worshipping God.

I DO UNDERSTAND why the church is losing upward to 80% of its young people!

I DON’T UNDERSTAND why children who are 10 years old and older can’t sit through services without going back and forth to the bath room.

I DO UNDERSTAND when I hear the children telling the parents what to do!

I DON’T UNDERSTAND why a Christian man or woman who is trying to influence their husband or wife to be a Christian, ever allows the non-Christian to influence them to miss services, not study or to simply be indifferent to what is going on.

I DO UNDERSTAND why many spouses are never converted!

I DON’T UNDERSTAND why Christians [*missing in original*] ever poor mouth.

I DO UNDERSTAND why we don’t support missionaries, preaching students and the poor!

I DON’T UNDERSTAND why one can fall away from faithfulness and no one will go and see them.

I DO UNDERSTAND why the one who fell away never comes back!

But Paul understood: “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7). Maybe, now, we all understand.

Route 1 Box 135; Bear Creek, AL 35543

What Is Personal Work????

Jay D. Rogers

It’s talking with a friend about Jesus.

It’s being the salt of the earth, the light of the world.

It’s living in such a way that I adorn the gospel of Christ.

It’s giving a friend a tract.

It’s helping a little lady with her groceries.

It’s a Bible study for a friend in your home.

It’s inviting your children’s friends to Bible study.

It’s helping a friend deal with his personal problems.

It’s visiting the newcomers to your community to welcome them.

It’s inviting them to worship.

It’s encouragement given to a new brother.

It’s hospitality, sharing your home with others.

It’s encouraging someone to take a Bible Correspondence Course.

It’s giving your love to someone who has lost a loved one.

It’s helping a brother or sister through a troubled marriage to increase their effectiveness with others.

It’s inviting the checkout lady at the grocery store to Bible Study.

It’s smiling as you let the Word of God dwell in you richly.

It's knowing that Jesus Christ is worth sharing anytime, any place.
It's God working in us to will and to act according to His good purpose.
It's looking out for the eternal good of others.
It's sharing Jesus even when we don't feel good.
It's loving your neighbor as yourself.
It's knowing that at work or play, I belong to God.
It's praying that God will open doors.
It's many things to each Christian, but the key to its success is that it begins with me.

BELLVIEW LECTURES
MAY 9-13,1992
“CURRENT CRISES
CHALLENGING THE CHURCH”

Free Bible Correspondence Course

The church at Bellview will gladly send one
to you! Write:
Bible Correspondence Course
% Harold Maxey
20 Emory Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506

Sympathy

We extend our sincere sympathy to the family of our brother Malcolm Pierce who passed from this life Monday, Feb. 10. His funeral was Thursday, Feb. 13.

Pantry

Please bring canned meats.

Write

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
Block 426 #02-119
Bukit Batok , W. Ave. 2
Singapore 2365
Republic of Singapore

Ray Peters
% Janis Zemitis
23 Brambergas St.
Apt. 3
Riga, Latvia 226058

Sick and Shut-in

Alberta Cozad is still ill and unable to be out.

Rubin Malone is still in the hospital at Sacred Heart.

Lavanda Egan is still ill at home.

Linda Parker has been ill at home for several weeks now.

Leo Myers, (sister Lindesmith's brother) is in VA hospital in Jackson, MS.

Remember all our sick in prayer!

Wednesday Schedule

2-19-92 Reading: Harold Maxey Invitation: Louis Herrington

2-26-92 Reading: Tim Lamb Invitation: Kevin Bailey

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

February 20, 1992

Number 8

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MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

“The Same”

Bobby Liddell

The Same Gospel

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, **the same** commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). Thus Paul wrote, by inspiration, to the young gospel preacher, Timothy.

Notice, Timothy was to preach the same thing Paul preached; that is, the same gospel. Consider the result of their preaching the same thing. There would be no cause for division from their preaching and no temptation for one to use deceit to win followers to a different doctrine (of men). If one were to obey the gospel according to Paul’s preaching and another obey the gospel according to Timothy’s preaching, there would be no discord between them. Paul and Timothy preached the same Deliverer and the same destiny to those who heard and heeded the saving message. **There would be no difference if they preached the same thing!**

Let us see what Paul preached. “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:13). Paul, being an inspired apostle, preached what the Holy Ghost (Spirit) revealed unto him; thus, the words he spoke (wrote) were not from man, but from God. To the Thessalonians, he wrote: “For this

cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 The. 2:13). To the brethren in Galatia. Paul affirmed: “But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11-12).

So, Paul preached the gospel of Christ, not the words of men. Would that all who claim to be preachers would do as Paul charged Timothy and preach the same thing; that is, the truth from God (John 17:17). Paul said he was not ashamed of it, but many today seem to be. They will go around the world to uphold the false doctrines of men and damnable lies of error, but are ashamed of the pure gospel of Christ. Why can they not say the same thing as Paul: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16)?

If we follow, teach and practice **the same**, unity will be an inevitable consequence. That is exactly what Paul encouraged the divided church at Corinth to do. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that ye all speak the **same thing**, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment**” (1 Cor. 1:10-13). Brethren in Christ, walking by the same rule (Phi. 3:16), speak the same thing, have the same mind and the same judgment! It is not an option and it should not be an oddity.

Now, what will that do for a church? There would be “no divisions” there. Contentions would vanish. Unity would prevail. Christ would be uplifted and God would be glorified. Souls would be saved and the church would grow in the right way. Energies and talents could be used for fighting Satan and winning the world to Christ instead of fighting against one another. Brethren, are those not noble and desirable reasons to walk in the same way?

Well, what way is that? It is the way, the only way, which one will follow if he hears the same gospel the Corinthians heard, believes it and obeys it. Paul said: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

The gospel did not change when Paul went to Thessalonica, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi or anywhere else. He preached the same thing. Is it little wonder, when he went into Macedonia, he left Timothy at Ephesus to: “charge some that they **teach no other doctrine**” (1 Tim. 1:3). If they preached “no other doctrine” they either would preach the same doctrine or they would preach nothing, but they surely could not preach a different doctrine from what God revealed through the Spirit!

Paul told the Galatians there was “not another” gospel. “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:6-9).

There is only one gospel! It is the gospel which those saints in the first century heard, believed and obeyed. It is the one faith (Eph. 4:4-6; Rom. 1:5, 16; Gal. 1:23), and there is not another from God. Thus, there is not another that saves. There is not another which man might choose, and be right in so doing, because it “suits him better” than the saving gospel of Christ. We shall all be saved by the same gospel else God is a respecter of persons, and that He certainly is not (Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jam. 2:1).

The Same Body

“That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of **the same body**, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (Eph. 3:6). There is only one body and all who are saved are members of **the same** body. That body is the one body (Eph. 4:4) and the one body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23): hence, **there is but one church**. It is the same body; that is, the same church: (1) which God eternally purposed (Eph. 3:11); (2) which Christ loved (Eph. 5:25); (3) for which He died (Eph. 5:25); (4) over which He is head (Eph. 5:23); (5) of which He is savior (Eph. 5:23); (6) in which God is glorified (Eph 3:21); (7) which is holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27); (8) which Christ nourishes and cherishes (Eph. 5:29); (9) of which the apostles, Christians in the first century and all those in Christ from then until now are members; and, (10) in which exist true peace and love.

From Pentecost until the Lord’s return, men enter the same body the same way: “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). Friends, there is but one body (Eph. 4:4).

The Same Standard of Judgment

Jesus said: “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” (John 12:48).

Now, can we see why Timothy was told: “**the same** commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2)? All men, in this present age, will be judged by the same standard—the words of Christ; that is, the gospel of Christ. That is what all men, if they would be saved, must hear. Salvation is promised to those who believe the gospel, repent of sins, confess their faith and are baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). All the saved are in the same body, the one body, the one church (Gal. 3:26-27). Are you?

Restored

Brother Bill Crowe confessed wrong and asked for prayer Sunday morning, 2-16-92. We commend his willingness to do right and his courage.

Pantry

Please bring canned meats.

Write

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
Block 426 #02-119
Bukit Batok , W. Ave. 2
Singapore 2365
Republic of Singapore

Ray Peters
% Janis Zemrtis
23 Brambergas St.
Apt. 3
Riga, Latvia 226058

Sick and Shut-in

Alberta Cozad is doing better.
Rubin Malone is at home now.
Lavanda Egan is still ill at home.
Linda Parker has been ill at home for several weeks now.
Leo Myers, (sister Lndesmith's brother) is still in the VA hospital in Jackson, MS.
Pat Brandon is ill at home.
Linda Worley will have surgery 2-24-92. Remember all our sick in prayer!

Wednesday Schedule

2-26-92 Reading: Tim Lamb
 Invitation: Kevin Bailey
3-4-92 Reading: Chad Lightner
 Invitation: Lee Bragg

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

February 27, 1992

Number 9

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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(904) 455-7595

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Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
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Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Taking the Gospel to Riga, Latvia *Bobby Liddell*

In October, 1991, six of us went to Riga, Latvia to carry the gospel to a country which had been under the domination of Communist control for fifty years. God blessed us with tremendous opportunities on every hand. We immediately made plans to return and do more work with the contacts we had made. **In July, 1992, we shall return for a two-week gospel meeting (three Sundays) in Riga, Latvia's capital city. The church at Bellview has committed itself to helping financially (and in other ways) in this landmark effort.** Perhaps you would like to help in spreading the saving gospel to a precious people who are open and receptive to God's Word. To do so, make your checks out to Bellview Church of Christ and mark them "For Latvian Work."

On our initial journey, as far as we could tell, there were no churches of Christ nor members of the body of Christ in the entire country. Nor had any Christians been to Latvia (at least in the last fifty years) to preach the gospel to the millions of lost souls there. The Communists would not allow such, but now the Latvians have gained their freedom and are anxious to hear of Christ and His church. Free politically, they look for freedom spiritually.

Jesus said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The Latvians need to hear the same gospel all those saved since the church's establishment have heard in order to be free. But, someone must take the gospel to them (Mark 16:15-16). Those who do must have the financial means to do so. Paul wrote: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:13-15).

Someone must take the gospel to them (Mark 16 15-16). Those who do must have the financial means to do

On Monday, February 24, 1992, Ray Peters left for Riga. He will be there for three months and will, among other things, teach courses in the University of Riga using the Bible as his text! He will also make additional

preparations for our return in July and make arrangements for advertising and the many other things necessary for a successful gospel meeting in Riga.

The Bellview church has already ordered communion service trays and covers for the Lord's Supper and collection plates for the contribution when the church meets in Riga. Song books have also been ordered and plans for printing Latvian/English song books are underway. In addition, more Latvian Bibles will be shipped to Riga in time for the meeting. Plans are to prepare tracts with the Latvian language on one page and English on the other for distribution during the meeting in July.

In addition to these costs, the Bellview congregation has agreed to underwrite the cost of renting an appropriate meeting place in downtown Riga. Riga is a city of one million and before the Communist takeover was a beautiful city with splendid architecture. Slowly, they are renovating the city seeking to bring it back to its former beauty. One of the buildings dear to the hearts of the Latvians is the Grand Cinema. It is a theater which seats 800 and is centrally located, well known and easily accessible to all. Through some of the contacts made on the first journey, we have made arrangements to rent the Grand Cinema for our gospel meeting. The cost is \$800 in U.S. currency and is a bargain at that price.

It certainly seems God has providentially opened the door to Latvia. Now, we must, by faith, enter and take full advantage of the opportunities which our gracious Father has bestowed. That, we seek to do. To God be all the glory! Please pray for us and this work and help as you can.

Invitation Etiquette

Dub McClish

A crucial time in our worship periods is that in which the preacher extends the invitation of Christ. This is a time when we are urging souls to obey Christ. The proper atmosphere is very important. During the invitation we are trying to get those whose lives are out of harmony with the Gospel to make the emotional and intellectual response that is necessary to save their souls. We must do all that we can to eliminate every distraction from the serious business at hand. We dare not by thoughtless behavior discourage or distract a soul that is on the verge of responding. He may never be that near to Christ again. In fact, our distracting behavior may cause him to die in sin and lose his soul. Everything the preacher, song leader, and every other member of the church does should aim at encouraging a response by those who need to respond. Please consider the following "invitation etiquette."

1. Sing the invitation song enthusiastically. It always saddens me to see so many who gaze around and make no effort at all to sing. They appear bored by it all. If you were thinking about responding to the invitation, think how such behavior would discourage you.

2. Do not move around or allow your children to leave during the invitation unless there is some kind of emergency. Of course, if you need to respond, by all means move around sufficiently to do so! The devil can use even innocent little children to distract people from responding to the invitation if parents do not properly control them. I am sad when I see more people going out the back door than are coming to the front during the invitation.

3. Wait until after the closing prayer to get ready to go home. Some folks are more interested in putting on a coat or picking up a purse than they are in the salvation of souls during the invitation song.

4. There should be no unnecessary talking or any other activity during the closing remarks of a Gospel sermon or the invitation song. It both breaks my heart and spurs my indignation to see this going on. It is bad enough at any time while I am preaching, but I am especially dismayed by such while I am pleading for souls.

Try to put yourself in the position of someone who needs to respond to Christ. You are about ready to step out into the aisle when suddenly the lady next to you bumps you while struggling to get her coat on. Or, the folks in front of you are talking and laughing. Now, how would you feel?

312 Pearl Street; Denton, Texas 76201

Bellview Lectures
"Current Crises
Challenging The
Church"
May 9-13, 1992

Restored

Brother Chris Mathews confessed wrong and asked for prayer Sunday morning, 2-23-92. We are thankful he has a tender heart and a great desire to do right.

Pantry

Please bring canned meats.

Write

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Block 426 #02-119
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Sick and Shut-in

Alberta Cozad is doing better.
Rubin Malone, Lavanda Egan, Linda Parker, Peggy Crowe, and Melanie Crowe are or have been ill at home.
Leo Myers, VA hospital in Jackson, MS.
Linda Worley had surgery 2-24-92, West Florida, Room 306.
Randall Johnson, Room 525, Sacred Heart Hospital.
Inez Prosser, Alpine Adult Care Center.

Wednesday Schedule

3-4-92 Reading: Chad Lightner
 Invitation: Lee Bragg
3-11-92 Reading: Jim Roddy
 Invitation: Preston Silcox

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

March 5, 1992

Number 10

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Jonah, a Prophet Who Loved a Gourd More than He Loved Souls

Wade Webster

Jonah has to be one of the most interesting characters of all the Bible. Although many of us have known the story of Jonah and the whale since we were children, we are still amazed as we read about this prophet of God. His name means "Dove." This may be in prophetic anticipation of his fleeing from the call of God to go preach to Nineveh. His prophetic work is unique. He was the only Old Testament prophet whose message was directed entirely to foreign people, and whose work was done on foreign soil; whose career involved the miraculous in a large way; and, who traveled on the Mediterranean Sea. He was the only character to which the Lord likened Himself (Mat. 12:38-41). Finally, Jonah was the only Old Testament prophet that wanted to fail in his mission. Let us examine Jonah, the prophet who loved a gourd more than he loved souls.

In chapter one we see Jonah, the **PREJUDICED PROPHET**. God instructed Jonah to arise, and to go Nineveh and "cry against it" (Jon. 1:1-2). Jonah did arise (v. 3), but he set out in the wrong direction. He was not going east toward Nineveh but west toward

Tarshish. One might wonder why Jonah was going the wrong way. Was it because he misunderstood God? No! Jonah understood God perfectly well! Later, he would tell those with whom he was sailing that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord (v. 10). Jonah understood what God had told him, he just was not going to do it. So it is with many today who know what the Bible teaches, but will not heed it (Mat. 13:13-15). It is not hard to determine why Jonah was fleeing from the presence of the Lord. He was prejudiced! Chapter four reveals very clearly Jonah's prejudice. When God saw Nineveh turned from their evil way, He: "repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not" (Jon. 3:10). When Jonah saw God was not going to destroy Nineveh: "it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil" (4:1-2).

Jonah revealed his true colors in his reaction and prayer when he learned God was going to spare Nineveh. He was displeased and angry to God (4:1, 9). Because of his prejudice, his hatred had grown to the point that he wanted Nineveh destroyed, not warned and saved. He, like all of his countrymen, hated the people of Nineveh because of

the bitter wars fought with them. Jonah allowed his patriotism and prejudice to get in the way of preaching God's message to sinners of all races and backgrounds. It is hard to find a man more prejudiced than Jonah on this occasion.

Just as Jonah was prejudiced, so many are in our own day. We must be careful not to have the prejudiced spirit of Jonah as we strive to teach our communities and the world the gospel (Jam. 2:1-10). Jonah was a prejudiced prophet who was trying to flee from responsibility by fleeing from God. He learned he could not flee from the presence of God (Psa. 139:1-12), nor from his responsibility to God (2 Cor. 5:10). He could not run far enough to relieve himself of his responsibility to go to Nineveh and preach. Likewise today, all men are amenable to the law of Christ (2 Pet. 3:9; Mark 16:15-16; 2 The. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 5:10). We cannot run far enough to hide from God or to relieve ourselves of the responsibility to obey His will. All men are under the law of Christ today, in spite of what James Bales or other false teachers may say!

In chapter two we see Jonah, the **PENITENT PROPHET**. Jonah prayed to God out of the belly of the great fish (2:1). He revealed he was crying unto God because of his afflictions (2:2; cf. 2:5). In the fourth verse we see Jonah's penitence. There are some very important points which we can make from this fourth verse. First, Jonah admitted his sin. We read, "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight" (2:4). Likewise, when we sin we must be willing to confess our sins (1 John 1:6-9). Second, Jonah knew that sin had separated him from God. He said, "I am cast out of thy sight." We must realize when we sin, we are separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2). Third, Jonah turned from sin to God. He said, "I will look again toward thy holy temple" (Jon. 2:4). We must also turn from sin to God if we are going to be pleasing to him (Luke 13:3). Jonah's sin: also affected others (Jon. 1:10-14); had to be disciplined (1:15; 2 The. 3:6); and, robbed him of strength (Jon. 2:7; Jud. 16:19). Jonah grew to the point through penitence that he wrote this book which so vividly points out his failings. It took three days in the belly of a whale for Jonah to realize his sinfulness. What is it going to take for us to realize and renounce our sinfulness today?

In chapter three we see Jonah, the **PREACHING PROPHET**. God instructed Jonah once again to go and preach to Nineveh (Jon. 3:1-2). It is important to note God told him: "Arise, go...and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee" (3:2). Jonah was not to carry his own message, but God's message. In the Old Testament prophet's alone, phrases such as: "Thus said the Lord," "God spake," "The Lord testified saying," and "The Lord hath spoken it," occur 1,300 times. Six times in the book of Jonah we read of God speaking. The Lord spoke five times to Jonah (1:1; 3:1; 4:4, 9-10) and one time to the fish (2:10). Although Jonah's preaching was not very lengthy, it was effective. The Bible records Jonah's sermon in eight words: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (3:4). The people of Nineveh believed the preaching of Jonah and repented (3:5). Repentance began with the king and proceeded throughout his empire (3:6-9). Christ said concerning this occasion the men of Nineveh would rise up in judgment against those who rejected His message of repentance (Mat. 12:41). The people repented when Jonah preached what God told him to preach. This should be a reminder to us of the power of God's message when we preach the preaching that God bids us (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:13).

In chapter four we see Jonah the **POUTING PROPHET**. Jonah was displeased and angry when he heard God was going to spare the city (4:1). In verse three we see Jonah pouting: "Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is* better for me to die than to live." Again: "And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, *It is* better for me to die than to live" (4:8). If Jonah could not have his way he wanted to die. In verse two Jonah complained about the goodness, mercy, and longsuffering of God, without realizing that he also was enjoying the benefits of God's goodness, mercy, and longsuffering. Twice in this chapter God asked Jonah, "Doest thou well to be angry?" (4:4, 9). Surely, God was being longsuffering with this backtalking prophet. Likewise God provided Jonah with a gourd to shade him for a day (4:5-6). Even though God took the gourd away (4:7), it still expressed His goodness and mercy in providing it in the first place. We need to remember God is "longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). We need to remember daily how good God has been to us, and dedicate our lives to His service (John 3:16; Rom. 12:1-2). Sadly, we have many in the church today who pout when they do not get their way. Like Jonah they are immature, selfish, and childish! May they grow to maturity as Jonah did when he wrote this book.

We all can learn from the prophet Jonah. His attitude toward his fellowman, and his fleeing from responsibility are so prevalent among God's people today. Jonah's life is recorded for our learning (Rom. 15:4). We are without excuse if we fail to take the lessons we learn from his life to heart!

Bellview Lectures
May 9-13, 1992

Restored

Brother Hezekiah Green repented of sin and asked for prayer Thursday, February 27, 1992. We rejoice with him and commend his example to others.

Pray

Please pray for our missionary efforts, especially remembering the work in Latvia and the upcoming gospel meeting in Riga, Latvia. Remember our missionaries and write them often.

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
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Republic of Singapore

Ray Peters
% Janis Zemrtis
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Apt. 3
Riga, Latvia 226058

Sick and Shut-in

AT HOME: Alberta Cozad (doing better and able to be out some); Jennette Nail, Rubin Malone; Lavanda Egan; Linda Parker; Lantice Garrett; Mabel Simmons (home from the hospital); Randall Johnson. Inez Brantley (had cataract surgery, 3-3-92). Leo Myers, (sister Lindesmith's brother) is still in the VA hospital in Jackson, MS. Linda Worley is undergoing rehabilitation at West Florida.

Wednesday Schedule

3-11-92 Reading: Jim Roddy
 Invitation: Preston Silcox
3-18-92 Reading: Harold Cozad
 Invitation: Jeremy Caine

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

March 12, 1992

Number 11

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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“When They Heard”

Jimmy Clark

“When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:5). There are times when phrases often repeated in the Bible seem to be insignificant. The little phrase “when they heard” is repeated in various passages in the book of Acts. It often is followed by a statement of action based upon the thing heard and the heart of the hearer(s). There is no doubt that those in Ephesus who heard Paul concerning the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ would not have become brethren in Christ had it not been for their hearing what they did with the proper attitude. Consider some passages in Acts that mention other occasions when people heard the truth.

1. **Hearing of the Devout.** “Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). Luke describes the kind of people who were in Jerusalem at that time. “And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5). The word “devout” means “to take hold well, i.e. carefully and surely; cautious, reverencing God, pious, religious” (Thayer, p.259). Though many in Jerusalem did not fit such a definition (cf. Acts 2:13), such can be said of these in verse thirty-seven. These truly feared God. When the truth was presented to them, they did not quibble or rationalize. The content of the

message and that such came from inspired men were evidence enough to ask what to do about their situation. When the truth and a true heart mix together, only good can come from it.

2. **Hearing of the Disciples.** “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord” (Acts 4:24). Consider the content of what they heard. “And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them” (Acts 4:23). The words of the chief priests and elders were neither pleasant nor gentle. The words of these disciples to the Lord manifest that they knew opposition was present. “And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word” (Acts 4:29). The threats did not intimidate the disciples. They rather spurred on the disciples toward greater involvement in the work. These devout disciples were developing into dedicated ones. Such is a picture of what truth in a true heart can do.

3. **Hearing of the Disobedient.** “When they heard *that*, they were cut *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay them” (Acts 5:33). Here one finds the truth presented, but the opposite effect is seen in comparison to the previous examples. Obedience was the subject (Acts 5:32), but such was not desired by these. When Stephen spoke the truth

to these, the text states, “When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with *their* teeth” (Acts 7:54). Truth does not always produce the same results in every case. There is nothing wrong with the message. What is wrong is the heart. When people hear the truth today, the same conversions and condemnations result. May all take heed not only to what one hears, but also to how it is heard.

Route 3 Box 425; Athens, AL 35611

Would I Study My Bible If...?

William McPherson had a charge of dynamite go off in his face. He lost his eyes and hands and the feeling in parts of his face. He realized how much the Bible meant to him and he greatly needed its strength. He could not read it in Braille because of his artificial hands. He tried to place his lips on the dots, but they were numb. He found he could use his tongue to decipher the Moon Type system of dashes. The metal left his lips and tongue bleeding and very sore, but he prayed to God to help him continue to learn just one letter of the alphabet. In the sixty-five years that followed, he read the Bible through four times with his tongue.

Would I study the Bible is the same thing happened to me that happened to Mr. McPherson? Would I have the desire, the intense desire to know God’s will, that I would go through what he did to learn? I wonder if I would not rather have decided, “I can’t ever read the Bible again.”

Would I study the Bible if I had to get up an hour earlier each day to work it into my busy (?) schedule? Or miss my favorite TV program if, at that hour, I remembered I had not studied my Bible for the day and would not have time afterwards?

Would I study the Bible (I wish I had not heard of that McPherson fellow) if I didn’t feel just right, or if I had had a hard day at work, or if I was just too tired? (I wonder how that fellow learned to read with his tongue?) Or would I study even though I was a slow reader and it took me all day just to read one or two chapters?

Would I study the Bible on occasions when the saints were assembled (Sunday morning, Wednesday night, etc.) if I had to go without supper till after services, or walk or drive several blocks to get there?

How many “ifs” keep you from studying that Bible? Is this matter of no importance to you at all? If it is, then do something about it. That McPherson fellow—I guess his example will haunt me th rest of my life.

Paul Johnson

The Bible

This old book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its histories are true, its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is a traveler’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the sailor’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the Christian’s charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven is opened and the gates of Hell are disclosed.

Christ is the grand Subject, our good its design and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure.

It is given you in life, will be open in judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents.

Author Unknown

Free Bible Correspondence Course

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Bible Course
% Harold Maxey
20 Emory Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506

Bellview Lectures
May 9-13, 1992
“Current Crises Challenging
The Church”

New Baby

We congratulate Ruth and Rick Martin on the birth of Lauren Elizabeth Martin. She weighed 6 pounds 14 ounces and was born February 28, 1992. Grandmother Betty Weekley is duly proud.

Camp

Indian Creek Youth Camp has announced its schedule. Teen Week will be June 21-26 with Jerry Martin as Director. Ronnie Hayes' week will be July 5-10. The fee this year will be \$60.00 per child per week. Brochures will be available later. Many of our young people and their parents attend camp each year.

Bellview Lectures

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures will be May 9-13, 1992. Theme: "Current Crises Challenging The Church."

Sick and Shut-in

AT HOME: Alberta Cozad, Rubin Malone; Lavanda Egan; Linda Parker; Mabel Simmons.

Leo Myers, (sister Lindesmith's brother) is still in the VA hospital in Jackson, MS.

Linda Worley is undergoing rehabilitation at West Florida.

Inez Prosser: Alpine Adult Care Center.

Marilyn Hall's father, Mr. Donoughe, is seriously ill in New York.

Wednesday Schedule

3-18-92 Reading: Harold Cozad
 Invitation: Jeremy Caine
3-25-92 Reading: Shelby Nall
 Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

March 19, 1992

Number 12

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Hold My Mule

Burt Jones

The old man couldn't carry a tune in a bucket, but he loved to sing—even if it was off-key. Besides, he was famous for “amening” the preacher several times each sermon. Some thought the worship service had deteriorated into an undignified assembly because of the old man. He simply got too involved in the goings on and forgot himself.

Four of the more well-to-do members decided this was too “crude” for the congregation. They appointed themselves as the ones to go talk to the old man.

When they arrived at the old man's house he was in the field plowing with his old mule. Though it was beneath their dignity, they finally walked out through that dusty ground, which soiled their clothes, to talk with the old man. “Brother Doe,” they began, “we want to talk to you about your singing. Not meaning any offense, you just can't sing! We've come to ask you to try not to sing so loud because it ruins our services.”

“I'm sorry,” he said, “It's just that when I look at these old clothes that I wear and then think of the robes that God has for me, I cant help singing.”

“When I see that old shack I live in and realize it might fall down at anytime, and then think about the beautiful palace that God

has for me, I just have to sing the praises of my Lord.”

“Do you see this old hat I have on? Well, when I see in my mind that crown God has for me, I just have to sing the name of Jesus at the top of my lungs.” “As a matter of fact,” he said, “would one of you HOLD MY MULE? I feel like singing.”

As these four men left the old man singing in the field, they pictured this precious soul in a different light. One of the men said, “You know, his singing isn't really all that bad.” Another said, “I never really realized how sweet his voice really is.” The third said, “I just hope that God allows me to sing in the same group that he sings in.”

While conducting singing workshops around the country last year, I have the cherished memory of four pre-teen boys sitting on the front row during every session singing their hearts out with not a one of them in tune! May I let you in on a secret? Never have I heard singing anywhere that caused within me the stirring of emotions that the singing of these young men did.

There are several lessons in the story of the old man and his mule. It just may be that the reason these self-appointed critics had difficulty appreciating the raw beauty of the singing of the old saint was that, “The world was

too much with them." Think about it!

926 E. Jackson St., Millersburg, OH 44654

Write

Floy Dell Lindesmith
%Leo Myers
128 Sunset Drive
Florence, MS 39073

Ray Peters
23-4 Brambergas St.
Riga, Latvia 2260058
EUROPE

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
Block 426 #02-119
Bukit Batok, W. Ave. 2
Singapore 2365
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

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Gospel Meeting
Jay Church of Christ
March 15-20, 7:30 P.M.
Charlie T. Garner, Preacher

Current Crises Challenging The Church

Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

SATURDAY, MAY 9

7:00 PM Singing

7:15 PM Must Christians Keep Themselves Pure?

Willie Bradshaw

8:00 PM Is it Time to Update Our Worship?

Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00 AM The Eldership: Critical Problem in the Church Today

Bobby Liddell

10:00 AM Is Abortion Murder?

Terry Claunch

7:00 PM Singing

7:15 PM Do We Need a New Hermeneutics?

Eddie Whitten

8:00 PM Is There a Pattern?

Andrew Connally

MONDAY, MAY 11

9:00 AM The Threat of Influential False Teachers and Unfaithful Schools

Noah Hackworth

9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Is the Faithfulness of Today the Anti-ism of Tomorrow?	Daniel Denham
11:15 AM	What Is Included in the Command to Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Are We Still People Who Know the Bible?	Garry Barnes
2:15 PM	Is the Church of Christ a Cult?	Steve Waller
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	How Does the Holy Spirit Guide Man?	Jerry Martin
8:00 PM	What Is the Role of Women in the Church?	Bob Duncan
TUESDAY, MAY 12		
9:00 AM	Is the Church Lacking in Spirituality?	Guss Eoff
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Modern Versions—Translations or Perversions?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
11:15 AM	What Is Excluded By Command to Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Is It Wrong to Judge?	Larry Middlebrooks
2:15 PM	Problems in the Pulpit	B. C. Carr
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Is the church of Christ the True Restored Church or Just One Part of the Restoration Fellowship?	Harrell Davidson
8:00 PM	Is Salvation By Grace Alone?	Garland Elkins
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13		
9:00 AM	Is the Bible the Inspired Word of God?	Jerri Manasco
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Have We Lost the Desire to Be Servants?	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:15 AM	Strange and Uncertain Sounds From Brethren	Allen Webster
1:30 PM	Creation or Evolution?	Garry Brantley
2:15 PM	Do we Care that Millions Have Not Heard of Christ?	Ronnie Hayes
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Have we Sold Our homes to Satan?	Buster Dobbs
8:00 PM	Does God's Love Prohibit Punishment?	Joe Gilmore

*Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(940) 455-7595*

Baptized

We congratulate Adam Beck, who was baptized Saturday, March 7, 1992. We commend Michael Peters who taught and baptized Adam. Let us all welcome Adam and encourage him as he grows in Christ. Please add his address and phone number to your directory.

Adam Beck
2013 Saddlebrook Drive
Pensacola, FL 32526
944-3032

Bible Bowl

The Third Annual Bellview Bible Bowl will be Saturday, May 9, 1992. Twelve congregations have been invited to be present at 9:30 that morning to begin our study of Ecclesiastes. We need your help with housing, food and *several* other things.

Sick and Shut-in

AT HOME: Alberta Cozad, Rubin Malone; Lavanda Egan; Pat Brandon; Ella Mae Hammac; Linda Parker. Leo Myers, (sister Lindesmith's brother) still in VA hospital in Jackson, MS. Linda Worley is undergoing rehabilitation at West Florida. Inez Prosser: Alpine Adult Care Center. Mabel Simmons-Room 302, Sacred Heart. Marilyn Hall's father, Anthony Donoghue of NY, not doing well.

Wednesday Schedule

3-25-92 Reading: Shelby Nall
 Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
4-1-92 Reading: Jim Loy
 Invitation: Paul Brantley

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

March 26, 1992

Number 13

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

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SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Suggestions for Leading in Public Prayer

Below are some suggestions regarding leading in public prayer. Brethren, please consider them in an effort to make our worship services more meaningful to all who attend:

1. Remember that it is a public prayer, not a private one.
2. Speak up so that you can be heard.
3. Plan to make your prayer brief. If you are behind on your praying, please remember that everyone may not be.
4. Avoid vain repetitions.
5. Avoid stereotypes and timeworn expressions.
6. Follow the model prayer given by Jesus as:
 - a. A model in brevity.
 - b. A model in simplicity and clarity.
 - c. A model in directness.
 - d. A model in scope.
7. Fit the prayer to the occasion.
8. Do not try to include every possible thing for which one could pray.
9. Remember to continue speaking loud enough for all to hear.
10. Be brief.
11. Pray so that those in the farthest corner can hear you.
12. No one can pray well publicly who does not pray much privately.

13. Study prayers recorded in the Scriptures.

14. Whenever you pause to think of something else to say, think of the word "Amen."

15. Can everybody hear what you are saying?

16. Don't let your voice trail off just before you get to the "Amen."

17. Say "Amen" in a firm, slow, positive tone so that all can end with you.

Beloved, let us be considerate of those in the worship services who are praying with us. We are not praying "for them," we are only "leading them" as we all pray.

Via "Bedford Banner"; Bedford, TX

I Can Wait and Take the Supper Tonight

As long as I can remember, the Lord's Supper has been made available on Sunday evenings to those who were "provisionally hindered" from taking it with the rest of the saints on Sunday morning. This thoughtful gesture was no doubt begun out of special concern for those who had someone sick, a death, or something else over which they had no control. But it appears we have begun to abuse this provision. If we want to take a trip, visit someone, sleep, go fishing, or engage in some other activity over which we do have control, we just say, "I'll go ahead and do it because I can wait and take the Supper tonight." Is this right? I definitely do not believe it is! And I doubt those who do it really believe it is! It seems common sense would teach us God would not tolerate such abuse of the Lord's Supper, putting it in second place. The apostle Paul was so concerned he commanded them to "tarry one for the other" (1 Cor. 11:33).

Furthermore, and maybe more importantly, no such abuse was allowed of the Passover which was the type and shadow of the Lord's Supper. In Numbers 9:6-12, we find the same gracious provision made for the man who was "provisionally hindered" from eating the Passover on its appointed day. If something over which he had no control prevented his eating on the appointed day with the children of Israel, he could eat it exactly one month later. But if anyone tried to abuse or take advantage of this provision, he was to be "cut off from among the people." It says, "But the man that *is* clean, and is not in a journey, and forbearth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin" (Numbers 9:13).

Does this have anything to say to the man who would willfully neglect to gather with the rest of the saints around the Lord's table on Sunday morning, and excuse himself by saying, "Oh well, I can just wait and take it tonight?" I think it does!

Via "The Sword"; Oxford, AL

You Preach First

The first sermon preached each Sunday is not by the minister, but by you. You preach a message of good cheer when you say "Good morning!" to those you meet when you park your car and when you are in the hallway and classroom.

You preach a message of "Welcome! We have room for you!" when you slide over a few seats instead of forcing others to squeeze in front of you. You preach a message of hope and joy when you sing enthusiastically during the song service.

You preach a message about the power of prayer when you fervently enter into our time of prayer together. You preach a message of love when you smile, say hello, and introduce yourself to visitors. You preach a message about faith when you give your offering. You preach a message about the importance of the Scriptures when you bring your Bible.

Many messages are preached before the minister stands up to bring his message. If your message is positive and consistent, then the message given from the pulpit will be much better received.

Come each time prepared to preach your sermon.

Via "Greenville Messenger"

Don't We Know It!

The typographical error is a slippery thing and sly;
You can hunt it til you're dizzy, but it somehow will get by.
Til the forms are off the press, it is strange how still it sleeps;
It shrinks down in a corner, and it never stirs or peeps.
That typographical error is too small for human eyes,
Til the ink is on the paper, when it grows to mountain size.
The remainder of the issue may be clean as clean can be;
But the typographical error is the only thing they'll see.

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Charlie T. Garner, Preacher

Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

Current Crises

Challenging The Church

Oops!

We inadvertently left out the name of a proud grandfather recently. As a matter of fact, the grandfather is proud of his first grandchild, and duly so. We could plead temporary insanity or say, "The Devil made me do it!" Rather, as the little old lady who said to the preacher trying diligently to console her over the death of her husband: "It's just one of them thar thangs," so this was "just one of them thar thangs" that elude the editor.

So, we are happy to announce that our brother William Weekley is duly proud of Lauren Elizabeth Martin, his first grandchild and we are proud for him!

Bible Bowl

The Third Annual Bellview Bible Bowl will begin at 9:30, Saturday, May 9, 1992. We shall study Ecclesiastes. How can you help?

Sick

At home: Alberta Cozad, Linda Worley (had outpatient surgery). Leo Myers, VA hospital in Jackson, MS. Inez Prosser: Alpine Adult Care Center. Mabel Simmons—Room 302, Sacred Heart. Joyce Simmons (surgery 3-19-92), Sacred Heart. Rheba Stancliff doing better after hip surgery in Singapore. Marilyn Hall's father, Anthony Donoghue of NY, is not doing well. Pray for the sick.

Wednesday Schedule

4-1-92 Reading: Jim Loy
 Invitation: Paul Brantley
4-8-92 Reading: Charles Garrett
 Invitation: Ray Foshee

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

April 2, 1992

Number 14

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
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SUNDAY:
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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Is it Wrong to Go to the Prom?

Bobby Liddell

After all, it is **your** prom and all **your** friends will be there and **your** date wants to go. Right? You only graduate from high school once and the prom is an important part of high school social life. Right? It will be well chaperoned and nothing can happen. Right? You want to dress up and eat out and have a fun time with your friends. Right?

What is right? Let us examine some questions to determine whether it is right or whether it is wrong to go to the prom.

WHAT EFFECT WILL IT HAVE ON YOU? Will it make you stronger in Christ or weaker? Will it tear down your inhibitions to worldliness? Jesus gave instruction in the model prayer saying: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Will going to the prom put you in a position to be tempted to sin? 80% of young men responding to a survey said dancing (the modern dance) caused them to have lustful thoughts. Indeed, many can trace their degradation back to its beginning at a dance. Why take such a chance?

Will it cause you to go against your conscience? Paul said whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). Can you, in faith, encourage (by your presence and support) and participate in that which is harmful to your soul and the souls of other young men and

women? Would you have to compromise Christian principles to attend? Would you feel confident good faithful Christian brothers and sisters would support your going to the prom?

Will your going to the prom encourage you to go to Heaven? Will you be taking a step down the narrow way that leads to life or down the broad way that is well traveled and leads to destruction (Mat. 7:13-14). Yes, attending the prom is a big step-but in what direction?

HOW WILL IT AFFECT YOUR INFLUENCE? Will people recognize your Christianity? Paul said, "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world" (Phi. 2:15). Can you shine as a light in the world (cf. Mat. 14-16) while participating in and encouraging an event which emphasizes dancing? The world knows what kind of activities accompany the prom. Will they not assume you are aware of, agreeable to and supportive of those activities?

Will your going to the prom aid your evangelism? Will it be easier or harder for you to influence your friends to become Christians? Will they see you as a hypocrite for attending or as distinctively different (in the right way)

for not attending? In 1 Timothy 4:12, the Bible records Paul's inspired words to Timothy: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Really, is attending a dance exemplary conduct for a Christian young person? Would Timothy go to the prom?

Will going to the prom show you to be worldly? Again, Paul penned: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:1-2). The world approves of the prom. While that, within itself, is not reason enough to not attend, certainly, it should cause us to think seriously.

HOW WILL IT AFFECT THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH? Would you be ashamed to tell someone, at the prom, you were a member of the Lord's body? Remember, Christ died for the church (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25). Would he approve of members of his body being at a dance?

Will your attendance at and support of the prom show the church of which you are a member, the church of Christ, is distinctively different from churches of men? Your absence will. And, your proper conduct and Christian principles for not attending will be a good influence which may result in some soul being saved.

Would it be okay for the preacher and his wife to go to the prom? What about the elders and their wives? If it would not be okay for them to go, then why would it be right for any Christian to go? God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). If it would be a disgrace for the preacher to be there (and it would) would it not be a disgrace for sister Susie or brother Johnny also? Would the church stand for the preacher and his wife attending the prom? No! Why should it stand for any other member going? It should not.

CONCLUSION. From all the above, at least you can see the questionable nature of the prom. That, within itself, should be sufficient cause for one to avoid it. "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9). Christians must seek the safe way—the way about which there can be no question. Aside from attendance at the prom being questionable, dancing, such as the modern dance, is condemned in God's Word.

Galatians 5:19-21 includes a catalog of sins which will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God. Among them is "lasciviousness" which is defined by the recognized Greek scholar Thayer as: "indecent bodily movements...unchaste handling of males and females...conduct which excites lust" (p. 79). Surely, that is an accurate description of the modern dance. Also in Galatians 5:19-21 is the word "revellings" which is defined as: "an occasion of merry making or noisy festivity with dancing, masking, etc."

In Exodus 32, dancing was a big part of the people's idolatrous worship. Verses 5 and 6 show their licentious behavior while verse 19 shows their dancing around the golden calf. Here, dancing was associated with idolatry and lewd and indecent behavior. Notice, the people were naked (v. 25). Today, near nakedness seems to be commonly associated with dancing. As if that were not enough, surely any honest inquirer would recognize the problems of a dance which appealed to the flesh in Mark 6. It cost righteous John his head, and the dancer and those whose lustful eyes watched her, their souls.

But, someone says they can go to the prom, not dance and not sin. Jesus said: "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Mat. 5:28). For the young Christian man, that is a real problem. What about the young Christian woman who may place herself in the position of tempting a young man?

Is it wrong to go to the prom? Yes! It is detrimental to one's soul's welfare, his influence and the influence of the church. Wise young people will not go.

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Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

Current Crises

Challenging The Church

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Bellview Lectures

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures will soon be upon us. With the good help of all, we shall have a great lectureship and bring glory to God in so doing. Be ready when called upon.

Thanks

Thanks to Ray and Marge Williams for helping in the printing of the bulletin. They are doing a great job along with Elward Brantley and Harold Cozad. Thanks.

Sick and Shut-in

AT HOME: Alberta Cozad, Rubin Malone; Lavanda Egan; Joyce Simmons; Mabel Simmons; Linda Worley; Pat Brandon; and Lantice Garrett. Leo Myers, VA hospital in Jackson, MS. Inez Prosser: Alpine Adult Care Center. Marilyn Hall's father, Anthony Donoghue of NY, is doing a little better.

Please remember Andrew Connally in your prayers.

Wednesday Schedule

4-8-92 Reading: Charles Garrett
 Invitation: Ray Foshee
4-15-92 Reading: Ray Dodd
 Invitation: Chris Mathews

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

April 9, 1992

Number 15

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
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MINISTER
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BISHOPS
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Jeff Walling's "Unity Formula" *Robin W. Haley*

That there are still those who refuse to believe that brother Jeff Walling is a false teacher and compromiser is hard to believe. Yet there it is. Some folk just do not want to be informed. When informed, some do not want to listen. When they listen, they do not choose to believe, and if they believe various reports about false brethren, they still choose to fellowship, invite and otherwise overlook the sins of such. Why is this, brethren?

Typical of so many today who are striving to undo the Lord's church's unique position of being the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), brother Walling chides, with a good deal of sarcasm, the safe and sound way to promote unity with his faulty version of what he calls unity. In his Tulsa Workshop speech of last year, he attempted to prove his formula as to what Jesus prayed for by perverting the text of John 17, especially verse 20. Immediately he castigates brethren who hold to the "old paths," charging them with "traditionalism." (My, hasn't that word been abused lately!?) He relates his recent cooperative venture with some charismatics and suggests that they have something that we could use (i.e., emotionalism). He pats himself on the back for his "open-mindedness" at having fellowship with those in error, then again chastises the church for trying to teach unity. This he says would be comparable to the Ayatollah of Iran conducting a seminar on mercy and forgiveness, or Beijing holding a conference on democracy. A lovely way to represent the Lord's people? All this, after having just "exhorted" the non-Christians in the crowd to become Christians tonight!

Next, he prays to God, asking to be filled with the Spirit, and asking forgiveness for his sin of pointing out the differences and sins in others. Do you suppose that God will count that a sin? If so, then the apostle Paul should also have prayed for forgiveness for "pointing out" sins in others. Surely the reader understands that doing so is not a sin, but sometimes most necessary!

Then, he wants to stress the word "one" from John 17:20-21. Again, he stresses "we" in this verse. Note whom he thinks Jesus is praying about: "Who is this? Non-Christians who happen to believe in Jesus, who love the Lord. It's bizarre and crazy....we must open our minds to this. This is who Jesus had in mind: not 'church-of-Christers,' not church go-ers, not those who are baptized, but who believe. If we don't accept this, we are closed-minded [with a good deal of sarcasm—RWH]." For some minutes he treats us to a tirade of accepting all who merely believe...

“throw the calf-ropes around” them all. He then issues a challenge: “to become ONE with all our non-Christian brethren.” Again, offering sarcasm for all those who do not accept this, amid a grand applause from the audience.

Now he wants to get 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 30 into the act. Usually, this chapter is used by brethren to justify their lack of “personal work,” claiming that they simply do not have that particular talent; thus, not their function in the body. He applies these verses to all believers from all denominations. He tries to convince us what he believes “one” does not mean: not the same function (with which we mostly agree), but then ridicules the “sameness” of the church. (What does Paul say again in 1 Cor. 1:10)? Walling alleges that cultism like the Boston heresy is the fault of the “mainline” church. (Here he seems to mimic Jerry Jones, who at OCC last year charged the church with this same crime. Brethren, we protest this accusation! It is simply not true!)

Sure enough, he then tells us what Paul’s “one” does mean. He says it is to have the same care for all believers: Baptists, Catholics, the Christian Church! To have concern for all those who agree about Jesus being God’s Son. He enlightens us by explaining that we cannot talk doctrine to our denominational friends, family or neighbors because they don’t see us living it. How does he know so much about how brethren all across the nation live—whether they live righteous lives or hypocritically. Why do speakers of his ilk always say the same things, and include EVERYBODY in their indictments? It is in this context that he calls doctrine “opinions,” and says that we do not have to be the same. Friends, he could not have made it any plainer!

There are two more texts to which he referred—very typical of these younger antinomian preachers within the Lord’s church. You who are familiar with these things surely know where brother Walling goes next. If you say, “Romans 14 or Ephesians 4,” you would be dead right! Because of space considerations, as well as the fact that this portion is so typical, let us merely outline what he says here:

Romans 14 refers to opinions, yet names a number of doctrines and says God okays our divergence; makes an appeal to help “mother” Theresa, the Salvation Army...any who do not agree with everything we teach, but still we can help them do “the work of Jesus.” Thus, he shows that he does not have the least idea of what “the work of Jesus” is. To refuse to do these things is to be sectarian. I wish he would look that word up in a dictionary.

Somehow, in Ephesians 4:13-16, he finds carnivals and concerts as worship and insults those who do not find authority for them as those who ought to go to some “little, dying church where they would fit right in.”

It is at this point that he confesses he had this same attitude 1 2 years ago and then thanks God that he has matured, repented of such a foolish position (that of opposing fleshly innovations). Now he sounds like Rubel Shelly who also repented of past soundness. Walling says that those who hold such attitudes are but “babies.”

This is but a brief review of Jeff Walling’s speech. Yet, it should be obvious that he does not believe in the uniqueness of the church of Christ, seems bent on destroying it, yet even regards with contempt those who do believe that the Lord’s church is special and different. No doubt; however, some big church or college or denomination will invite him back to speak to their teens and young college aged people. Thus, we can just about guess what the future of many congregations will hold. They certainly will not resemble what we find in the scriptures. Verily, many do not even now!

Via “Contending For The Faith”; August, 1991

Editor’s Note: Jeff Walling will be at the Gateway Church of Christ in Pensacola in May for a “Spring Revival.” Buddy Bell, pulpit minister of Gateway said in the April, 1992 Gatepost, “I am so excited about Jeff coming to be with us. There is not a speaker in more demand or one that is more effective in the brotherhood.” STILL, MANY BRETHREN ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT GATEWAY!

Free Bible Correspondence Course

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Bible Course
% Harold Maxey
20 Emory Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506

Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

**“Current Crises
Challenging The Church”**

Bible Bowl

The Third Annual Bellview Bible Bowl will be Saturday, May 9, 1992. Twelve congregations have been invited to be present at 9:30 that morning to begin our study of Ecclesiastes. We need your help with housing, food and several other things.

Bellview Lectures

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures will soon be upon us. With the good help of all, we shall have a great lectureship and bring glory to God in so doing. Be ready when called upon.

Welcome Back

We are glad to have the Hoffay's back with us in Pensacola. Their address is:

5749 Hermosa Circle
32526 Welcome home!

Restored

Marilyn Hall was restored April 1992. We rejoice with Marilyn. She has requested our continuing prayers.

Baptized

Talisha Brantley was baptized by her father, Paul, Sunday, April 19, 1992. We commend Talisha on her decision to become a Christian and welcome her to the family of God at Bellview.

Wednesday Schedule

4-15-92 Reading: Ray Dodd
 Invitation: Chris Mathews
4-22-92 Reading: Kevin Bailey
 Invitation: Tony Liddell

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

April 16, 1992

Number 16

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

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Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
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Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
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SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Lost Opportunities

Jimmy Clark

“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved” (Jer. 8:20). This short, descriptive passage reveals a truth about a tragic time. Jeremiah knew through the Word of the Lord that captivity was a certainty for the southern kingdom. The Babylonian captivity could have been avoided.

Jeremiah spoke previously, “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels *and* in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward” (Jer. 7:23-24). The nation had its opportunities, but refused them. Consider some areas where opportunities can be lost today.

1. *Rearing of Offspring.* Solomon wrote, “Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying” (Pro. 19:18). Consider the significance of the phrase “while there is hope.” This underscores the fact that all children can be trained in their youth, but the time must be used wisely. Solomon also wrote, “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame” (Pro. 29:15). The “impressionable years” must be seized by parents to instill the truth of God and his will within the minds

and hearts of the young. Solomon also wrote, “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them” (Ecc. 12:1). Youthful times must not become lost opportunities for good.

2. *Relieving of Oppression.* When Jeremiah had been placed in the dungeon, an Ethiopian eunuch went to the king and said, “My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for *there is* no more bread in the city” (Jer. 38:9). Later, the Lord said to this same man who rescued Jeremiah, “For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD” (Jer. 39:18). This eunuch was blessed because he feared God and showed his faith in the rescuing of Jeremiah. His actions are a bright spot in a dismal place. Paul wrote, “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10). The church must not become like those of Jeremiah’s day who took no thought for the oppressed.

3. *Response of Obedience.* How often Jeremiah prophesied to the cities of Judah and Jerusalem, but they would

not turn. Rebellion eventually must reap its consequences. John recorded the words of Jesus to the church in Philadelphia, "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7). Once the door is shut, no man can reopen it. The five foolish virgins learned this the hard way (Mat. 25:1-13). May all redeem the time (Eph. 5:16) and encourage others to do the same.

Route 3 Box 425; Athens, AL 35611

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Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

**"Current Crises
Challenging The Church"**

Current Crises Challenging The Church

Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

SATURDAY, MAY 9

7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Must Christians Keep Themselves Pure?	Willie Bradshaw
8:00 PM	Is it Time to Update Our Worship?	Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00 AM	The Eldership: Critical Problem in the Church Today	Bobby Liddell
10:00 AM	Is Abortion Murder?	Terry Claunch
7:00 PM	Singing	
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8:00 PM	Is There a Pattern?	Andrew Connally

MONDAY, MAY 11

9:00 AM	The Threat of Influential False Teachers and Unfaithful Schools	Noah Hackworth
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Is the Faithfulness of Today the Anti-ism of Tomorrow?	Daniel Denham
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Pensacola, FL 32526
(940) 455-7595*

Bible Bowl

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Bellview Lectures

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures will soon be upon us. With the good help of all, we shall have a great lectureship and bring glory to God in so doing. Be ready when called upon.

New Members

We are happy to welcome Karen and Doug Hoffay and Lanet Hoffay Taylor as members of the Bellview congregation. Phone: 453-0076. Don has returned to his job overseas.

New Address

Preston Silcox has a new address. Please make the necessary correction in your Directory.

Preston Silcox
7001 Nathan Road
32526

Restored

We rejoice with brother Chris Mathews who was recently restored (Wednesday, April 8, 1992).

Wednesday Schedule

4-22-92 Reading: Kevin Bailey
Invitation: Tony Liddell
4-29-92 Reading: Jerry Lindesmith
Invitation: Tim Lamb

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

April 23, 1992

Number 17

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
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Assembly of God Lady Preacher Obeys Christ

Bill Brandstatter

In December of last year a 77-year-old woman obeyed the gospel and was baptized into Christ. The age of the woman made her obedience a bit unusual. But what really caused us to rejoice was her background. She has been imbedded in the Church of God and Assembly of God movements since the age of 10. Her daughter sings for Jimmy Swaggart and works in his office in Baton Rouge, LA. The 77-year-old was "ordained" to preach by the Assembly of God churches. She has been involved for many years in the Women's Missionary Council Department of the Assembly of God churches. She has been all around this part of the country helping to establish certain churches and helping others to grow.

Our first contact with this lady came in 1990. When visiting a member of the congregation here, I was asked to perform a wedding ceremony for him and this lady. The man died over a year ago. Since that time my wife and I have taken her under our wings. We have helped her whenever we got a chance. We have brought her to church with us every Sunday. She is often unable because of health reasons to go all the time. I have on other occasions attempted to set up a Bible study with the woman all to no avail. After coming to services

a number of times, and our continued efforts to help her, we noticed a change. She started to break some of the ties with her former religion. When asked where she went to church she would proudly declare, "the church of Christ." The woman is a living example of how "people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." After she knew how much we cared she started asking some questions. On one occasion she stated, "If I am not going to heaven, I want somebody to let me know." The door was opened. My wife and I talked to her about God's plan to save mankind. She stated, "You mean I have to give up everything I've learned since the age of 10?" She got the message, and after some further instruction she was baptized into Christ the next night.

If anyone had an excuse not to be baptized this woman did. She is suffering from Lupus. It is slowing killing her. She has severe heart problems and must frequently take nitroglycerin tablets. To complicate matters, her hands are so crippled she has difficulty dressing herself. Our baptistry has several steps going up to it and four more steps go down into the baptistry. She could have said, "I can't do it." Many would have. She knew how important it was. She knew heaven was more important than health. So, with assistance and patience we got her into the water and buried her into Christ.

Often preachers and Christians in general become weary in well doing. Sometimes we think that if a person is a member of a denominational group there is no hope. This is not always the case. The gospel truly is “the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). Let us learn not to be “weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not” (Gal. 6:9). When we think all is hopeless let us remember the words of Paul to the church at Corinth. To the Christians there he wrote, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

206 N. Hancock; Ironton, MO 63650

**The Seventeenth Annual
Bellview Lectures
May 9-13, 1992**

**“Current Crises Challenging
The Church”**

Current Crises Challenging The Church
Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures
May 9-13, 1992

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Young People's Classes

Every Sunday afternoon, classes meet at 5:30 (middle school age up) and 5:40 (younger) prior to our evening worship. Help your young people prepare for eternity—bring them to class.

It Is Important

It is important whether you and your family attend Bible classes. If you ever want to be all you can be in Christ, you will certainly want to take advantage of the great opportunity afforded you to study in Bible classes.

It is important you arrive before class begins, have your lesson prepared, bring a good attitude, seek to learn all you can and encourage others also.

It is important! See you in Bible class.

Wednesday Schedule

4-29-92	Reading: Jerry Lindesmith Invitation: Tim Lamb
5-6-92	Reading: Bill Crowe Invitation: Mike Peters

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

April 30, 1992

Number 18

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
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The So-called “New Hermeneutic” Supports Digression *Curtis A. Gates*

I. Introduction.

1. How critically needed is the study of the timely subject of digression, of the “new hermeneutic,” and of how this false teaching encourages apostasy from “the faith.”
 1. Indeed, the “New Hermeneutic” does support digression.
 2. “To digress” is to stray from the truth of God, to turn aside from the faith once for all time delivered (Jude 3).
 2. The “New Hermeneutic” is nothing more nor less than the old neo-orthodoxy liberalism which rejects the authority of the Holy Scriptures.
 1. It is infidelity, a lack of loyalty to God and His Word, and constitutes spiritual adultery.
 2. With advocates among “churches of Christ,” it is an outgrowth of some preachers and educators feeding at the troughs of sectarian “scholars,” attending denominational seminaries, and reading liberal works.
 3. They have become so well “educated” that they no longer understand the meaning of the words “one,” “know,” “truth,” “church,” “kingdom,” and “pattern.”
 4. They no longer understand the nature of the Scriptures, nor do they have a high regard for inspiration (as defined by the Bible).
 5. They are saying “Lo here” and “Lo there,” as they try to finalize and systematize their epistemology and to work out their “liturgy.”
 6. They affirm that one cannot know the truth, and yet they blast the “legalists” who still hold to the “old hermeneutic,” those who are keeping the “church,” they say, from being in the mainstream and from meeting the great needs of society and the world. They are able to know, strangely enough, that those teaching the oneness of the church and that one can know the truth, et al., are wrong!
3. What are some averments of the “New Hermeneutic”?

II. The “New Hermeneutic” holds that the canon of Scripture was not complete and recognized until the last of the fourth century A.D.

1. The church councils [Hippo (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D.397)] first recognized the twenty-seven New Testament books as inspired, they say.
 1. This argument tries to do away with the recognition of the Scriptures’ verbal inspiration, and supports the idea of theistic evolutionary origin of the Scriptures.
 2. It tries to do away with the Scripture as pattern, since the early church supposedly did not have or recognize the whole truth.
 3. It tries to do away with “proof texting,” a “thus saith the Lord.”
2. This averment is wrong on many counts.
 1. The whole truth was revealed in the first century and did not evolve (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 1:3; Jude 3; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11).
 2. The spoken Word was as much the truth (John 8:32; 17:17) as was/is the written Word (2 The. 2:15).
 3. The Word was spoken by inspiration by both the apostles and those on whom their hands were laid; and, the Word was confirmed by miracles (Heb. 2:1-3; Eph. 4:11ff; 1 Cor. 13:8ff; et al.).
 4. The Word was a pattern, a law even before it was written; it was not to be added to, taken from, or substituted for (2 The. 2:13; Gal. 1:6-9).
 5. The inspired letters were read in the churches having been copied repeatedly and circulated widely (2 Pet. 3:15-17; Col. 4:16). Furthermore, they were understood (Eph. 3:4; cf. John 7:17).
 6. Not only were they immediately recognized as inspired (just as the Old Testament books when they were J1 written and assembled with the others of the canon), but they were listed in f various “canons” and were translated into other languages in the second and third centuries, hundreds of years before the so-called councils supposedly acknowledged them as canon and thus inspired.
 7. Please note that recognizing New Testament books as canon and thus inspired is just exactly backward; they are in the canon because they are inspired. One position is atheistic modernism, the other reverence for verbal, plenary, inerrant inspiration.
 8. The writings of the early church also belie this contention of the “new hermeneutics.”

III. The “New Hermeneutic” holds that Scripture is not law.

1. The letters were simply written as one would write a “love letter,” they say:
 1. Christ loved us very much, and His Word is more for our encouragement than for legislating to us.
 2. And, it certainly is not to be thought of as objective, absolute truth.
2. The Bible makes it clear that we are under law to the Lord.
 1. He is the Law-giver, having all authority (Mat. 28:18-20), being “Lord of heaven and earth” (Acts 17:24).
 2. Has anyone ever heard of a kingdom without a law?
 - a. Christ is Lord (Acts 2:36).
 - b. “the law is good” (1 Tim. 1:8); Christ is “King of kings” (6:15).
 - c. We are “heirs of the kingdom” and thus under the “law of liberty” (Jam. 2:8; 1:25); indeed, we “shall be judged by the law of liberty” (2:12).
 - d. “we walk after his commandments” (2 John 6), for “sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).
 3. Being saved by grace has never ruled out being under God’s law.
 - a. Noah was saved by grace through faith when he obeyed God’s commands (Gen. 6:8, 14, 22)—Note the grace (8), law (14), works (22), and faith (Heb. 11:7).
 - b. Abraham was saved by grace (Jam. 2:23) through faith (Heb. 11:8) when he worked [obeyed] (11:8; Jam. 2:21-22) God’s law [command].
 - c. Abraham’s obedience to God’s command was “of faith, that it may be according to grace [that God’s grace might flow to him]”; we are saved the same way (Rom. 4:16).
 4. Observe some other passages which affirm that we are under the law.
 - a. “where there is no law, there is no transgression” (Rom. 4:15).

- b. "So then I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God" (Rom. 7:25).
- c. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).
- d. We are "under law to Christ" (1 Cor. 9:22).
- e. "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).
- f. In prophecy concerning the kingdom, Isaiah affirmed, "for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3); Jeremiah affirmed, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write it" (Jer. 31:33; cf. Heb. 8:10).
- g. "I will put my laws on their heart" (Heb. 10:16).
- h. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4); which law???

Via "Yokefellow"; 4400 Knight Arnold Road; Memphis, TN 38118

**"Current Crises
Challenging
The Church"**
1992 Bellview Lectures
May 9-13, 1992

Bible Bowl

The Third Annual Bellview Bible Bowl will be Saturday, May 9, 1992. Remember, we can use your help in preparing food (see Judy Peters) and providing lodging for our out of town guests.

Bellview Lectures

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures will be May 9-13, 1992. How can we help make them the best possible?

1. Attend every lecture.
2. Encourage others to come.
3. Help with last minute preparations.
4. Be ready to serve.
5. Don't forget to pray.
6. Greet every visitor warmly.
7. Listen in view of eternity.

Sympathy

We extend our deepest sympathy to sister Floy Dell Lindesmith whose brother Leo Myers passed away Tuesday, April 14, 1992. following a lengthy illness. Graveside services were conducted the following Saturday in Florence, MS.

Sister Lindesmith's care for her brother is certainly commendable. She has donated his new wheelchair to the church to be used as needed.

Wednesday Schedule

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 5-6-92 | Reading: Bill Crowe
Invitation: Mike Peters |
| 5-20-92 | Reading: Ray Dodd
Invitation: Bill Gallaher |

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

May 7, 1992

Number 19

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

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Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
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Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
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Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Steps in the Right Direction

W. A. Holley

“My son, attend to my words; Incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; Keep them in the midst of thy heart. For they are life unto those that find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a wayward mouth, And perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on, And let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Make level the path of thy feet, And let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: Remove thy foot from evil” (Pro. 4:20-27—ASV).

Solomon was very interested in the general welfare of his son. Insofar as we know Solomon had but one son, Rehoboam, who seemed to have lacked the gift of common sense (1 Kin. 14:21-ff; 2 Chr. 10:1-11).

Solomon talked a good religion but he did not practice it (Neh. 13:23:26; 1 Kin. 11:1-13). It is well for parents to offer sound advice, but is far better for them to put their advice in action. Listen to Paul, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12—ASV). Fathers and mothers, one good example is worth a thousand arguments.

The power of a good example can be demonstrated: One man who lived six miles from the house of worship, complained to the preacher of the distance he had to go to attend worship. “Never mind,” said the preacher, “remember every Lord’s day you have the privilege of preaching a sermon six miles long. You preach the gospel to all the people you pass.”

Moreover, one can be wrong even when he is right. How could such be? A bad attitude or a mean spirit makes one wrong, even if he should be speaking the truth. Truth spoken in anger does not excuse, does not forgive the sins of anger (Eph. 4:15, 25-32).

It is right to pray, but when one prays to be heard of men it becomes sinful; it is right to give alms, but when one gives to be seen of men, such almsgiving is a great sin before God (Mat. 6:1-8).

Just as there are wrong ways of doing things, there are also right ways. Notice some right steps in the right direction:

1. A step in the right direction is the abandonment of human creeds, the doctrines and commandments of men, the human manuals and confessions of faiths (Mark 7:6-13; Mat. 15:1-9). To what book shall we turn? Let all honest and sincere souls embrace the Holy Bible unreservedly. The Bible is God’s rule or standard of judgment

(Gal. 6:16; Phi. 3:15-16). "The scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), it will stand when the world is on fire (Mat. 24:35), and by it we shall be judged at the last day (John 12:48). Believe it, obey its commands, live faithfully the Christian life, and heaven will be your eternal home (Heb. 11:6; Luke 13:3,5; Mat. 10:32-33; Mark 16:1 5-1 6; Acts 2:36-38; Rev. 2:10). No man has ever made a mistake by following the Bible!!

2. Another step in the right direction is seeking to share the gospel of Christ with others (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-47). If you want the world changed, the only power that can change it is the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16-17). We can fight all the "Persian Gulf Wars" we want to, but as long as people remain sinners we have not really accomplished anything. You see, man needs to become a new man (John 3:3-5). He needs to "put away,...the old man,...and put on the new man" (Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9). The sinner can become "a new creature" in Christ when he hears the word of God (2 Tim. 4:1-3), repents of his sins (2 Pet. 3:9), confesses Jesus' worthy name before men (Acts 8:37), and is baptized in water for the remission of sins (Acts 10:47-48; Acts 2:36-38; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; 2 Cor. 5:17).

3. Another step in the right direction is accepting duty and responsibility. We have talents for which we are responsible (Mat. 25:14-30), and buried talents can result in being cast into hell-fire. The man who buried his talent was called a "wicked and slothful servant," even though he was not an adulterer or a murderer, or the like. Dear Reader, do you not feel your responsibility to labor for the Lord? Hear Jesus, "Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16).

What is responsibility? Ability plus opportunity equals responsibility. What about your responsibility for the success of your own life? For the family? For the church? For good moral examples? Aids, drunkenness, divorce, divisions, drug abuse, child and adult abuse are all the result of a breakdown in personal responsibility (Mat. 19:3-9; Mark 10:11-12; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8). Just think how much our world could be improved if each person accepted his own responsibility!! According to Christ we are not due any special praise for doing the right things, for "We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10). Let us solve the ethical problems of our lives, if we wish to travel in the right direction (2 Cor. 8:21; 1 Pet. 4:15-16).

4. Steps in the right direction involve the Lord's day assembly (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:24-26; Rev. 1:10). There are many so-called Christians who never attend the Lord's services. One person when asked if he were a member of the church, said, "Yes, but I'm not working at it very much." Think of the backsliders known to you. It is a great sin to forsake the Lord's day assembly!! You will be doing your family, your friends and neighbors, and yourself a great service, if you will but attend the Lord's day services.

These words are written for those honest and sincere souls who truly want to improve their lives.

Current Crises Challenging The Church

Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures

May 9-13, 1992

SATURDAY, MAY 9

7:00 PM Singing

7:15 PM Must Christians Keep Themselves Pure?

Willie Bradshaw

8:00 PM Is it Time to Update Our Worship?

Ronnie Hayes

SUNDAY, MAY 10

9:00 AM The Eldership: Critical Problem in the Church Today

Bobby Liddell

10:00 AM Is Abortion Murder?

Terry Claunch

7:00 PM Singing

7:15 PM Do We Need a New Hermeneutics?

Eddie Whitten

8:00 PM Is There a Pattern?

Andrew Connally

MONDAY, MAY 11

9:00 AM The Threat of Influential False Teachers and Unfaithful Schools

Noah Hackworth

9:45 AM Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church

Roy Deaver

10:30 AM	Is the Faithfulness of Today the Anti-ism of Tomorrow?	Daniel Denham
11:15 AM	What Is Included in the Command to Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Are We Still People Who Know the Bible?	Garry Barnes
2:15 PM	Is the Church of Christ a Cult?	Steve Waller
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	How Does the Holy Spirit Guide Man?	Jerry Martin
8:00 PM	What Is the Role of Women in the Church?	Bob Duncan
TUESDAY, MAY 12		
9:00 AM	Is the Church Lacking in Spirituality?	Guss Eoff
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Modern Versions—Translations or Perversions?	Robert R. Taylor, Jr.
11:15 AM	What Is Excluded By Command to Sing?	Winfred Clark
1:30 PM	Is It Wrong to Judge?	Larry Middlebrooks
2:15 PM	Problems in the Pulpit	B. C. Carr
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Is the church of Christ the True Restored Church or Just One Part of the Restoration Fellowship?	Harrell Davidson
8:00 PM	Is Salvation By Grace Alone?	Garland Elkins
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13		
9:00 AM	Is the Bible the Inspired Word of God?	Jerri Manasco
9:45 AM	Is Matthew 19:9 Universal Legislation Covering All Marriages Both in and out of the Church	Roy Deaver
10:30 AM	Have We Lost the Desire to Be Servants?	Ira Y. Rice, Jr.
11:15 AM	Strange and Uncertain Sounds From Brethren	Allen Webster
1:30 PM	Creation or Evolution?	Garry Brantley
2:15 PM	Do we Care that Millions Have Not Heard of Christ?	Ronnie Hayes
7:00 PM	Singing	
7:15 PM	Have we Sold Our homes to Satan?	Buster Dobbs
8:00 PM	Does God's Love Prohibit Punishment?	Joe Gilmore

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4850 Saufley Road
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Bible Bowl

The Third Annual Bellview Bible Bowl will begin Saturday, May 9 at 9:30 A.M. A number of young people from Alabama and Florida will be here. We will begin with singing, prayer, Bible reading and a brief message. The competition is at 1 0:00 and lunch will follow in the Zone Meeting Room. Be ready to help in any way you can. Remember, your attendance will be a great boost to the Bible Bowl activities.

Wednesday Schedule

5-20-92	Reading: Ray Dodd Invitation: Bill Gallaher
5-27-92	Reading: Nathan Liddell Invitation: Jerry Fillingim

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

May 14, 1992

Number 20

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Boiled or Roasted Crickets

Alton Hayes

As I left Talladega a couple of days ago and headed for Brookwood Hospital I noticed a sign. As I first looked at this flashing sign outside the country grocery I read:

BOILED OR ROASTED CRICKETS

Although I state of myself that I will eat anything this did not seem to be appetizing to me. Yet, when I drove just a little further down the highway the front of the car which had previously been blocking my sight of a portion of the sign no longer blocked the sign and it read:

BOILED OR ROASTED PEANUTS; CRICKETS FOR SALE

While I laughed at myself for my poor reading of the sign I thought, "Isn't this the way many approach their reading and study of the Bible?"

As I first saw the sign I had no thought concerning the whole message contained on this sign. I really didn't see the overall picture of this sign. Men, women, boys, and girls today approach the reading and study of their Bible with the same lack of insight into the whole picture. We must understand the Bible is God's plan for saving man. Redemption is the key to understanding. From God stating the seed of woman would bruise the head of Satan (Gen. 3:15) to God's proclamation of victory through the blood of the Lamb (Revelation),

the whole of the Bible addresses God's desire for man to be saved. However, many today will find one passage, and believing it teaches what they already believe and disregarding the whole of the Scriptures, they profess some doctrine of man. For example, there are those who teach man is saved by "faith only" according to the teaching of John 3:16. To do this is to disregard the fact of the teaching of the new birth in chapter 3 of John. Also, when men do this they disregard all that Inspiration teaches concerning man's salvation. The Bible is plain to teach there is more to being saved than "just believe."

Another lesson that comes to mind from my faulty reading of the sign is the speed and carelessness with which I read. It was only seconds later when I carefully read the whole of the sign that I knew this store did not have the dietary delight of crickets. How many in the world today read the Bible with the careless spirit by which I read the sign? We are instructed to feed upon God's Word (Psa. 119:103; Mat. 5:6; Heb. 5:12-14). Not many of us hurry through a meal so we can say we ate this day; but, this attitude is manifest when it comes to eating from Holy Writ. Perhaps we need more "Daily Bible Students" rather than "Daily Bible Readers" (see 2 Tim. 2:15). A quick snack is not enough; we must feed on the truths of God's Word. This requires careful and deliberate study on our parts.

One trouble with my reading of the store-front sign was the car which blocked it. I just could not see through the front of that car. How many in the “religious world” have their spiritual eyesight blocked? Jesus quoted Isaiah and said of physical Israel they were spiritually blind (Mat. 13:14). They had their eyes darkened by the prejudice of their father’s religion and would not accept the Christ. Multitudes today are blinded by parent’s religion and when asked why they will not follow the Bible their only response is, “I can’t go against my mother and dad!” Others allow “their preacher” or friends to obscure their sight of the Bible. Friends, nothing has the right to stand in our way of the truth. Only God’s inspired Word can save (Rom. 1:16).

I was really relieved when I saw “boiled or roasted” crickets were not on sale at the store, but how many today are relieved when their “doctrines” and “beliefs” are shown not to be in the Bible. On the one hand by faulty reading we have a diet of crickets. On the other hand by faulty reading we have one’s soul being lost. Which is more important to you? Your diet? Or your destiny? Careful reading and study of the Bible will determine our destiny!

While Her Father Slept

There is a story that a father once took his little girl out into a green meadow. It was a hot day so he sat in the shade of a beautiful tree to rest. The little girl ran about gathering flowers and brought them to her father, saying, “Pretty! Pretty!” Soon the father fell asleep, and the child unattended wandered away. When he awoke, his first thought was, “Where is my Child?” He shouted at the top of his voice, but all he heard was his voice ringing and echoing back. Running to a nearby hill, he frantically looked around, but she was not to be seen. Then he looked over a nearby cliff, and there upon the rocks and bushes below he saw the mangled body of his beloved little girl. Ever after he accused himself of being the killer of his little child, because while he was asleep, the child wandered over the precipice.

Oh, how many fathers and mothers are now sleeping while their children wander over cliffs and are making shipwreck of their lives, falling into overt sin and unbelief?! Now is the time to train children in Christian principles, the way they should go. Next year may be (and will be) too late. What a tragic day it will be when one awakens from his spiritual indifference to find that while he was sleeping, his child wandered far away!

Via “Ridgedale Reminder”

I Married a Christian

I married a Christian because a godly mate is a blessing. The genuine spirituality of a companion is worth far more than all the treasures on earth. Truth, mercy and loving-kindness are my mate’s garments for every day.

I married a Christian because of the hours of trial in this life. A Christian companion is longsuffering towards human weaknesses knowing victory comes from a bond of genuine Christian love. A Christian mate with a wise and understanding heart is a strength in moments of discouragement and despair. When the hour is dark and all seems hopeless, my mate shows me the silver lining in the cloud of trouble.

I married a Christian because I know my love will be returned a hundred fold. I know I have that which I give and my mate’s love, too. Our aims, our hopes and our aspirations are one. This brings true happiness to our companionship.

I married a Christian because I wanted a companion with a Christ-like mind and attitude to counsel the family. Our children are blessed by that mate of mine who will listen to their problems of life with a loving heart and lead them in Christ’s way.

I married a Christian because I wanted a mate whose love even looks beyond our own family to the sickness and needs of others. A Christian mate seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and sets the proper example before our children and others.

I married a Christian because I can love, trust, honor and cherish such a one until death parts us.

I married a Christian because I want more than anything to go to heaven when this life is over, and I am confident my mate does too. We can help each other as we journey the road of life that we both live in heaven after awhile.

Via “The Informer”; Munford, AL

Bible Bowl Update

Because of the Lectures, this bulletin was printed early; thus, we were unable to announce the winner of the Bible Bowl. We shall do that next week, but all who participated were winners. Thanks young people for your example in Bible study and in good behavior.

Thanks to all who helped in every way especially to those who opened their homes to out of town guests and to those who provided the delicious food.

Bellview Lectures

Likewise, we shall give a report on the Bellview Lectures next week. Thanks to all who helped! It is truly a congregation wide effort.

So many put so much time, effort and money into making our Lectures successful. Thanks also to our speakers for the fine lessons presented.

Annual Bellview Lectureship Books

- 1992 *Current Crises Challenging the Church*
- 1991 *The Church Triumphant*
- 1990 *What Does God Authorize in Worship?*
- 1989 *In Hope of Eternal Life*
- 1988 *Are We Moving Away from the Cross of Christ?*

Order from Bellview

Wednesday Schedule

- 5-20-92 Reading: Ray Dodd
Invitation: Bill Gallaher
- 5-27-92 Reading: Nathan Liddell
Invitation: Jerry Fillingim

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

May 21, 1992

Number 21

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WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

1992 Bellview Lectures

Bobby Liddell

The Seventeenth Annual Bellview Lectures had as its theme, "Current Crises Challenging The Church." Men of faith and recognized ability presented lessons designed to encourage us all to stand fast in the faith, uphold the truth and oppose error. From the first lecture on Saturday evening until the last on Wednesday, not one uncertain sound was heard. Every lesson was well prepared, lovingly presented and gratefully received by an enthusiastic assembly.

While I feel blessed indeed to direct the Bellview Lectures, truly, this annual effort involves the work of every member of the Bellview congregation. The Bellview elders are especially to be commended for their steadfast leadership in the path of right. Through the preaching of the Gospel in each lecture and the books and tapes prepared, we trust much good shall continue to be accomplished throughout years to come.

Those wishing to obtain books or tapes may order them from the Bellview Church of Christ. A complete set of audio tapes costs \$30.00. A complete set of video tapes costs \$44.00. Lectureship books (1988-1992) sell for \$10.00 plus \$1.25 shipping.

We hope you shall plan now to attend the Eighteenth Annual Bellview Lectures which are scheduled for May 8-12, 1993, at the building of the Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL.

The Way Back Is Longer!

Jerri Manasco

We know that all sin and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Furthermore we know that even children of God sin and must be on guard against departing from God (1 John 1:8-10; Heb. 2:1-3; 2 Pet. 1:5-11; Heb. 6:1-6; etc.). We also know that the sinner can be reconciled to God and have his or her sins pardoned by the marvelous grace of God (2 Cor. 5:14-21). We know that when a child of God has sinned and been "out of service" for some time it is often harder to return to God than it was to leave Him! The way back is often longer, but only because we make it so. Rationally speaking, the Prodigal Son of Luke 15 must have found the way home to be the longest road he ever traveled. For us the same can also be true—but it is a shame that it has to be! Why is it that coming back is often longer than when we left?

First, we have the attitude of the elder brother (Luke 15:25-30) to overcome. Have we ever taken time to consider that one reason some will not “come home” and be restored is because they know that they will be met by the self-righteousness of the “faithful” (??) members? Many who have been backsliders know that they will have to experience the criticism of those who have no sense of what it was like to have lived for the devil again. Those who would like to return have the fear that the “great ones” in the congregation will have something to say about their waywardness. This makes it hard to come home!

Second, we have to overcome the attitude of so many brethren who want to take the erring back on probation! “Yes, I want him to come back—but I’m going to watch him mighty close before I will fully accept him.” You may not hear this said in exactly these words, but isn’t this exactly what some of us mean? Shamefully yes! Paul’s remedy for this is simply: “Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God” (Rom. 15:7).

Third, the returning one must overcome his or her own sense of personal devaluation. Yes, sin is degrading. It is a shame to have left the Lord’s service in the first place. But GOD PARDONS THE SINNER WHO REPENTS AND CONFESSES HIS SIN! The erring one needs to have faith in God’s faithfulness to forgive sin and cleanse from unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). The way back is long in many cases because the one who has been unfaithful simply has a difficult time readjusting to the newly found pardon of sin! Many stay out because they think God won’t forgive them. Overcome that doubt and come home. God loves you, my brother and my sister.

P.O. Box 166; Boaz, AL 35957

Congratulations 1992 Graduates

Daniel Barker—Pine Forest High (To attend Pensacola Junior College).

Adam Beck—Pine Forest High (To attend USA, Mobile).

Chris Calle—Pine Forest High (Going into the U.S. Navy).

Michael Peters—Pine Forest High (To attend Pensacola Uunior College).

Tanya Brantley—AA Pensacola Junior College.

Vaydra Herrington—AA Pensacola Junior College.

Alabama School of Bible Emphasis Lectures

September 20-23, 1992 at the Hobbs Street Church of Christ building, Athens, Alabama. The theme is: “Challenges Of The Twenty-first Century.”

Thanks!

Thanks to all who helped with the Bible Bowl. Thanks to Paul Brantley for providing the plaques for the Bible Bowl winners. Thanks to Jerry Caine for the hours he put in in preparing our testing equipment. Thanks to all who opened their homes to our guests. Thanks to all the ladies for the delicious food. And, thanks to all who participated.

Thanks to all who did so much to make our Lectures a success. So many were involved in so many ways, we would have to name almost the entire congregation to cover all that was done. Many took time off from work to help! Thanks for being the folks you are! You make working with you so pleasant, uplifting and hope building.

Baptisms in Latvia

Five have recently been baptized in Riga, capital of Latvia. Ray Peters, who has been in Riga for the last three months is scheduled to return to the Pensacola Airport Saturday evening, May 23, at 8:00 P.M. on Continental. Why not plan to welcome him home.

Pantry

Our food pantry is getting low. Let us all remember to bring some canned goods (especially meats) when we come to services. You may, in lieu of canned goods, contribute to the pantry fund. See Judy for details.

New Address

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
Block 465 #12-536
Jurong West Street 41
Singapore 2264

Lectureship Books

A good number of the lectureship books have been distributed. We hope all of the members at Bellview have one. If not, you certainly need to get one. The publishing of a lectureship book is a work designed to make widely available the outstanding lessons of the Annual Bellview Lectures. There is no profit made on the sale of these books. As a matter of fact, the cost of the books has been several thousands of dollars more than the sales have returned. In addition, we send out several hundreds of dollars worth of free books to preacher training students and others each year.

Why not make good use of the excellent material contained in the lectureship books. Send copies to your family, friends and neighbors. Anyone who loves the truth would welcome a copy. Those who are not Christians will find encouragement and instruction therein. Preachers, students, teachers, elders and deacons will be especially benefitted by the receipt of a copy or a complete set from 1988-1992.

Sick and Shut-in

Alberta Cozad—surgery, 5-13-92, recuperating at home and doing well. Renae Bragg—Gall bladder surgery recently. Bill Bragg (Lee's father)—Prostate surgery 5-4-92. Melba Lamb (Tim's mother)—Gall bladder surgery, 5-11-92. At home—Mabel Simmons and Rubin Malone. Alpine Adult Care Center—Inez Prosser.

Indian Creek Youth Camp

June 21-26: TEEN WEEK—Jerry Martin.

July 5-10: Ronnie Hayes directing.

Be sure and send in your registration as soon as possible to insure your place at camp.

Restored

Tim Lamb was restored on May 3 and Jim Roddy on May 6. Pray for them.

Birth Announcement

Harold and Elaine Maxey announce the birth of their fifth grandchild. Joseph Robert weighed 11 lbs. 11 oz. and was 22" at birth. Darrell and Janet of Tampa, FL are the happy parents.

Sympathy

We express our deepest sympathy to the family of Shirley Phillips who passed away 5-10-92. Funeral arrangements were 5-12-92 with Faith Chapel conducting.

Wednesday Schedule

5-27-92 Reading: Nathan Liddell
 Invitation: Jerry Fillingim
6-3-92 Reading: Preston Silcox
 Invitation: Harold Maxey

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

May 28, 1992

Number 22

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Is the Lord's Church a Denomination?

Cliff Lyons

In reading the New testament one learns that our Lord promised during His personal ministry, "I will build my church" (Mat. 16:18). Notice that Jesus was the one who would build it; it would be His church. Also, at the time Jesus made that above statement, the church was not yet in existence. However, the kingdom (church) was "at hand" (Mat. 4:17). The kingdom about which Isaiah, Daniel and others had prophesied would soon be built. In fact, one learns from reading the second chapter of Acts that about 3,000 added to the church on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ. The Lord's church had its beginning in Jerusalem in A.D. 33. The kingdom came with power (Mark 9:1; Luke 24:47-49; Acts 2).

It should be obvious as one reads about the church in the New Testament that he is not reading about a denomination. In the first century, we well as now, if it is the Lord's church, it is not a denomination. If the church digresses to the point that it becomes a mere denomination, it is not the Lord's church, but an apostate church. Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, warned of apostasy (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Tim. 4:1-3). This apostasy resulted in the Catholic church. Later, denominationalism evolved and began to flourish in

the 16th century.

Yes, many people, and sadly even some brethren, consider the church of Christ a mere denomination. But just because people look upon us as another denomination does not make it true. However, there is room for concern. It is important that we understand the difference between the New Testament church and denominationalism and that we stand ready to explain that difference (1 Pet. 3:15). But why would anyone get the idea that the Lord's church is a denomination? Part of the

reason lies in the fact that in fur modern world the term "denomination" has become synonymous, or almost so, with the word "church." This means that we have a problem with which we must cope as we endeavor to help people understand New Testament Christianity. We can, if properly prepared to teach the truth, use this misunderstanding to great advantage in teaching a lost world. With the Bible as the standard of authority, what the Bible teaches about the Lord's church stands; denominational doctrines fall. Counterfeit churches (denominations) have counterfeit teachings that will not stand the test of careful comparison with the true standard of authority, God's Word. We must awaken to the danger of these counterfeit teachings and clearly expose them. No matter how cleverly their

doctrines may be taught, they will not stand the test of truth, nor save the souls of men. People, including brethren, need to understand the great contrast between denominational doctrines and what the Bible teaches. Please consider the following itemized list of fundamental Bible subjects and the striking contrast between what the Bible teaches and denominational teaching. This list has been adapted from an unknown source.

New Testament Church

Christ founder of church (Mat. 16:18)
One body, one faith, one baptism (Eph. 4:4-6).
Christ has ALL authority (Mat. 28:18)
Wear name Christian (1 Pet. 4:16)
Scriptural names for church (Acts 20:28; Rom. 16:16)
Preach only one gospel (Gal. 1:8,9)
Bible remains the same (Mat. 24:35).
Lord adds saved to His church (Acts 2:47)

Sound doctrine vital to salvation (2 Tim. 4:16).

All Christians are priests (1 Pet. 2:9)
God no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34)
Plurality of elders (pastors) over each congregation
(Acts 20:17)
“Faith Without works is dead” (Jam. 2:14-26).
“Ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. 5:4).
Lord’s Supper each Lord’s Day (Acts 2:42; 20:7)

Baptize by immersion only (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12)
Baptized “into Christ” (His spiritual body, the church) (Gal 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13).
Baptism for penitent believers (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38)
Baptism a condition of salvation (Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21)
Understand the will of the Lord (Eph. 5:17)
Singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16)

vs Denominationalism

vs Human founders of denominations.
vs Many bodies, faiths, baptisms.
vs Authority vested in creeds and councils.
vs Wear names that glorify man, systems, doctrines.
vs Denominational designations.
vs Preach different gospels.
vs Rewrite and revise creeds.
vs “Join” various denominations. “One church is as good as another.”
vs Doctrine unimportant if one is “honest and sincere.”
vs “Clergy and laity.”
vs “The Reverend”
vs One “Pastor” over “Church.”

vs “Faith only” saves.
vs Cannot fall from grace.
vs According to custom or church preference; quarterly, etc.
vs “Baptism” by sprinkling, pouring.
vs Accepted by vote of congregation, probation, confirmation, etc.
vs Baptism of infants.

vs “Faith only” saves or baptism not essential for salvation.
vs Can’t understand alike.
vs Mechanical instruments of music.

Via Olathe, KS

Indian Creek Youth Camp

June 21-26: TEEN WEEK—Jerry Martin.

July 5-10: Ronnie Hayes directing.

Be sure and send in your registration as soon as possible to insure your place at camp.

If you need additional information or are interested in transportation to and from camp, see Bobby.

Alabama School of Bible Emphasis Lectures

The Alabama School of Bible Emphasis will have their first lectureship on September 20-23, 1992 at the Hobbs Street Church of Christ building, Athens, Alabama. The theme is: “Challenges Of The Twenty-first Century.” Brother Winfred Clark directs ASBE and the Bellview church is glad to have a part in that good Work by supporting it.

Pantry

Our food pantry is getting low. Let us all remember to bring some canned goods (especially meats) when we come to services. You may, in lieu of canned goods, contribute to the pantry fund. See Judy for details.

We really appreciate the time and effort that goes into the care and replenishing of the pantry. Brother and sister Crowe are steadfast in their work and do a good job at it. Thanks!

Wednesday Schedule

6-3-92 Reading: Preston Silcox
 Invitation: Harold Maxey
6-10-92 Reading: Chad Lightner
 Invitation: Kevin Bailey

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

June 4, 1992

Number 23

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

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Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
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Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

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9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Some Questions For Wives and Husbands

William Lyon Phelps once said, "The highest happiness on earth is in marriage. Every man who is happily married is a successful man even if he has failed in everything else. And every man whose marriage is a failure is not a successful man even if he has succeeded in everything else."

Are you the kind of husband or wife that God would have you to be? Remember, your happiness, to a great extent, depends upon your role as a husband or wife. Please consider carefully the following questions for wives and husbands. What kind of a grade would your husband or wife give you?

Some Questions for Wives to Consider

1. Do you make an honest effort to live within the income of you husband?
2. Do you keep the house neat, attractive and clean?
3. Do you spend at least half of your recreational hours with him?
4. Are you in "subjection" to your husband? (Eph. 5:22).
5. Do you just wait until he comes home to unload all of today's problems on him?
6. Do you dress with an eye to pleasing him (husband)?
7. Ladies, have you learned to say "I'm sorry," or are you always right?
8. Do you shoulder your part of the discipline of the children?
9. Do you attend services of the church regularly? Take an interest? Pray? Sing?
10. Are you guilty of nagging? (Pro. 21:9)
11. Do you refrain from criticizing in public?
12. Do you take an interest in his work?
13. Do you keep the shrine of your heart for him?

Some Questions for Husbands to Consider

1. Do you take an interest in her work? What she does?
2. Do you give her some money that she can spend as she pleases?
3. Are you on guard to compliment your wife? Her work? House? Meals? Appearance?
4. Do you refrain from "criticizing" her in public?
5. Do you take seriously your responsibility to head the household? (with right attitude—love, not tyrannical

attitude).

6. Do you shoulder your responsibility in the spiritual training of the family?
7. Do you take an interest in your wife's spiritual growth?
8. Do you give sufficient time to your wife and children?
9. Do you treat your wife with the same courtesies you treat your best friend?
10. Do you keep the shrine of your heart intact for her?
11. Do you attend the services of the church regularly?

Husbands and Wives Instead of Working Against One Another must Work with One Another

1. Agree in regard to the discipline of children.
2. Do your best to walk in the steps of Jesus and set the right example for your mate and your children.
3. Realize that you will not be the "perfect" husband or wife, but you can be faithful before God and one another.
4. Together, take time and put forth the thought and effort to have a Christian home.

Via "Eastside Edifier"; Muskogee, OK

Godliness Pays

Dub McClish

The Bible constantly exhorts its readers to godly living. The worldly-minded ridicule godliness, believing it only means hardship and deprivation. The Bible says it pays: "godliness is profitable unto all things,...is great gain" (1 Tim. 4:8; 6:6). Millions who have tried it through the centuries know it is so. How does it pay?

MATERIALLY. It is hypocrisy to appear to be godly merely for hope of material profit (John 6:26-27). However, when one makes God's kingdom and God's way the most important thing in his life, all of the things of life that one needs are promised him from God (Mat. 6:33). The very principles of godliness taught in Scripture contribute to prosperity. They include honesty and integrity (Rom. 12:17), industry (1 The. 4:11), good manners and appropriate behavior (1 Cor. 13:5), economy and thrift (John 6:12-13).

PHYSICALLY. A life that follows God's Word even benefits us physically (2 Pet. 1:3). It urges us to purity of life and body and warns us not to do things destructive to the body (1 Cor. 3:17; 2 Cor. 7:1). It counsels us to replace worry with cheerful optimism (Mat. 6:25; Phi. 4:4). All practices that are physically harmful (e.g. drunkenness, tobacco addiction, misuse of other drugs, sexual sins, envy, malice, anxiety, gluttony, etc.), are frequently condemned, either in name or in principle, in God's Word.

SOCIALLY. Jesus grew "in favor with men" (Luke 2:52) and none has ever been as godly as He. Godly persons have the traits that even the ungodly admire. These include strong convictions fearlessly voiced, self-control, unwavering honesty, compassion, meekness, fairness, and love, the most essential of all social graces.

SPIRITUALLY. Here godliness brings its greatest rewards. When one does what God teaches him to do to begin living a godly life, his sins are forgiven (Acts 2:38). This makes him a "new creation in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17). He is enabled to approach God's throne boldly (Heb. 4:16) and he attains a peace that the ungodly cannot comprehend (Phi. 4:7). The wonderful blessing of fellowship with God's people is his (Heb. 13:1). All of these are rewards of godliness while we live here, but the greatest is that which is to come-eternal life with God and Christ and all of God's faithful children of all ages (Rom. 2:7; 6:23; 1 John 2:17). We dare not grow weary in godliness and fall by the wayside, for we shall reap the eternal reward only if we faint not (Gal. 6:9). Yes, godliness pays, both for now and forever (Mark 10:29-30)!

312 Pearl Street; Denton, TX 76201

The Reasoning of an Infidel

Bob Duncan

In the foreword of his *Age of Reason*, published in 1794, the noted infidel Thomas Paine said: "The most formidable weapon against errors of every kind is reason. I have never used any other, and I trust I never shall."

It is unfortunate that Paine is best known for his atheistic publications, though he claims to believe in one God and to hope for happiness beyond this life (see page 1 of *Age of Reason*). Otherwise, he would be remembered as

a great American statesman. In January of 1776, he published a pamphlet called "Common Sense." The sentiment expressed in that publication swept the nation, and six months later the colonies declared their independence. During the course of the Revolutionary War, Paine served under Washington, and when things began to go against the colonies, the soldiers were very discouraged. Paine wrote another pamphlet, which began with the words: "These are the times that try men's souls." These words, read around the soldiers' campfires, became a battle cry for the soldiers of the Revolution, and the rest is history.

But how reasonable was Paine when he began to oppose the God of the Bible? A sample of his reasoning is found on page 116 of his *Age of Reason*. Here, in trying to show that the Bible contains errors, and is not, therefore, from God, Paine says: "The 137th Psalm could not have been written till more than 400 years after the time of David, because it was written in commemoration of...the captivity of the Jews in Babylon." Now, on this point Paine's reasoning is very good. But his reasoning is very faulty in that he overlooks the fact that the Bible does not say that the 137th Psalm was written by David. While some may refer to the Psalms as "The Psalms of David," and some even erroneously attributed this particular psalm to David, the Bible nowhere says that David is its author. Furthermore, I know of no serious student of the Bible who would say it was written by David. But this fact does not begin to argue or prove that it is not inspired of God. Is this the kind of reason Paine was talking about as being "the most formidable weapon against errors"?

Via "The Informer"; Munford, AL

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Men's Training Class and Young Ladies' Class

Our young people's class will soon split into a class for training men and a young ladies' class. Both will continue to meet at 5:30 P.M. Sunday's. Bobby Liddell will teach the training class and Jane Herrington the young ladies' class.

New Classes

Be present for the first class of the new quarter and for each one thereafter.

Sick and Shut-in

Alberta Cozad, Rubin Malone, Mabel Simmons, Lavanda Egan, Melba Lamb, Jim Roddy, Inez Prosser (Alpine Adult Care), Lucille Staples and Mary Muldoon.

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July 20-24

7:00-8:30 P.M.

Classes For All Ages!

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Invitation: Kevin Bailey

6-17-92 Reading: Jerry Caine

Invitation: Preston Silcox

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“But the Truth And Sell it Not” Or “Numbers at Any Cost”

Ronnie Hayes

“Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding” (Pro. 23:23). It is with much prayer that I write this article. It is not my intention to become a “watch dog” or to become “contentious,” but I do feel compelled to speak up.

THE DECREE—BUY THE TRUTH. Many in days gone by have bought the truth, but for some reason deem it necessary to give it away. Why? It is hard to say! Paul said to the church at Galatia, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth” (Gal. 3:1). Maybe these churches are bewitched with power, position or simply compromise.

THE DANGER—SELLING THE TRUTH. Because of the so called “unity movement” and even now the “new hermeneutics,” some who were once faithful, have sold the truth! It has become apparent that the Homewood Church of Christ and Wayne Kilpatrick fall into this category. Brother Kilpatrick was at the first of these so called “unity movements” and made a statement of which he later repented. The Bible tells us that one who repents will, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance” (Mat. 3:8). As one looks at the fruit of brother Kilpatrick, has he really repented? He still is

associated with the Tulsa Soul Winning Workshop (one of the liberals’ breeding grounds) and the Jubilee of Nashville (which this year boasts of a woman speaker from the Community Church) and in their Youth Day at Homewood this year they will have Jeff Walling and Acappella from Paris, TN. No faithful person would want their name associated with these false teachers. But yet, brother Kilpatrick wants to have his cake and eat it too!! He wants to be deemed as faithful *and* liberal. Now which one is it brother Kilpatrick?

Recently, I spoke with Craig Branch, who is a Presbyterian preacher in Birmingham. To show you how much Mr. Branch despises the church, he calls us a cult. He says that only those who believe in “faith only” will be saved, therefore those in the church of Christ are lost. Then he told me that some in the church of Christ were finally coming around. I asked him of whom he spoke and he said he believed that there were some saved in the Homewood Church of Christ. Instead of Homewood leading denominations out of their lost state, Homewood is evidently being led into false doctrines. Why wouldn’t they? Gene Lively, a member at Homewood and also an anchorman on the evening news, said to a fellow newsman who was leaving the show to go to some denominational school to become a denominational preacher, “God Speed.” “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the

doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). From examples like these, it is apparent Homewood and those who follow their philosophy, do not respect God’s Word any more!!!

THE DILEMMA—THEY HAVE SOLD THE TRUTH, NOW WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? There will be three types of people who will read this article: (1) those who know what I have said and know that it is truth; (2) those that will not believe one word of what I have said; and, (3) those who have no idea how far Homewood and brother Kilpatrick have gone, but when they see the evidence will be awakened to the truth. Of course, when one speaks out, he will be called the troubler as in 1 Kings 18:17, “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, *Art* thou he that troubleth Israel?” It is easy to shift the blame and every false teacher is a master at it! I don’t expect to change Homewood or brother Kilpatrick, but I hope to enlighten honest Christians who may be ignorant of the truth.

I am not shocked at false teachers but I am amazed at faithful brethren who continue to use them. Some faithful brethren try to condone their use by saying, “They didn’t teach anything false while they were here!” That would be like saying a weasel is a good watch dog, he only catches and kills chickens when he is hungry.

We have the responsibility to watch and warn. “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me” (Eze. 3:17). It saddens my heart to have to speak of such matters, but it saddens my heart even more to see faithful brethren going headlong after this kind of thinking simply because Homewood is a large congregation. Brethren it is time for us to wake the sleeping giant. It is time for us to say, “We will not sell the truth.” It is time for us to say, “We do not want numbers at any cost!”

Route 1 Box 135; Bear Creek, AL 35543

The Danger of Tobacco

Vance Mutton

One pressure, among many, facing our children and all teens is whether to smoke or not, chew or not, or dip or not. These have to do with the use of tobacco. Although public approval of tobacco use has declined, many of our youth continue to take up the habit. Think with me for a moment on this subject.

Nicotine is derived from tobacco and is responsible for many of the effects of tobacco use. Nicotine is one of the most lethal poisons known. An oral dose of 40 to 60 mg. is lethal in adults. There is enough nicotine in 3 or 4 average cigarettes if put directly into the bloodstream to kill a person. This drug is very addictive.

Notice some facts about smoking. Smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and disease, killing more people than alcohol, illegal drugs, accidents, homicides, and suicides combined. The nation’s third leading cause of death is passive cigarette smoke, killing nearly 53,000 nonsmoking Americans each year.

Cigarette smoking is not a gamble because all smokers are affected in some harmful way. On the average, one to two pack-per-day smokers cut 6 to 8 years off their lives.

How about the smokeless tobacco? A half-ounce wad of tobacco kept in the mouth for an hour could cause as much absorption of nicotine as 8 or 9 cigarettes. Approximately 27,000 people get mouth cancer each year in the United States. Of that number, about 9,000 die. Some of the strongest smokeless tobacco has not been on the market long enough yet to really see its effects. This tobacco may be smokeless but it is a far cry from harmless.

Could I use tobacco in good conscience? The answer to me would be NO. Our bodies are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19-20). We are stewards or caretakers of all we have (1 Cor. 4:2). We are to be good servants and a living sacrifice before God (Rom. 12:1). Our bodies are not to be brought under control by any other person, thing, or influence (1 Cor. 6:12). Our bodies as Christians house the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) and this should prompt a spirit of caution and care. Often the Bible speaks of temperance or self-control under the control of the Lord and His will for us. The golden rule as we call it in Matthew 7:12 would surely be called into question. We should respect others.

Can we quit the habit? Surely the Lord will help us be victorious in the things He desires of us (Phi. 4:1 3). It ought to be easier for a Christian than any other and many others have done so. All could who would.

I know there are many other ways we harm our bodies such as overeating, becoming over weight, and lack of exercise. Many of us, myself included, need more self-control in these areas too. May we all discipline ourselves

in whatever area needed to the tune of God's holy will (Col. 3:17).

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6-24-92	Reading: Shelby Nall Invitation: Louis Herrington

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

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June 18, 1992

Number 25

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Don't Be an Ostrich

David McCain

More and more often we hear of brethren who are departing from sound doctrine to espouse and embrace the doctrines of men. If you read the February issue of the *Gospel Advocate*, you know that some congregations in our brotherhood are rapidly departing from the faith on such issues as: acceptable worship, authorized leadership in the church, and the Gospel plan of salvation, just to name a few of the Bible's teachings which are currently being compromised.

Lest you think this problem is not serious, widespread, and getting worse, let me tell you about a report I read of the recent Abilene Christian University Lectureship. One of the resident "Greek scholars" at Abilene, was supposedly exposing the Greek text of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, when he argued that whether we like it or not, we are allowed to have women preachers and elders in the Lord's church. The report I read stated that his comments in that regard received a rousing applause from several thousand people who were assembled in Cullen Auditorium, indicating that a lot of folks present liked what they heard.

Brethren, the fact that this kind of teaching and preaching is being done on the campuses of many of our "Christian" colleges, is certainly indicative of how rapidly our brotherhood is headed towards apostasy. Should we ignore such teaching? Should we stick

our heads in the sand, like the proverbial ostrich, and just pretend that such teaching does not threaten to rend the precious body of Christ? Should we label the current digression in our brotherhood as "insignificant," or as "only a matter of opinion"? NO, brethren! When glaringly obvious departures from the truth occur within our brotherhood, faithful men of God must stand up and oppose such false doctrine, lest it eventually destroy the distinctiveness of the Lord's church. It is never pleasant to discuss digression, and I know of no faithful gospel preacher who gets any big thrill out of calling attention to false doctrine or practice among our brethren. If he does, he is certainly not very healthy mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. It is with heaviness of heart that faithful gospel preachers point out error. However, faithful ministers must bring these matters to our attention, if they desire to be true to the Lord.

Some brethren object, saying it seems "holier than thou" to call attention to departures from the truth in our brotherhood, or that it seems like we are "judging and condemning" our own people. Brethren, it is never "holier than thou" to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3) or to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Tim. 4:2). When someone calls attention to unscriptural teaching and practice, it is God, Christ, and

the Holy Spirit who are judging and condemning, not the messenger. However, if we let error go unchallenged, the judgment and condemnation will be on us in the end.

Others object saying, “Well, it happened somewhere else, not here, therefore it’s none of our business, and it doesn’t really affect us anyway.” WRONG, brethren! It does affect us! The church is currently in the fast lane so far as human change is concerned, and because we live in a mobile society, digression in other places will soon make its way to our home congregation. The kid who is being raised in the digressive church at Podunk today, or trained at the “liberal” arts “Christian” college at Timbuktu tomorrow, may well be your son-in-law or daughter-in-law in a few years. That kind of gives false teaching in other places a different perspective, doesn’t it?

The point is this brethren. We better start paying attention to what is going on in the brotherhood round about us. We better start listening to all preaching and teaching with a critical ear, and checking it by the Scriptures, to make sure it is true (Acts 17:11). We better quit being afraid to stand up and oppose error whenever and wherever we find it. And, when some faithful servant of God sticks his neck out, and does the unpopular thing by challenging error, we had better give him a fair hearing and not stop our ears to the truth.

Yes, some folks would rather have their ears tickled, and would rather hear fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4), than listen to the truth. Because of this, many in our brotherhood have received the “strong delusion,” and are “believing a lie,” because they “love not the truth,” but have “pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 The. 2:10-12). But, brethren, let it not be us! We must love the truth and stand boldly against every departure from it. When digression and false doctrine rear their ugly heads, don’t be an ostrich!

P.O. Box 429; Murfreesboro, TN 37133

Some Startling Facts and Figures on Crime

There are over 800,000 men and women in America’s State and Federal prisons. Another 1,500,000 spend time in city or county jails every year. 3,200,000 are on probation or parole.

The average cost of keeping an inmate is \$17,200 per year. The cost of Police and Judicial services (which would include apprehension and prosecution of criminals) is \$41,270,597,000 (41.2 billion) per year. The total cost of the Nation’s justice system is \$60,980,334,000 (60.9 billion) per year. Of course, there is no way to compare the dollar figure with the untold cost of human suffering. The broken homes, the physical and emotional scars left by crime costs society much more than any dollar amount could compensate.

There were 34,404,000 reported crimes in 1990. This is actually down 3.9% from the previous year. About 1/4 of American households were victims of crime in that one year.

96% of those now incarcerated will one day be released. Guess who your new neighbor might be?

All these facts and figures could cause despair. But there are things that Christians can do to make an impact. Crime=Sin. The solution to sin is a redeemed life in Jesus Christ. I realize that even Christians still sin, but they at least are striving to do what is right. Many today make fun of traditional Christian beliefs; they are outdated and too strict for modern man. What a price we are all paying for that lie of the Devil!

It would be nice to have a “magic wand” to make the problem go away. But it will have to be done the old fashioned way; one sinner at a time.

Via “Florida Prison Evangelist”; Lake Butler, FL

“And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this *cometh* judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him, unto salvation” (Heb. 9:27-28).

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Our young people's class will soon split into a class for training men and a young ladies' class. Both will continue to meet at 5:30 P.M. Sunday's. Bobby Liddell will teach the training class and Jane Herrington the young ladies' class.

Family Bible School
July 20-24
7:00-8:30 P.M.
Classes For All Ages!

Wednesday Schedule

6-24-92	Reading: Shelby Nall Invitation: Louis Herrington
7-1-92	Reading: Harold Cozad Invitation: Jeremy Caine

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

June 25, 1992

Number 26

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

The Exclusive Fellowship

Burt Groves

People join exclusive clubs to satisfy their longing to be superior to others by reason of wealth or professional status. College fraternities and sororities seldom try to hide their proud motives. Membership in honor societies or recognition by being named an outstanding person hardly elicit a sense of humility. Only the wealthy can live in exclusive neighborhoods. The snobbish nature of those who feel superior to the working class or those lacking graduate degrees cause one to suspect the word "exclusive" of being evil.

The Pharisees were exclusive in their self righteousness, and the Sadducees in their rejection of the resurrection and existence of angels and spirits (Acts 23:8). Today various sects and churches teach their exclusive doctrines which produce divisions rather than unity for which Jesus prayed (John 17:20-21).

INCLUSIVE FELLOWSHIPS. Can unity be experienced by including all who will gather under the banner of Christendom? Should the church be known as a body of people governed by nothing more than their subjective faith? By subjective faith we mean faith that is personal and originates from sources other than the Bible. Can one be true to Christ while believing those of the Muslim faith are saved? Can one please God while believing the book of Mormon which ridicules the truth of the all sufficiency of the Bible? Can two

professing Christians fully accept one another while one believes baptism is essential for salvation while the other believes it unnecessary? All need to know that spiritual fellowship results from hearing, believing and conforming to the truth (1 John 1:3-7).

EXCLUDED BY DOUBT. Jesus warned that unbelievers would die in their sins (John 8:24). Christians who cease believing exclude themselves from fellowship with God (Heb. 3:12). As the Jews could not enter Canaan because of unbelief neither will the doubter enter heaven (Heb. 3:17-19). No one can please God without faith (Heb. 11:6), and that faith must conform to God's Word (Rom. 10:13-17).

EXCLUDED BY IMMORALITY. Once the Corinthians who obeyed the gospel had indulged in immorality, but they had been made holy by the work of the Spirit and the authority of Christ (1 Cor. 6:9-11). If they chose to return to sexual perversion or greed they could "not inherit the kingdom of God."

The churches of Galatia were commanded to stand fast in the freedom they knew in Christ by walking in the Spirit rather than indulging in the lusts or works of the flesh (Gal. 5:1 ;16-21). They followed Christ only when they obeyed the truth (Gal. 5:7).

Christ's church in Ephesus was instructed to put off the old immoral man who was corrupt and to put on the new man of holiness (Eph. 4:22-24). That required the cessation of lying, uncontrolled anger, stealing and evil speech (Eph. 4:26-29).

Professing Christians have participated in probably every immorality one can imagine, and some of those licentious people continue to be recognized as God's people. Nominal Christians nauseate good people outside Christ who want to do right. God will not accept the immoral person who refuses to repent and break ties with the evil world (Jam. 4:4). The Savior died to deliver sinners, but those who refuse to repent perish (2 Pet. 3:9).

EXCLUDED BY RELIGIOUS ERROR. Only one Savior exists for sinful man; no one can be saved except by the authority of Jesus (Mat. 28:18; Acts 4:12). False teachers are to be marked and avoided (Rom. 16:17-18). Jesus promised to build His church or called -out body (Mat. 16:18), and He did what He promised (Acts 20:28). One opposes the Christ when he rejects the truth Jesus revealed during His personal ministry and through inspired men in the first century of the church. The apostle John warned about false teachers who did not confess Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh (1 John 4:1). Today this not only condemns the so-called Jehovah's Witnesses who claim that the Word who became flesh was a created being but also all those who abandon the doctrine of Christ "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9). God excludes from fellowship in His church those who pervert the "doctrine of Christ." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10-11).

One cannot be true to Christ while acknowledging as a faithful Christian those who are excluded by Jesus. God graciously receives all who receive Jesus as the Christ by honoring Him as Lord (Heb. 5:8-9). However, those who neglect the great salvation (Heb. 2:3) by disobeying the gospel (2 The. 1:7-9) God rejects. If we honor the sinner as a saint when he is condemned by God we condemn ourselves. Further, consorting in this way with those outside of Christ deceives with false security those who might be responsive to the truth.

Yes, the church of Christ is exclusive. Only those delivered from sin by the death of Jesus enter in, and only those who continue to "walk in the light" enjoy the promise of heaven.

P.O. Box 1 7066; Dallas, TX 75217

Christianity Comes in Cans

Dub McClish

It might interest some to know that Christianity comes in cans. I am sure that I have met some people along the way who would be glad to "get some religion" if they could just get it in a small, inexpensive package like a can. While it does not come in that sort of can, it does come in some cans.

GET ALL YOU CAN. The people in the world (and many in the church) are already attempting this, but they are trying to get the wrong things. They seek material things, power, fame, fleshly pleasure, and such like. Those who are serious about following Christ will seek other things. They will get all they can of the Word of God, of fellowship with the saints, of spiritual strength and growth. Those who desire to get all they can of these things will never forsake the assembly, will make a time each day for Bible study and prayer, will go to lecture programs and Gospel meetings where they can learn, will read sound and wholesome books and papers, et al. They will be so hungry for Truth and the blessings it brings they will pursue every source to get all they can. Many do not follow Christ very closely because they do not get all they can of the right things.

SAVE ALL YOU CAN. Many people are doing this, but they are saving the wrong things. Some folk save everything they get their hands on. I once knew a man who ate scraps out of garbage cans so he could increase his considerable investments. If some Christians would get as concerned about saving imperishable things as they are about saving perishables it would almost cause a revolution in the church! If we would be true to the example and teaching of Christ, we must save all the souls we can, starting with our own. Parents must do their best to save their children. We all have other family members we should try to save. We must seek to save all of our friends that we can. No, we will never save them all, but who knows which ones we can until we try? The Lord will not so much judge us by how many we save, but by how hard we tried to save all we can.

GIVE ALL YOU CAN. Some people are doing this for a career, a sports event, a civic club, a political party,

or some other cause. Again, if some would give as much to the Lord and His work as they do to secular causes, it would make drastic improvements in what we could accomplish. I speak not merely of the giving of money, but the gift of self. The essence of discipleship is self-denial, service, putting the kingdom first, willingness to suffer for the Savior. Those who thus behave will not be stingy with their money, time, or talent. Neither do they have to be begged to give!

312 Pearl Street, Denton, TX

Indian Creek Youth Camp

June 21-26: TEEN WEEK—Jerry Martin.

July 5-10: Ronnie Hayes directing.

Bible Bowl Study

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Men's Training Class and Young Ladies' Class

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 Invitation: Bill Crowe

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

July 2, 1992

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Ray Peters Returns to Riga, Latvia *Bobby Liddell*

Brother Ray Peters returned from three months in Riga, Latvia on May 24. He had planned to stay home (in Pensacola, FL) until July 31, but due to the immediate need in Riga, he returned there, leaving Pensacola on June 12. He said, "Since I have been home the work and the new converts have been constantly on my mind." Thus, Ray has returned to continue the work, to encourage the new converts, to train men so they can take the lead, to resume Bible studies he had begun, to teach and convert others and to prepare for the Gospel meeting planned to begin September 20 and continue through October 4.

Ray's goals are to put the work in Riga on a firm foundation. He reported, "It is my desire to move to Riga, Latvia...My plans are to move there and to start a School of Biblical Studies in Riga. We'll see."

This writer plans to go to Riga in August, meet Ray and go on into Russia (around St. Petersburg) to follow up on some contacts there, to carry some Russian Bibles, and; hopefully, to establish a congregation of the Lord's people. God has blessed us with tremendous opportunities. We are thankful for men like Ray who will

make the sacrifices necessary to take the gospel to the people of Latvia, Russia and around the world. Please remember him and this work in your prayers.

Brother Peters would be glad to hear from you. If you would like to correspond with Ray and encourage him while he is in Latvia, you may write him at the following address.

Ray Peters
18A Druvas
Riga 226002
Latvia, EUROPE

You may also call him at 011-7-0132-613-129. Be aware a call to Latvia is not inexpensive.

Brother Andrew Connally Passes

After a lengthy and courageous battle with cancer and other ailments, our dear brother Andrew Connally of Seagoville, Texas has passed from this life, departing on Tuesday, June 23. His funeral was conducted at the Seagoville Church of Christ building on Friday, June 25. He was a gentle giant of a man beloved by faithful brethren everywhere and a favorite of the members of the Bellview church. He had appeared numerous times on the Bellview lectures and was scheduled for a Gospel meeting at Bellview and to be on the lectureship in 1992, but was unable, due to health, to come either time.

Brother Connally's life was literally spent in mission work. He worked tirelessly for the Chimala Mission in Tanzania, Africa. Thus, in lieu of other memorials, the family has requested contributions be sent to the Chimala Mission in memory of Andrew. You may send them earmarked "For Chimala Mission in memory of Andrew Connally" in care of the Seagoville Church of Christ, 510 N. Kaufman, Seagoville, TX 75159.

The Lord's church has lost another great man and valiant defender of the faith. As Paul said of himself in 2 Timothy 4:7-8, so we now can say of Andrew: he has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day: and not to him only, but unto all them also that love the Lord's appearing.

If you would like to write sister Claudene Connally, Andrew's faithful and dear wife, you may address her at 204 Shadywood Lane, Seagoville, TX 75159.

Report from Camp

We had a good week at Indian Creek Youth Camp. Brother Jerry Martin of Meeker, Colorado directed "Teen Week" in a fine way. We are indebted to him and to Denise for all the work they did in making Camp a great experience.

Five were baptized including Rachel Priola, formerly of Pensacola. A number were restored including our Kelly Caine. Kelly was also given the "Most Improved Camper" award. Tanya Brantley was named "Best Bible Student" and Preston Silcox was awarded a \$2400 scholarship for future studies at Faulkner University.

We truly benefitted spiritually by going for a week of Bible study, worship (nightly), singing classes, great singing, sweet fellowship and good fun. Tuesday night's worship service was interrupted by a mouse who visited the services. Jerry dispatched the mouse and explained those things happen in the rustic setting of camp. We got our minds back on worship only to be visited by a snake who was following the mouse. While Jerry directed those attending away from the unwanted visitor, I caught the snake and took him outside. Ever since, I have been ribbed about handling a snake during worship. I even received the "Excellence in Snake Handling" award. Believe me, it was not by choice and it certainly was not as worship!!

Another group from Bellview will leave for a week at Camp beginning on July 5. We trust they shall have a profitable and enjoyable time there. Pray for their safe journey.

A Good Meeting

I count it a privilege to have preached recently for the Central Church of Christ just outside Winfield, Alabama, in a series of Gospel meetings. We were blessed with good attendance and support from the community and area churches. Three were baptized into Christ and four were restored. We thank God for the powerful Gospel of Christ.

The brethren at Central have a preacher, Jamie Long, who has really set that "church" on fire. He really did not mean to though. He parked his truck in the parking lot in front of the building and somehow it rolled into the building, caught fire, burned the truck and did a lot of damage to the front of the "church" (building). We are thankful no one was injured and the fire's damage was limited due to the rapid response of the local fire department.

Seriously, Jamie is doing a good work at Central and I thank God for him!

*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Garrett
request the honour of your
presence
at the marriage of their daughter
Jessica Allie Garrett
to
Chad Webster Lightner
son of Mrs. Monte Gallagher
and Mr. Dennis Lightner
on Saturday, the first of August
Nineteen hundred and ninety-two
at six o'clock in the evening
Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, Florida*

New Addresses

Hezekiah Green has moved out of the Pensacola area. You may write him at:

Hezekiah Green
802 5th Street, #1
Laurel, MD 20707-5136

Chris Galle is in Orlando with the Navy. You may write Chris at:

S.R. Galle, C.D.
435536350 Division 2 C121
Recruit Training Center
Orlando, FL 32893-0021

Bridal Shower

A bridal shower to honor Jessica Garrett will take place on July 14, at 7:30 P.M. at the home of Jane Herrington.

Restored

Tony Liddell came seeking forgiveness and prayer (6-3-92). Chris Mathews was restored on 6-21-92 and Tanya Brantley was restored on 6-28-92. Kelly Caine was restored at Indian Creek.

New Address

Howard and Vicki Johnson have moved. Their new address is:

Howard Johnson
9344 Bell Ridge
Drive Pensacola, FL 32526

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July 20-24
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Classes For All Ages!

Wednesday Schedule

7-8-92 Reading: Chris Mathews
 Invitation: Bill Crowe
7-15-92 Reading: Kevin Bailey
 Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

July 9, 1992

Number 28

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WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Dogmatic: to Be or Not to be

Weylan Deaver

Looking up the word “dogma” in Webster’s dictionary, one finds it means “a philosophical tenet; theological doctrine authoritatively asserted; a principle or belief (p. 114). There is nothing inherently evil about the word “dogma.” For our purposes we could use as a working definition that a dogma is a religious doctrine that is set forth in an authoritative manner. There are religious doctrines (dogmas) that are true and religious doctrines (dogmas) that are false.

“Dogmatism” is defined as a “positive assertion; laying down the law.” “Dogmatic” is the adjective form of “dogma.” It can mean “pertaining to a dogma; opinionated; authoritative.” Notice especially the last definition. No man has the right to be dogmatic about an opinion. None is to stress his opinions at the expense of doctrine. But when we are talking about New Testament teaching, we are not talking about opinions.

Two questions then: (1) Can we know what New Testament doctrine is? and (2) If we can know it, can we present it to others in an authoritative way? The answer to the first question is absolutely yes, as Jesus affirmed in John 8:32. The answer to the second question is absolutely yes, as Paul commanded in Titus 2:15 (cf. Mat. 7:28-29; Eph. 6:19; etc.). In other words, we can be dogmatic (laying down the law of the Gospel in an authoritative manner) about the

Truth because it is the Truth. How sad in God’s eyes must be the sight of so many today who decry this. Consider the following from the pen of a preacher (?) in the Lord’s church: “Dogmatism exudes the air that there is no way I can be wrong. If we have a disagreement and I cannot be wrong, guess where that leaves you? This is the ‘air’ that has given a black eye to the church today. Rather than being dogmatic, we need to be provisional. Provisional statements relate the conditions that lead to my conclusions, but they leave room for the possibility that the other person’s ideas and evidence may have merit.”

According to this brother, standing boldly, uncompromisingly, unwaveringly, and unashamedly for Bible truths has given the church of Christ a “black eye,” or made us to look bad in the eyes of others. It is truly a pity this brother was not around to advise the Lord that He not be so dogmatic and authoritative in His preaching. And while he was at it, he could have told Paul and Stephen to tone down their preaching. In addressing the Sanhedrin (Acts 7), Stephen should have left room for the possibility that the Jews may have been right after all. That would not have made the Jews feel so bad. Can you imagine?!! Now where in the world did the notion come from that those with the Truth need to act as if those without the Truth may be right? The truth is, there are certain things about

which I cannot be wrong. I cannot be wrong in teaching that one must be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). I cannot be wrong that there is one church (Mat. 16:18). If I am in a discussion with one who does not believe in baptism, where is the merit in my acting as if he may be right? He goes away lost because he doesn't know the Truth and I go away lost because I compromised it. That is not a formula of success from Heaven, but a cunning strategy from Satan.

In my library is a book by a true Gospel preacher, entitled *C. K. Wallace's Lectures on Denominational Dogmas*. In it brother Wallace dogmatically defends the Gospel against the false dogmas of denominations. Those are the kinds of sermons that once caused the church to grow and abound in the faith. What a terrible shame the same series could not be preached in many of our pulpits today without raising an uproar from some members who would bend over backwards—yea, verily, stand on their heads—to keep from upsetting a man in error whose soul will be lost forever if he doesn't repent!

It goes without saying that the Christian must be kind and concerned, filled with love for lost souls. But it goes too far when one suggests we must not be as bold as were the apostles and our Lord. A man has no right to be dogmatic about error. But a man with the Gospel has no right to be less than dogmatic about God's Truth. Presenting the Gospel, in love, and as the one and only authoritative plan can only make a positive contribution to the health of the Lord's church. To be dogmatic, or not to be dogmatic? It all depends on how much we love the Truth.

Via "The Edifier"; Denton, TX

Can We Understand the Bible Alike?

David Lipscomb (1913)

WORK AND WORSHIP. I could prove the same to be true concerning questions that have divided the religious world in years and centuries past in all sections of the world. Were we to examine questions which have destroyed the peace of congregations and disciples, they would be found precisely of the same character. There are two questions over which there is great diversity of sentiment. One affects the worship; the other, the organization and consolidation of churches. On all points of worship for which we have either precept or example in the Scriptures there is perfect unity. The assembling, the teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, prayer, exhortation, singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord—all recognize these as right, proper, and necessary. There is no diversity or division of sentiment on these points that are authoritatively presented in the Scriptures. Some think that the strict order of the primitive times is not necessarily to be observed, and feel themselves at liberty to introduce instrumental music into the worship. Hence, men divide and dispute, are of diverse judgments and are not, cannot be, perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. Then, again, in reference to church work and organizations and co-operation to carry it out. The Bible, by both precept and example, teaches that individuals and churches should "teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"—in other words, to spread abroad the religion of Christ, our Redeemer, to lost and ruined sinners. In reference to this work and the means for doing it as recognized in the Scriptures there is not a breath of dissent. Christians are all perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. They may let the selfish and sordid element of their nature prevent their doing what the judgment approves but they are all of one accord of one mind, of the work and manner and means for its prosecution as set forth in the Bible. There can be no division here, but others think that liberty is given them to form new organizations of churches or individuals for doing this work which are known to the whole realm of revelation. When these are presented, the unity of judgment is destroyed and strife and division come.

Now, I believe people can and do understand what God has presented in the Bible precisely alike, and that the questions that cause division and strife are not those taught in the Bible, but those introduced concerning which the Bible teaches nothing. Men cannot agree where they have no rule laid down to guide them. When they have an authoritative rule laid down to guide them, they can be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. They can never be by introducing practices into the church for which there is no divine authority. The Savior demands unity, and the Holy Spirit says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). One deferring his judgment to another does not

answer the divine requisition. There can be no active, harmonious, hearty cooperation in this course. The demand is imperative: "Be perfected together in the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Then there is no occasion for compromise. Christians can be perfected together on this and on all questions and practices ordained and commanded in the Bible. Whoever, then, introduces a question or practice not taught in the Bible introduces strife and division and schism. He is a schismatic, a heretic, and works directly contrary to the will of God; he destroys the unity of the followers of Christ, and so makes it impossible for men to believe that he is sent of God. Whoever does this, even under the plea of sending the gospel to the heathen, destroys the ground of man's faith in Christ, so really promotes infidelity!

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July 20-24
7:00-8:30 P.M.
Classes For All Ages!

Wednesday Schedule

7-15-92	Reading: Kevin Bailey Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
7-22-92	Family Bible School

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

July 16, 1992

Number 29

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*Mr. and Mrs. Charles Garrett
request the honour of your
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at the marriage of their daughter
Jessica Allie Garrett
to
Chad Webster Lightner
son of Mrs. Monte Gallagher
and Mr. Dennis Lightner
on Saturday, the first of August
Nineteen hundred and ninety-two
at six o'clock in the evening
Bellview Church of Christ
4850 Saufley Field Road
Pensacola, Florida*

Family Bible School

***Hey, It's That
Time Of Year!***

It's time for Family Bible School with the
Bellview Church of Christ!

We have a great Bible School each year because **you**
come to be with us. So, we're looking for **you** this
year too.

Bible Classes For All Ages!
A Great Time Always!

This Year's Theme Is:
Let Your Light Shine!

July 20-24

7:00 - 8:30 P.M.

Bellview Church of Christ

3/4 Mile West of Mobile Highway on
Saufley Road. Phone 455-7595.

Classes For Adults

Taught by Garry Barnes
of Foley, Alabama

Monday—

Communicating Our Faith

Tuesday—

How to Run the Christian Race

Wednesday—

What David Needed Most

Thursday—

Complete In Christ (I)

Friday—

Complete In Christ (II)

Classes For Children

Let Your Light Shine!

Monday—

By Being Thankful

Tuesday—

By Caring and Sharing

Wednesday—

By Being Honest

Thursday—

By Being a Peacemaker

Friday—

Overcoming Temptation

*Mrs. William S. Cline
requests the honour of your presence
at the marriage of her daughter*

Mary Ruth

to

*Gary Wayne Barch
son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Barch
on Saturday, the eighth of August
Nineteen hundred and ninety-two
at two o'clock in the afternoon
Bellview Church of Christ
Pensacola, Florida*

Reception immediately following

Family Bible School
July 20-24
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Classes For All Ages!

Wednesday Schedule

7-22-92 Family Bible School
7-29-92 Reading: Nathan Liddell
Invitation: Ray Foshee

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

July 23, 1992

Number 30

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Nineteen hundred and ninety-two
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Bellview Church of Christ
Pensacola, Florida*

Reception immediately following

Thanks, Brethren!

We have so many things for which to be thankful. God has blessed us abundantly. He has given us life and more-abundant life in Christ (John 10:10). One of the great blessings of being a Christian is fellowship with those of like precious faith (1 John 1:6-10). From such, we are encouraged and strengthened. Together, we work with one another and with God (2 Cor. 6:1). What a joy it is to work with brothers and sisters in furthering the cause of Christ. That work sometimes involves tasks not noticed and too many times, not appreciated, but God knows all we do and He shall reward accordingly.

Thanks to brethren Elward Brantley, Ray Williams and Harold Cozad for their work in printing THE BEACON and DEFENDER. That requires a lot of work and volunteer work, at that! They do such a good job and always on time.

Thanks to those who have worked so hard in Family Bible School. Brother Jerry Caine has done a great job in organizing this year's school. He has certainly made my job easier by taking care of all the details. When I have asked Judy, "Do we need to get this or arrange that?" she has said, "It is already taken care of." Thanks to all who have spent hour upon hour in preparing to teach. Without you we could not have a Bible School. Thanks to our song leaders, refreshment servers and all who worked in inviting their neighbors.

Thanks to those who have volunteered their time and given financially to erect the shed covering our tables

out back. Brother Hairston Brantley headed that effort which resulted in a solidly built, very functional and attractive facility. He also gave most of the money required to build it. Thanks to all who helped, especially to brother Kevin Bailey for donating his time and equipment.

Thanks to sister Tina Foshee for painting in the Zone Meeting Room. She spent many hours painting the doors, trim and cabinets. Thanks to the Lindesmith's for giving the new chairs for use in the Zone Meeting Room. With the new chairs, new paint and the new walls (for sound dampening), the Zone Meeting Room looks like a different place. Let's all work to keep it clean.

Thanks to sister Betty Weekley and brother Bill Gallaher for the many weeks spent in cataloging and arranging the church library. They have meticulously gone through every book and record, making new cards when needed and adding the records to the library computer. That is a lot of work!

Thanks to sister Dot Brantley for volunteering her time (refusing to accept pay) to prepare the numerous financial reports involved in the many works of the Bellview church. All who know Dot know she is the finest example of a dependable hard worker.

Thanks to Harold and Elaine Maxey for their continuing work in sending out the Bible Correspondence Courses. That takes a lot of time and work but has resulted in a number of conversions and continues to bear fruit. Thanks!

Thanks to our young people for their hard work and exemplary conduct. You mean so much to us all! Thanks, young men, for your preaching the Gospel. Mike Peters preached at Jay and Tim Lamb at Bellview last Sunday. Isn't that great! Others have also preached here and led our public worship in other ways! You do a great job and we appreciate it!

Thanks to all who teach. You do your job in such a fine way. Some are teaching for the first time and that is not easy. Thanks, we appreciate you!

A special thanks to the Bellview elders, Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley and Bill Gallaher, for their leading the Bellview congregation in such a fine way. Their leadership has meant so much to all of us! I know of very few elderships which serve as well as they.

I know there are others I have not mentioned and probably a lot of things which have been done about which I have no knowledge. So often, someone sees something which needs doing and they just do it! They are not interested in being praised, just in serving in the best way they can. That is the type of thing which has made my association with the Bellview congregation so pleasant and so encouraging to me and to my family. While there are many good sound congregations of God's people, I can think of no place I would rather be and no influence under which I would rather have my family and children. Thanks for being you!

Latvia Update

Brother Ray Peters reports two more baptized in Latvia and a number of promising studies. One such study is with a Latvian man who is an English teacher. Hopefully, his conversion will aid the work in that he could act as an expert translator for both speaking and printing. Ray also requests more Bibles which we shall take to Riga, Latvia in September. In addition, Ray is working on plans to take the Gospel into Russia through a contact with a sister who was converted by Ray in Riga and has since returned to Russia.

On September 16, a number of us shall depart for three weeks of work in Riga. We shall carry Russian, Latvian and English Bibles and tracts with us. We shall also carry communionware and song books for the church in Riga. On September 20, we shall begin a Gospel meeting (in the Academy of Arts building) which shall continue for two weeks (three Sundays). Please pray for the success of the work in Riga.

Among those going will be one of the Bellview elders, Paul Brantley. We are excited about Paul's being able to go and know he will be a great help to the work in the meeting by leading singing and setting up and conducting Bible studies. Paul has long wanted to go and he and Phyllis have contributed greatly in a financial way and otherwise to the Latvian work.

Another from Bellview going in September is Judy Peters, Ray's wife. She will also assist in the meeting and be a great help with the training of the Latvian ladies who have obeyed the Gospel. She and Ray have future plans to move to Latvia and this will be a good time for her to get better acquainted with the work and the Latvian people. The good brethren at Cartersville, Georgia, who oversee Ray's mission work, have agreed to send Judy in this

effort. To help, the Bellview elders have agreed the Bellview congregation will send \$600 to Cartersville for Judy.

Thanks to all who have contributed to make our work in Latvia possible. Many at Bellview have been so generous. We shall use it to carry the Gospel to Latvia.

News

Indian Creek Youth Camp

Those who attended the last session said it was the best ever! Among those were Rachel Priola, Jeremy Caine and Tony Liddell each receiving a \$2400 scholarship to Faulkner University. Tony Liddell also was named Mr. ICYC and Best Bible Student.

Preacher Training Update

Gideon Rodriguez of Manila, Philippines (whom we supported) graduated from the Memphis School of Preaching receiving the Academic and Outstanding Student Awards. We will help support Jeffrey Booth in Lakeland, Jerry Murrell at Memphis, and Brian Chadwick at Southwest in the upcoming school year.

Restored

Recently several have responded. Chris Mathews sought forgiveness for wrong in his life 7-8-92. Marilyn Hall came 7-12-92, confessing wrong in her life and requesting prayer. She also requested prayer for her grandson Tony. Mike Peters (7-12-92) and Scot Brazell (7-18-92) also repented Of sin and sought forgiveness. Please remember Chris, Marilyn, Tony, Mike and Scot.

Wednesday Schedule

7-29-92 Reading: Nathan Liddell
 Invitation: Ray Foshee
8-5-92 Reading: Tim Lamb
 Invitation: Jerry Fillingim

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

July 30, 1992

Number 31

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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“Greater Condemnation”

Harold Blevins

Is there a greater condemnation for one who teaches false and fatal doctrine? Notice what the Bible teaches: “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation” (Jam. 3:1). Those who teach falsely and those who are ill-prepared to teach are to receive “a heavier judgment.” “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” (Mat. 18:7). Pharisees (Mat. 23:7-14); and, scribes who love the chief seats will receive a greater damnation (Mark 12:38-40). All such are NOT dead.

In his commentary, on James 3:1, brother Guy N. Woods (a great Bible scholar of our time) states: “at the great judgment day, the Lord will separate those who have been teachers of his word from these who have not, and will then pass on the far stricter standards than those applicable to non-teachers” (pp. 157-158). Brother Woods draws a lesson from leadership on this verse by commenting, “if the responsibility is greater, and the judgment heavier for those who misuse or do not properly use the occasion, the reward is greater for those who do properly teach and edify others.” This writer agrees wholeheartedly that there are greater damnations and rewards for the many teachers, preachers, and elders. Brother Woods concludes the

matter this way: “Teachers, preachers, elders, all who have the obligation to instruct others, should take these matters carefully to heart, and to be mindful always of the weighty responsibility which is theirs in this respect.” Amen, brother Woods, amen!!!

If one is given greater judgment for false teaching, surely one is rewarded greater for faithful teaching. There are somber responsibilities for elders; therefore, there are greater rewards. The opposite of greater judgment is greater reward (Jam. 3:1). It is NOT taking 1 Timothy 5:17 out of context to teach that a good, great and godly elder will receive greater reward for his labors. Let the Bible speak: (1) “Let him that is taught in the word communicate” (Gal. 6:6); elders are to watch, feed, rule, tend, govern, shepherd, manage, and direct the flock (Acts 20:28); (2) “Prove all things” (1 The. 5:21); (3) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17).

Elders will give account of their watch over the flock. An elder will receive greater reward (double honor/reward) for faithful and laborious work in the greatest honor put on men: the eldership. “This *is* a true saying,

If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work")1 Tim. 3:1).

When the problems of leading, feeding and ruling a congregation of the Lord's people are concluded by death, an elder desires and deserves double honor in the heaven of God. If not, why not?

Route 2 Box 10A; Tiptonville, TN 38079

The Spirit of Brotherhood

Winfred Clark

I am convinced, and I believe there are hundreds of others, that there MUST be a recovery of the "Spirit of Brotherhood." One does not have to be a microscopic observer to see such a spirit is lacking in so many quarters. It is also very obvious that the lack of such breeds dreadful consequences. In view of this we can not stand aside and act as if such will merely run its course and then all will be well. Not so, we are dealing with something that can destroy.

I know that there are those who will view any appeal for brotherhood as an effort to compromise. That is most unfortunate and I hope this study will prove this to be the case. We MUST not allow ourselves to be muted concerning this because of some misinterpretation placed upon what might be said. So why don't we take some time to think about this thing called "brotherhood."

1. There Is a Brotherhood. I know you will only find the word one time in the New Testament. Peter placed it in the midst of some demanding statements when he said, "love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2:17). He does not stop to try to explain what the brotherhood really was. He would imply that they would know. They would understand this to be those who made up the church. It would be made up of those who were brethren. When we speak of our brethren, we are speaking of the brotherhood. These are people who have obeyed the same truth and in so doing have purified their souls (1 Pet. 1:22). These are the ones who have been begotten again (1 Pet. 1:23). These are those who are seen as "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (1 Pet. 2:9); who have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9). These make up the brotherhood.

I believe such exists today. There are such people in the world who have done the very things that Peter describes these as having done. If those made up the brotherhood then, they will do so now. This we need to understand. This is the way we must see our brethren. These constitute the brotherhood.

2. "Love" is the Spirit of Brotherhood. One can make this statement without fear of contradiction. This is what Peter is talking about when he says, "love the brotherhood" (1 Pet. 2:17). You will find this sort of an admonition over and over in the writing of John. John said say, "We know we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). John will go on to say, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). So we have no doubt about the fact that "love" and "love indeed" is the spirit that must dominate the brotherhood. All of us know these people would have their weaknesses and failures, just as we all do. They all need the benefits of the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:7-9). But they would still be seen as brethren and as those who are to be the objects of love.

When the "spirit of brotherhood" is present, what will we find? Can we find examples where this spirit prevailed? I believe we can.

One case would surely be with Abraham of old. It will be found where strife arose between the herdsmen of Lot and the herdsmen of Abraham (Gen. 13). Here you would and could have one side pitted against the other. Such could surely produce suspicions and envy. But notice the "spirit of brotherhood" manifested by Abraham. He came to Lot saying, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren" (Gen. 13:8). Abraham made his appeal on the basis they are brethren. That means those who are brethren will approach a problem in a particular way. They will not approach one with suspicion and evil surmising. There will be equal respect. Notice Abraham comes with a plan for peace. He is one who "follow after the things which make for peace" (Rom. 14:19). He said, "*Is* not the whole land before thee?" (Gen. 13:9). Abraham saw there was more territory than that which was being contested. He knew there was a way to solve the problem if people wanted to do so.

There is something interesting in the "spirit of brotherhood" seen in Abraham. He did not come to the problem with one ounce of ego or selfishness. He was not thinking of himself, but of the cause of God. His motive was foremost to please God. I doubt very seriously he would care who received the credit if the problem could be

solved. He was not out to gain a personal victory. He wanted to do what was right. He could and would surrender something that might be attractive to him for the sake of peace. No, this does not involve a matter of doctrine but a matter of judgment. But this could have become an ugly mess if the “spirit of brotherhood” had not prevailed.

The “spirit of brotherhood” prevailed when a dispute arose among the disciples in (Acts 6). In this case the Grecian Jews in the church, murmured against the Hebrew Jews because their widows were being neglected (Acts 6:1). Here you have the making of a real division. But the “spirit of brotherhood” prevailed. First, it is seen in the conduct of the apostles. They did not feel insulted but rather called the multitude unto themselves. They would try to keep open the doors of communication. They brought all the parties into the solution. They gave them a way to solve the problem if they wanted to do so, and they surely wanted to. They were told to look for seven men, certain kind of men (Acts 6:3). They chose these men and we are told that all of these would be Grecian. But remember, the Grecians were the ones who felt they had a problem. So the Hebrew Jews would go overboard to be sure to remove the possible objection that they were seeking to take advantage of brethren. This would surely be a case of men “not looking each of you to his own things” (Phi. 2:4). That is the “spirit of brotherhood.” Such a spirit settled the problem in Jerusalem and I am persuaded such a spirit will go far in settling most of the difficulties we face in our own day. When we reach the point where we had rather serve one another than to strive against one another, we will have found that spirit.

P.O. Box 1025; Athens, AL 35611

Bridal Shower

There will be a bridal shower to honor Mary Cline on Tuesday, August 4 at 7:00 P.M. at the home of Vicki Johnson. For more details, please see one of the hostesses: Dot Brantley, Vicki Johnson, Joan Liddell or Judy Peters.

Sick and Shut-in

Remember Betty Weekley, Lavanda Egan, Inez Prosser, Rubin Malone, Mabel Simmons and Ida Williams who have been ill or are shut-in.

Wednesday Schedule

8-5-92	Reading: Tim Lamb Invitation: Jerry Fillingim
8-12-92	Reading: Jim Roddy Invitation: Mike Peters

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

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I Distinctly Remember Forgetting

Bill Brandstatter

Two ladies were talking when the first said to the second: "Do you remember back many years ago when that person committed an awful sin." The second responded, "I distinctly remembering forgetting that." There are many things today that Christians need to distinctly remember to forget.

Christians need to forget the past. Paul wrote, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Phi. 3:13). Christians are sometimes like elephants, they never forget. Events that occurred are always brought back up. These things, when forgiven, should be forgotten. God forgives, but often man finds it hard to forgive and to forget. Jesus is plain in this regard, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:3-4). So, saints need to distinctly remember to forget the sins of brothers and sisters who repent. Stephen's prayer to God for those stoning him was, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). The children of God should have this same attitude toward others.

Members of the body of Christ should forget those things done in haste. A brother or sister in Christ should be given the benefit of the doubt if what was done may appear questionable (1 Cor. 13:7). Paul writes to the church at Colossae, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*" (Col. 3:12-13). Longsuffering Christians are indeed a pleasure to be around. Man is not often longsuffering like God is (2 Pet. 3:9). One of the Christian virtues listed by Peter is longsuffering (patience) (2 Pet. 1:6). Let the elect of God always practice being longsuffering and a lot of church problems will disappear.

These are just a few of the things Christians need to distinctly remember to forget. All saints need to remember to "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another*" (Rom. 12:10).

206 N. Hancock, Ironton, MO

For a Free Bible Correspondence Course
from Bellview, write: Harold Maxey, 20
Emory Drive, Pensacola, FL 32506

Fables

Shan Jackson

A fable is a fictitious story, which seems an accurate assessment in Paul's encouragement to Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:4. He tells this young Christian to seek and listen to the truth rather than the fictitious stories being circulated by the religious men of that day. However, would not this sage advice also be to our benefit today? Should we not also heed his advice and seek and listen to the truth rather than non-truth? This redundant line of thought does not deserve commentary for each of us realizes that we are all commanded to seek the truth, for the truth shall make us free (John 8:32).

Paul also addressed the subject of fables in his second letter to this young preacher, Timothy. In that passage he says that some will not only not seek truth but will, in fact, turn from it. Truth be known, many of that day did turn from truth and turned their attention to fables in its place. They preferred fictitious stories over Christ's story of salvation. However, such is also the case today. We see many of our preachers, elders and teachers, who in times past demanded of themselves the use of God's truth, yet in their later days embrace and accept a fable or two. How sad to see a lifetime of good work tarnished by fable-seeking in late life. They preached the word, they were instant in season and out of season, but the time came that they would not endure sound doctrine and sought for themselves their own teachers who would scratch their itching ears (2 Tim. 4).

These fictitious fables are also called by our Lord as "man's commandments" or human teaching. Paul told another young Christian in Titus 1:14, "Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." Peter also mentioned the possibility of following "cunningly devised fables" in 2 Peter 1:16 but he adds that Christians will not follow these.

But what are some of these fictitious fables that are being batted back and forth in the religious community which some of our brethren are embracing and accepting? Well, one is the blatant disregard for the command of God in Romans 16:17. Plainly and simply Paul writes, "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." My brethren, this is a command not a position of opinion! He states, and allows no room for opinion, to "mark them." ("Them" referring to those who cause division of the Lord's body). Certainly this is never a pleasant thing to do, but dividing the body of Christ does not bring pleasantness either. It is only because of generation after generation of apathy among the Lord's people that denominations have been allowed to begin and survive. Had we "marked" and "avoided" as commanded we would probably not be facing such an onslaught of liberal ideas and practices.

Still, who would possibly promote such fable-attraction? Well, naturally the advocates of denominationalism and those who desire unity with such would. Men within and without the brotherhood who promote everything from passive conduct to actually allowing denominational men into our pulpits are eager to follow fables, cunningly devised or blatantly false. And, what are some of these sugarcoated fables which we are being encouraged to swallow? Here are a few. Some are saying that Romans 14 allows the individual to decide for himself what is acceptable and not acceptable in worship. They feel that if they are comfortable with observance of the Lord's Supper on a day other than Sunday that it is no one's business but theirs. Furthermore, they feel that if they are marked and avoided for it that they are the ones offended, rather than Christ. Others feel that the instrument used in worship can, and should, be incorporated into worship because, they claim, it is not a viable issue anyway. And on and on we could go.

My brethren, anyone who sets themselves up as God's authority is asking to be destroyed by the destroyer of fables. The provost of fables and the followers of such might think they are seeking Christ's salvation but his salvation is reserved for the true followers of God and his divine truth. Whatever we do, whatever we teach, whatever we promote must be under God's authoritative pattern and for the glory of Christ and his church. As Paul says, "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17).

P.O. Box 904; Palacios, TX

Write Ray Peters

Ray Peters
18a Druvas
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Latvia, Europe
via Copenhagen

Write the Stancliff's

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stancliff
Block 465, #12-536
Jurong West Street 41
Singapore 2264

Thanks!

Thanks to Ray and Tina Foshee and Nancy Loy for their work in painting in the Zone Meeting Room.

Thanks also to Ray Foshee and Tony Liddell for their work in taking the doors off the cabinets and putting them back after they were painted. It looks much better.

Baptized

Jeremy Chabot (Tina Maltby's son) and Christopher Blevins (Tina's nephew) were baptized after services Wednesday, 7-29-92. We welcome Jeremy and Christopher to the family of God at Bellview! Be sure to meet them and introduce yourself to them.

Restored

Chris Mathews was restored 7-26-92 and Champ Hollowell was restored 8-2-92. Please pray for them.

Wednesday Schedule

8-12-92 Reading: Jim Roddy
 Invitation: Mike Peters
8-19-92 Reading: Scot Brazell
 Invitation: Tony Liddell

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What Shall I Wear?

Ed Smith

Did you ever go to the closet and say, "I don't have anything to wear?" It is obvious that this is the case with many today because they don't wear much of anything. Ever since the sinful couple of Eden recognized their nakedness, God has encouraged putting on clothing to cover the body. Adam and Eve had some clothes on made of fig leaves, but God provided skins to better clothe them (Gen. 3:21). In a style conscious society, one must be careful in how he speaks concerning the dress of others. There is a place for one to wear old work clothes and a place for wearing the best coat and tie or dress. Certainly, one should dress as well as he can with respect for God in worship to him.

However, there are no areas of public dress (that is where male and female are present) for a Christian to reveal the body. There are occasions where it is popular to do so, but Christian modesty demands otherwise (1 Tim. 2:9). Especially is this important to the female, when the male is easily excitable. Lasciviousness (Mark 7:22; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 1 Pet. 4:3; Jude 4) is a conduct or character. It is the manner of filthy words, indecent bodily movements and the unchaste handling of male and female.

When young ladies start developing the physical features of mature adults, they need to understand that certain parts of the body need to be hidden at all times: the thighs, hips, midriff, and breast. These should not only be covered, but clothing should be so as not to accentuate these areas. They should refrain from brief clothing such as: shorts, tight pants, tight skirts, short skirts, bare midriff blouses, low necklines that reveal portions of the breast, peek-a-boo tops, and swim suits, one or two piece! Style is one thing, but Christian dress, regardless of location, is a must. There is no difference in a majorette revealing her body to mixed audiences and a woman watering her flowers with shorts on where her neighbors can see. There is no difference in a stripper in Las Vegas and a woman with a two piece swim suit at a public pool. The modern language of the style of our time is sexy, revealing, enticing, wicked and suggestive, to list a few. Why can't God's people dress so as to be described as modest, sensible, pure and holy!

89 E. Hamric Drive; Oxford, AL 37203

Preacher, Say What You Mean!

Bubba Phillips

Some gospel preachers are very clear and direct presenting scriptural truths while others talk in circles and say very little. Preachers must learn to say what they mean. Below are a few observations that can be made. “I don’t keep up with the issues.” This usually means preaching brethren do not want to know what is going on in the brotherhood lest they be in a position to take a stand one way or another. “I had better not rock the boat.” This statement indicates a lack of courage and conviction. Far too many preachers have developed this attitude and will not really stand for the truth as a result. “There is too much negative preaching.” Such words demonstrate a spirit of compromise on the part of more than a few preachers. Preachers who will not “reprove and rebuke” (2 Tim. 4:2) are not gospel preachers!

“I am not for it, and I am not against it.” Preachers who make such statements have already indicated their preference. They have chosen not to take a stand against what is questionable and thus are inconsistent indeed. “I have not made up my mind on divorce and remarriage.” Such a preacher has made up his mind, not to make up his mind! God decided long ago (Mat. 5:31-32). Such preachers will cause many to stumble.

Perhaps I have been too harsh in my observations, but I think not. I wonder how many “gospel” (?) preachers are hiding behind pulpits due to their cowardice? How many are guilty of making hearers sit on the edge of their seats while a place in hell is being reserved for such preachers and hearers? Brethren, if gospel preachers cease to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) they are not gospel preachers. They are professional pulpiteers!

Preachers—say what you mean, and be sure what you say is what God says! (1 Pet. 4:11). After all, countless souls will be saved or lost due to what you say.

Via “Eastside Edifier”; Muskogee, OK

The Saint and Suffering

Winfred Clark

The first epistle of Peter stands up and says to saints, “You may be called upon to sacrifice and suffer because of who and what you are.” That shouldn’t come as any surprise when one considers the collision course between evil and righteousness. Sixteen times within this epistle one confronts the term that is equal to suffering. In the fourth chapter of this five-chapter book, one is handed a handbook of instructions on how to handle that which is bound to come. We would do well to listen to Peter as he addresses the situation.

I. HE SAYS IT CAN BE EXPECTED.

“Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise” (1 Pet. 4:1). “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you” (1 Pet. 4:12). They could expect such to come (2 Tim. 3:12).

Didn’t Jesus set such a possibility clearly before His disciples? He said, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you” (John 15:18). “If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20). “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service” (John 16:2). “In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33). Surely, surely His disciples would know what to expect. Thus, they must do at least three things.

First, they must arm themselves for the fight. This, among other things, would mean having the right mind which would be the mind of Christ (1 Pet. 4:1). This is the thing that enabled the apostles to depart with bruised backs from the council rejoicing that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5:41-42). These folks are strong in the Lord and the power of His might (Eph. 6:10).

Second, they must abstain from sins of the flesh. One armed with the right mind no longer lives life to merely satisfy the lusts of the flesh. He walks to the beat of a different drummer. This can cause him to face suffering. Third, they must await the end. This can help people who see the expected come.

II. HE SAYS IT CAN BE EASIER.

This is detailed in 1 Peter 4:8-11. Space doesn’t allow a full discussion of this but you’ll see how these folks could help one another through the suffering. They could bear one another’s burdens. Let them keep cool heads,

warm hearts, open houses, ready hands, and truthful tongues. Now, place this in the context of Acts 12:1-17. Here in the home of Mary, a faithful band of disciples met. In one another they find the help to more easily bear the onslaught of suffering raining down upon them.

III. HE SAYS IT CAN BE ENDURED.

Peter believed that not only could Christians endure suffering but they could make it work to the glory of God (1 Pet. 4:13-16). There are several admonitions within these verses that would enable them to endure such. He says keep your perspective, keep your peace, keep your purity, keep your pride, and keep your poise. In doing this, they can endure the suffering more easily even though such can be expected. This places the saint in the arena of suffering with his armour on, ready to do battle for the glory of God.

P.O. Box 506; Athens, AL 35611

New Adult Classes in September

SUNDAY

New Converts Class—Room 17: *Christian Doctrine*—Bill Gallaher.

Adult I—Room 18: *Fellowship*—Paul Brantley.

Adult II—Room 7: *Mark*—Bobby Liddell

Adult III—Room 5: *Effective Bible Study*—Jim Loy.

WEDNESDAY

New Converts Class continues.

Adult I—Room 18: *The Holy Spirit*—Bobby Liddell.

Adult II—Room 7: *Proverbs*—Bill Crowe.

Adult III—Room 5: *The Bible Only Makes Christians Only And The Only Christians*—Ray Foshee

See you at the first class!!

New Address

Woody, Lanette and Ryan Taylor
4628 Bellview Ave. Apt. A
Pensacola, FL 32506
Phone: 944-7054

Sick

William Weekley, resting at home awaiting word on his tests.

Mabel Simmons, Room 522, Sacred Heart Hospital.

Tony Hall, recuperating from a viral infection at home.

Wednesday Schedule

8-19-92 Reading: Scot Brazell
 Invitation: Tony Liddell
8-26-92 Reading: Nathan Liddell
 Invitation: Ray Foshee

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

August 20, 1992

Number 34

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

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Bill Gallaher

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Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

“Murphy Has a Baby... Quayle Has a Cow”

Roger Coffman

This was the headline in a Philadelphia newspaper. Carson, Letterman, Arsenic, and even some of the news anchors all had a heyday with Vice President Dan Quayle's infamous May 20th “Murphy Brown Speech.” The fact that the comment about Murphy Brown represented a single sentence in a seven-page speech has gone largely unreported. Reading the context in which the remark was made has been enlightening to me. Hollywood and others pointed to it as one of the most stupid speeches in recent times. You can judge for yourself:

“right now, the failure of our families is hurting America deeply. When families fall, society falls. The anarchy and lack of structure in our inner cities are testament to how quickly civilization falls apart when the family foundation cracks. Children need love and discipline. They need mothers and fathers. A welfare check is not a husband. The state is not a father. It is from parents that children come to understand values and themselves as men and women, fathers and mothers.

“And for those concerned about children growing up in poverty, we should know this: marriage is probably the best anti-poverty

program of all. Among families headed by married couples today, there is a poverty rate of 5.7 percent. But 33.4 percent of families headed by a single mother are in poverty today.

“Nature abhors a vacuum. Where there are no mature, responsible men around to teach boys how to become good men, gangs serve in their place. In fact, gangs have become a surrogate family for much of our generation of inner-city boys. I recently visited with some former gang members in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In a private meeting, they told me why they had joined gangs. These teenage boys said that gangs gave them a sense of security. They made them feel wanted and useful. They got support from their friends. And they said, ‘It was like having a family.’ ‘Like family’—unfortunately, that says it all.

“The system perpetuates itself as these young men father children whom they had no intention of caring for, by women whose welfare checks support them. Teenage girls, mired in the same hopelessness, lack sufficient motive to say no to this trap.

“Answers to our problems won't be easy. We can start by dismantling a welfare system that encourages dependency and subsidizes broken families. We can attach conditions such as school attendance, or work to welfare.

We can limit the time a recipient gets benefits. We can stop penalizing marriage for welfare mothers. We can enforce child support payment.

“Ultimately, however, marriage babies irresponsibly is, simply, wrong. Failure to support children one had fathered is wrong. We must be unequivocal about this.

“It doesn’t help matters when prime time TV had Murphy Brown—a character who supposedly epitomizes today’s intelligent, highly paid, professional woman—mocking the importance of a father, by bearing a child alone, and calling it just another ‘lifestyle choice.’

“I know it is not fashionable to talk about moral values, but we need to do it. Even though our cultural leaders in Hollywood, network TV and the national newspapers routinely jeer at them, I think that most of us in this room know that some things are good, and other things are wrong. Now it’s time to make the discussion public.

“It’s time to talk again about family, hard work, integrity and personal responsibility. We cannot be embarrassed out of belief that two parents, married to each other, are better in most cases for children than one. That honest work is better than hand-outs or crime. That we are our brothers’ keepers. That it’s worth making an effort, even when rewards aren’t immediate.

“So I think the time has come to renew our public commitment to our Judaeo-Christian values in our churches and synagogues, our civic organizations and our schools. We are, as our children recite each morning, ‘One nation under God.’ That’s a useful framework for acknowledging a duty and an authority higher than our own pleasure and personal ambitions.”

There you have it. A major portion of the infamous speech Vice President Quayle delivered back in May with the one sentence reference to Murphy Brown in context.

Pretty radical stuff, huh? Hilariously funny material! Not really.

What it really says to me is how hostile Hollywood and the news media are toward morality, marriage, parenthood, and the Judaeo-Christian system of values that has helped to make the USA the greatest country on the face of the earth.

Thank you, Vice President Quayle for what you said in your speech on May 20 to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco.

Via “The Visitor”; Adamsville Church of Christ; Adamsville, AL

“The Optimist”

Richard M. Gunn

I passed a sand lot yesterday,
Some kids were playing ball,
I strolled along the third base line
Within the fielder’s call.

“Say, what’s the score?” I asked the chap,
He yelled to beat the stuffin’

“There’s no one out, the bases full
And they’re forty-two to nuthin’!”

“You’re gettin’ beat, aren’t you my lad?”

And then in no time flat,
He answered: “No sir, not as yet!
Our side ain’t been to bat!”

Sick and Shut-in

Mabel Simmons, ill at home.

William Weekley, at home, awaiting word from tests.

Vaydra Herrington, recuperating from having her tonsils removed.

Rubin Malone, shut-in at home.

Inez Prosser, Alpine Adult Care Center.
Lavanda Egan, shut-in at home.

Restored

Tim Lamb, 8-16. We rejoice with Tim.

Wednesday Schedule

8-26-92	Reading: Nathan Liddell Invitation: Ray Foshee
9-2-92	Reading: Kevin Bailey Invitation: Preston Silcox

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

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“Judas—Loyal, Traitor, Bargainer, Betrayer, Suicide”

Robert R. Taylor

The names of the twelve apostles are given in Matthew 10, Mark 3 and Luke 6. Judas Iscariot, uniformly, is listed last. Both Matthew and Mark refer to him as the betrayer; Luke styles him the traitor. The names of the eleven are enshrined in our hearts as real heroes of holiness, gallant men of the gospel. The name of Judas Iscariot, literally a man from Kerioth in Judaea, lives in infamy. We can scarcely speak his name without evoking feelings of repulsion, scorn and distaste. Judas was not born that way; he was not even that way when first railed. He became that way when he gave in to sin.

JUDAS—LOYAL: Prior to being named an apostle, Judas was a disciple which means student, follower, learner, observer. So were the other eleven. Then came the point in their [unintelligible word in original] when Christ called them to a more lofty level—that of apostles. Apostles were appointed; they were sent; they were clothed with the powers of ambassadors; they were to be His envoys. Judas was qualified for such, else the Lord would not have given him this place of spiritual priority. Judas was clothed with powers to heal, cast out demons, cleanse lepers and even raise the dead. The Lord would not have bequeathed such powers to one already in league with

Satan. Judas was an excellent handler of money. That is why he became the treasurer of the apostolic company as per John 12:6. Judas was loyal to the Lord at first; he just did not retain this loyalty. He lost it; he sold his soul to sin.

JUDAS—TRAITOR: Judas became a traitor in heart before he became one externally. Out of the heart flow the issues of life as per the statement from the Wisest of the Ages (Pro. 4:23). Judas failed to do what the first part of that proverb enjoins—keep his heart with full, dedicated diligence. In Matthew 12:35, Jesus avers that “an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” Judas allowed evil to enter, permeate and then dominate his heart. Satan was not always IN him. We read in Luke 22:3, “Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.” Satan, obviously, could not have entered into him at this point had he dominated his heart all along! Yet Satan entered a willing heart here. He did not come in as forceful usurper or Master compelling Judas to receive him. Judas extended him the welcome mat and IN HE CAME! That is the way the Devilish Deluder enters any heart, every heart. Luke tells us that Judas COMMUNED with the Jewish leadership. He communed out of a heart that had become filled with treason against truth. He was a full fledged traitor to truth—its betrayer.

JUDAS—BARGAINER: The bill of sales had to be finalized now. His covetous, grasping, greedy ways drove him to his would-be cronies in crime—the scribes, Pharisees, chief priests and elders. He wished to know what price they would pay for his traitorous plans to be put into infamous operation. He was playing right into their cold, calloused, cruel hands. They agreed to shell out thirty pieces of silver for the dastardly deed, the sure delivery of the despised Galilean into their murderous midst. The foul deed now only awaited convenience of opportune time (Mat. 26:14-16).

JUDAS—BETRAYER: Judas had the audacity to appear with the faithful eleven at the Last Supper in the Upper Room. He was in close proximity to the Lord as they reclined at the table. The Lord pointed to him as the betrayer. Judas exits into the darkness of that Thursday night. The river of no return had been reached for him. He knew that plans for that night called for the Lord to go to Gethsemane—a garden on the western slopes of Olivet where Jesus frequently resorted when in the Jerusalem area. Judas headed for his cronies in crime. He led them to Jesus and identified Him with a kiss. It was the kiss of treason, the kiss of betrayal, the kiss of hypocrisy to the nth degree, and then some!! From that day until now we have had the Judas kiss as a sinful symbol of insensitive betrayal and hypocritical treachery.

JUDAS—SUICIDE: When the diabolical deed stood completed the coveted pieces of silver became less inviting to Judas with the passing of every minute; they soon became odious in his sinful sight. He sought to return the tainted coins to his cronies in crime but they treated him with a cold sneer. He was no longer useful to them. In desperation he threw the now despised coins to the temple floor and went forth in total disgrace. He took his own life by hanging himself (Mat. 27:5). Later his body fell to the ground—head first—and his bowels gushed out as a result of the impact (Acts 1:18). The blood money was used to purchase the potter's field in which strangers in Jerusalem might be buried. Judas went to his own place—Hadean punishment. He is destined for Eternal Gehenna from judgment onward as per Acts 1:25, which states, "That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. Sin is always worse than we first imagine it will be.
2. Judas could have repented; instead he only regretted what he had done.
3. Tragedy stalks every person whose soul is for sale.
4. A child of God can so sin as to be eternally lost—look at Judas.
5. There is never any real comfort or loyalty from one's cronies in crime.
6. A man can prove unfaithful in the very area where he is unusually talented. Judas did in the money handling business.

(Appreciation is expressed for the works of brethren H. A. Dixon and Guy N. Woods which have been helpful in the writing of this article).

P.O. Box 464; Ripley, TN 38063

J. Edgar Hoover and the Church of Christ

Curtis A. Cates

In one of his recent gospel meetings, this writer was privileged to meet a dentist and his wife who informed him of an inquiry they had made of the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, several decades ago. This couple was very active in a mainline denominational church, when they began to notice the increasingly pronounced move toward socialism, especially in the directives and guidelines sent down from the church's headquarters.

Having become disenchanted by the modernistic, anti-American, pro-socialistic thrusts of their denomination and by the National Council of Churches, of which their church was a member and major supporter, they wrote Director J. Edgar Hoover, F.B.I., Washington, D.C., asking, "Which church in America, if any, is likely to be the least infiltrated and permeated by such unpatriotic influences?" Mr. Hoover promptly responded by letter, saying that since the churches of Christ are completely autonomous—possessing no organization larger than the local church, thus no hierarchy to send directives down to the local congregation—there would be little likelihood of more than one or a few congregations coming under such influence.

The dentist and his wife investigated the undenominational church of Christ, against which they had earlier been quite prejudiced. They came to appreciate the restoration principle (i.e., the return to the pure teaching of the

New Testament and thereby restoring the primitive church, which Christ built nearly two thousand years ago) and obeyed the gospel plan of salvation, as set forth in the Acts of Apostles. Director Hoover's insight into the organization of the church of Christ will always be appreciated by these fine Christians and by their children. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph. 3:10).

Write Ray Peters

Ray Peters
18A Druvas
Riga 226002
Latvia, Europe
Via Copenhagen

Sick and Shut-in

Inez Prosser—Alpine Adult Care Center.

William Weekley—outpatient surgery on 8-25 at West Florida Hospital, recuperating at home.

Mabel Simmons—at home.

Rubin Malone—at home.

Lavanda Egan—at home.

New Classes

Don't forget new classes start Wed., Sept. 2 and Sun., Sept. 6!!!!

Wednesday Schedule

9-2-92	Reading: Kevin Bailey Invitation: Preston Silcox
9-9-92	Reading: Ray Williams Invitation: Tim Lamb

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

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September 3, 1992

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God's Promises

Jerry Smith

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet. 1:4). We are certainly blessed to have such a kind, loving creator. The blessings of God are too numerous to mention, however we can use the Bible to follow a line of thought of a blessing for mankind planned even before his creation.

Ephesians 3:9-11 states: "And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (cf. 2 The. 2:13-14).

What is this "mystery"? "For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Cor. 1:20).

Promises in Christ, but how? "But now hath he obtained a **more excellent ministry**, by how much also he is the mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established upon **better promises**" (Heb. 8:6).

Why is this so? "For if that first *covenant* [Law of Moses] had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second"

(Heb. 8:7).

Ultimately, this "promise" means we can be: "the sons of God,...we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). This should be our goal, for we know he is the only way (John 14:6). All "spiritual blessings" are in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:3).

Prophecy: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you" (Eze. 36:25). Explained: "For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah" (Heb. 8:8). Also: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Heb. 8:10).

Before he ascended back to heaven, Jesus spoke of this "promise," to His disciples: "there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1).

This promise came about on Pentecost as the disciples were gathered as Jesus had commanded them (Acts 2:1-4). The Holy Spirit came upon them and by inspiration they used the "keys of the kingdom" to open up entrance

to the church, the promised hope for those assembled, their children, and to all those of future generations who would ultimately hear the gospel (Acts 2:38-39). Thus the “promise,” the Gospel of Christ was carried to all the world (Mark 16:15) Jesus was preached to those who would hear their words (Acts 8:35-37). Thus the “promise” was fulfilled. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).

This, however, was a conditional promise. Man is not forced to accept Christ; he has a choice to make in the matter. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Mat. 6:24). However, the “choice” is a clear one. “For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting” (Gal. 6:8).

We need to carefully consider our choice. “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:12). Believe (Mark 1:15; John 1:12); Repent (Mat. 4:17; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30); Confess (Mat. 10:32; Rom. 10:10); and, Be Baptized (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 41), and the Lord will add you to “His church.” (Mat. 16:18; Acts 2:47). Thereafter, remain faithful to His Word (1 John 1:7; Mat. 25:21; Rev. 2:10).

P.O. Box 664; Parrish, AL 35580

The Gospel in Isaiah

Winfred Clark

In a class of the Alabama School of Bible Emphasis, we had the privilege of studying Isaiah 53. Here is, without a doubt, a great chapter that rests at the heart of God’s plan to save man. It places you hundreds of years before Christ to see what happens as if you were there. It runs the course as far as attitudes are concerned. There is the attitude of the skeptic, of the Saviour, and of God. The reactions are registered in various verses. There are several approaches one might take but look at three things within the chapter.

I. THERE IS THE REPUDIATION OF THE MESSIAH (vv. 1-3).

Take a look at the phrase, “Who hath believed our report?” That question is equal to saying, “Look at how few believe our report.” The report or message about the Saviour did not receive ready acceptance. Two New Testament passages confirm this (John 12:37-38; Rom. 10:16). Romans 10:16 has to do with men’s reactions after the fact of the Lord’s coming, death, resurrection and ascension. They still don’t believe. They don’t believe what the Scriptures such as Isaiah 53 had to say about His coming, dying, and resurrection. They were just like those of Luke 24:25-26. They ignored the signs that He indeed came from God. What would you then expect but a repudiation of Him as the Saviour? They will see nothing in His background that attracts them. He is indeed “a root out of a dry ground.” They see nothing in His behaviour that attracts, for after all, He is a man of sorrows. Truly, Christ, to the Jew, was a stumbling block and to the Greeks, foolishness. It would have been different if they had accepted the signs and Scriptures that pointed to Him.

II. THERE IS THE HUMILIATION OF THE SAVIOUR (vv. 4-9).

This is surely to be expected after such an attitude is expressed in verses 1-3. Now you are introduced to His suffering. There is before us the reality of His suffering. The prophet says, “surely.” That means “a matter of fact.” His suffering was real, not merely imagined. One passage after another confirms this fact (Mat. 16:21; 17:12; Heb. 5:7-9; 13:12; 1 Pet. 2:21-23). He was smitten, stricken, afflicted, wounded, bruised, and cut off. You don’t look at those terms without seeing the hurt and harm our Lord endured. There is not only the reality but also the ruthless aspect. Those who killed Him were unmerciful and unconcerned. They couldn’t care less about the pain He endured. Add to this the reproach of His suffering. They treated Him like a criminal in His suffering and would bury Him as one, had God not intervened through Joseph. Yes, His suffering was real, ruthless and reproachful. But thank God the chapter doesn’t stop there.

III. THERE IS THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SAVIOUR (vv. 10-12).

They could put Him to death and they did but these verses show us that He would be raised from the dead. Note that “he would see his seed,” and “he shall prolong his days.” These two things could only be possible if He were raised. He would also be the redeemer. He would “justify many.” But He will also reign as a conqueror who receives the spoils of victory.

Yes, Isaiah is at the heart of the gospel and tells me what God did “for me” at Calvary.

P.O. Box 506; Athens, AL 35611

Guest Speaker

We are delighted to have brother Clifford Newell, of Bay Minette, speaking at Bellview on Sunday morning, Sept. 6. Brother Liddell will be speaking at Bay Minette.

Teachers' Meeting

All teachers, co-teachers and their spouses are requested to attend a teachers' meeting and Dutch treat dinner on October 20, at 6:00 P.M. at Morrison's in Town and Country Plaza. See you there!

Gospel Meeting

Our fall Gospel meeting will be November 1-6, 1992. Brother Jerry Martin, outstanding evangelist from Meeker, Colorado, will preach. Plan now to be present for every service and to bring someone with you.

Pantry

Please bring juices and canned fruits. You may also make a donation to be used to purchase items.

Hurricane Relief

Those wishing to help the brethren in Homestead, FL affected by Hurricane Andrew may make a donation through the Jupiter-Tequesta Church of Christ, 11701 SE 171st Street, Tequesta, FL 33469. Mark it for Hurricane Relief.

Wednesday Schedule

9-9-92 Reading: Ray Williams
 Invitation: Tim Lamb
9-16-92 Reading: Jeremy Caine
 Invitation: Louis Herrington

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

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Caleb: the Man with “Another Spirit”

Jimmy Clark

“But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it” (Num. 14:24). This passage is set in contrast with the spirit of the spies which brought up an evil report concerning the conquest. Caleb stands as an example for all to study and to learn how to have the proper frame of mind in the midst of “seeming” difficulties. Consider three principles found with the spirit of Caleb.

CONVICTION. “And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this *is* the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people *be* strong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* walled, *and* very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:27-30). Look at all the discouragement that is presented and yet such did not affect Caleb’s

thinking. He saw the exact same things which they saw. Even though the majority fainted in their minds, Caleb’s mind was full of faith. His conviction was so established that he encouraged immediate action. Notice the statement “Let us go up at once” (Num. 13:30). The world, home, church, etc. would be much better off with such a spirit in the minds of men and women today.

COURAGE. It took a true man to stand up against the report of his fellows. It took a true man to see that the people of the land and their protection was nothing. Notice the words of Joshua and Caleb after the people abandoned hope of conquering the land. “And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, *is* an exceeding good land. If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they *are* bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the LORD *is* with us: fear them not” (Num. 14:7-9). When Caleb finally had the opportunity to receive his inheritance, he said, “Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great *and* fenced: if so be the LORD *will be* with me, then I shall be

able to drive them out, as the LORD said” (Jos. 14:12). Such a virtue is essential.

CONFIDENCE. Conviction and courage would be lacking without the confidence that goes with faith. Caleb’s confidence rested in the power and faithfulness of God. Caleb’s confidence centered upon the truth “If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey” (Num. 14:8). Caleb’s hope was stayed in the fact that “the LORD *is* with us” (Num. 14:9). When looming obstacles stand before a person, confidence in God is a great stabilizer. Caleb was not without the hardships of life, but he did know how to face them. May all have the same spirit as Caleb!

Sin

Franklin Camp

“Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*” (Exo. 34:7). “Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, *whose sin is* covered. Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile” (Psa. 32:1-2). “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin” (Psa. 51:1-2).

If you read carefully these verses, you will note that there are three words to denote man’s departure from God. The words are iniquity, transgression and sin. These three words all designate the same action but from different points of view. These three words denote the different aspects of sin. Sin is a many-sided thing. Sin is a word that is almost eliminated from our vocabulary today. Perhaps a study of these words will help us recognize the vileness of sin. Everyone would do well to study especially Psalm 51. This psalm is an outpouring from the heart that has come to recognize the personal nature of sin, and one whose conscience has been wounded and healed. Let us now study each of these words.

INIQUITY. Iniquity means that which is twisted or crooked. It is the failure to walk a straight line. Iniquity is the opposite of righteousness. The definition of the word in Matthew 7:23 is “lawlessness.” All sin is a deviation from a standard to which we ought to conform. There is a straight line to which our conduct ought to run parallel. The path to God is a straight line. The shortest road from earth to heaven is absolutely straight. There is a path that is right and there is a path that is wrong. There is a law of absolute right embracing everything. This is contrary to the general philosophy of our day. The idea of truth being relative is denied by the word “iniquity” itself. The refusal on man’s part to admit his iniquity has led to the idea of truth being relative and situation ethics. The Bible knows of no such thing as either truth being relative or situation ethics.

TRANSGRESSION. Transgression has to do with our relation to God. Transgression means rebellion, separation, departure. All sin going away from God. One aspect of sin as indicated in the word “transgression” is contempt for divine law. Every sin is rebellion against God. Among other things, Saul’s sin, as described in I Samuel 15, is called rebellion against God. Iniquity suggests law. Transgression suggests a law-giver. Thus, our obligation is not merely to the law but to the one that gave it. The center of all sin is the refusal to obey God and to live for oneself. The word “transgression” emphasizes the ingratitude of the sinner.

SIN. The word “sin” means missing the aim or goal. Every sin misses the goal at which we should aim. Sin is failure in the great purpose of our being. All sin is a failure. When we sin we fall short of our highest purpose. Whatever we gain by sin, we always lose more. Every life committed to sin is a failure. The sinner may be counted successful as the world counts success, but it is a failure as far as the individual is concerned and his relationship to God.

In Luke 12, in the parable of the rich man, Jesus calls him a fool. His life was a failure because it was life without God, and a life that was characterized by sin. Death only made evident what had been true all the time. It is tragic for one to fail to realize that his life has been a failure until he comes to face death. Sin always fails to secure what it sought. That which Adam and Eve sought to obtain by sin in Genesis 3, they failed to secure. What was true of Adam and Eve is true of every sinner. The very definition of the word “sin” suggests the futility of sin.

Via “Hobbs St. Herald”; Athens, AL

Gospel Meeting in Riga, Latvia

On September 16, a group of brethren, including three from Bellview, will be leaving for Riga to take part in a gospel meeting. Brother Ray Peters has been working diligently in Riga for the last several months in reaching the lost and has baptized several into Christ. The group will be taking songbooks, communionware, Bibles in English, Russian and Latvian and tracts for the work. Pray for the work in Riga.

Thanks!

Thanks to all those who worked to put together the September issue of DEFENDER. Thanks to Elward Brantley for the fine job he always does printing DEFENDER.

Gospel Meeting

November 1-6

Bellview Church of Christ

With Evangelist

Jerry Martin

of Meeker, CO

Wednesday Schedule

9-16-92 Reading: Jeremy Caine
 Invitation: Louis Herrington

9-23-92 Reading: Jerry Caine
 Invitation: Scot Brazell

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

September 17, 1992

Number 38

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

The Six Trials of Christ

Harold Blevins

The Jewish and Roman illegal trials of Christ were a travesty. There was nothing just or legal about any of the mock trials of Our Master. The Savior was sent from one court scene to another in two threefold trials. There were three trials by the Jews (ecclesiastical) and three by the Romans (civil).

Jesus was led bound as a prisoner from Gethsemane silently through the streets at miserable midnight. God and Christ contemplated from the early morning of time that the Son of man would suffer the spectacle of shame of man's inhumanity to man in mock trials of the Master.

The Jewish Trials

(Mat. 26:57-58; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54-71; John 18:12-14; 19-24)

- I. Jesus Before Annas (John 18:13).
 1. Annas had great influence.
 2. This was an informal trial.
 3. Gave Sanhedrin time to gather.
- II. Jesus before Caiphas (Mat. 26:57).
 1. Sanhedrin hastily assembled at night. Under law could not meet at night.
 2. Sentence of death agreed upon during night—illegal.

III. Savior sentenced (Luke 22:66-71).

1. At daybreak Sanhedrin reassembled.
2. False witnesses sought, but established nothing.
 1. Jesus silent (Isa. 53).
3. Jesus answers (Mat. 26:64).
 1. Then they judged.
 2. "Tomorrow" Jesus will judge (2 Tim. 4:1; John 12:24; 2 Cor. 5).

The Roman Trials

(Mat. 27:11-23; Mark 15:2-14; Luke 23:2-25; John 18:28-40)

- I. Jesus before Pilate, first time.
 1. Lead from Caiphas to Pilate (John 18:28-29).
 2. Jews could sentence, but not execute the sentence.
- II. Jesus before Herod (Luke 23:5-12).

1. Only Luke records this.
 2. Herod Antipas who beheaded John Baptist (Mark 6:23-24).
 3. Horrible treatment by Herod.
 1. Purple robe sign of royalty to mock the Master (John 19:2).
 4. Sent Christ to Pilate (Luke 23:11).
- III. Savior's second appearance before Pilate (Mat. 27:23ff; Mark 15:14ff; Luke 23:13ff; John 18:33ff).
1. Pilate sought to dismiss the case.
 2. Pilate proposed compromise.
 1. Spirit of Rome at that time.
 2. Agree to chastise Christ.
 3. Crowd cried to crucify Christ.

CONCLUSION: Christians must recall Christ and the terrible trials by both the Jew and the Roman. As we lie in the lap of luxury and dream of Heaven we need to remind ourselves of OUR REDEEMER and that He was sent to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). So should we. Let us listen to Luke's recording of the Lamb's words, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37).

Via "The Harvester"; El Reno, OK

Editorially Speaking

Foy L. Smith

I learned a long time ago to never sell children short. They know a lot more than we often give them credit for knowing. Henry Ward Beecher said, "The mother's heart is the child's classroom." This is about the child's first classroom, and the things he/she learns there are almost unbelievable. More and more the idea is being advanced that the child even learns from the mother's heartbeat. With its head against its mother's breast it is going through a learning process. And with the beginning of the very first day of school the learning process really begins. Begins, I said. The little boy went home after the first day of school and was asked, "Did you learn anything?" He replied, "No, I gotta' go back again tomorrow!" And after a lot of tomorrows the child is still learning. In fact, it is a process that goes all the way through life if we let it. The day we stop learning we hasten the day of dying.

The child knows a lot more about "the birds and the bees" than often given credit of knowing. I know I did, and I lived back in the "ignorant" day! When my younger brother, Loy, was born, I went across the "holler" to spend the day with my aunt and cousins. Papa came over late that day and broke the news, "Guess what we have at our house? The Dr. came and left us a little red headed boy!" Now, we never had anything on any side of our family tree that was red headed! But that was the way he broke the news to me—news that didn't surprise me one bit. It was sort of like the two little boys playing when the daddy of one broke the same news to him. The child looked surprised, then when the dad left, he handed a dollar bill to his little friend, saying, "You win! It was a boy!" Nope, we don't fool even the little ones very often anymore, and certainly not in this present day. If children learn just about everything else at an early age, we must not overlook the golden time to teach them when they are young (Pro. 22:6). Paul reminded Timothy that he had known the holy Scriptures "from a child" (2 Tim. 3:15). There is no doubt that children do learn at an earlier age today than when we were children. Now we weren't dumbbells, but there are so many more instruments of learning today than back in our early days. For this reason they just may become accountable at a somewhat earlier age. They like baby-talk when they are little, but it doesn't take too long for them to grow away from baby-talk. Now I am naturally leading up to an important point and I must not let it get away from me. If we are not very careful we will not let our children mature as they must. I have seen this in our Bible School materials for many years. I hear it from our young people, especially in the junior departments. I have talked about it to those who put the materials out but have not gotten very far, it seems. Some of our fine juniors returned from camp just recently. They had a fine time, but that was the criticism. They felt that the material presented was a bit below their learning ability...and I have heard this for the past thirty-five years, at least. "They treat us like we are little children." And we older ones know that this is a real affront to intermediates who are trying hard to throw off childhood and accept adulthood. I think this is worthy of the attention of publishing houses that put out materials for all ages. Some of these troubles come from "our" bookstores that rely on denominational sources for studies for our children. Have we run out of able brethren who can supply such study courses for our

own children and youths? Children have to be taught on their own level. This goes without argument, but we oftentimes fail to know what their learning level is. We must keep on offering constructive comments, even criticisms, hoping that this mistake will be corrected.

Of course, one great fault is with parents who gladly turn their children over to someone else and never take the time to teach them at home. They know more about their development than anyone else. And they can render invaluable help to those who write materials by talking with them about their own children and their abilities to learn. Isn't it strange that in almost every problem, the solution seems to be in the home, at least to a great extent. Luther Burbank said one time, "If we paid no more attention to our plants than we have to our children, we would now be living in a jungle of weeds." If Mr. Burbank could come back, he no doubt would say, "I TOLD YOU SO!"

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Nightly: 7:30*

GOSPEL MEETING
FOLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST
OCTOBER 4-8
SPEAKER: BOBBY DUNCAN
OF ADAMSVILLE, AL

Wednesday Schedule

9-23-92 Reading: Jerry Caine
 Invitation: Scot Brazell
9-30-92 Reading: Adam Beck
 Invitation: Kevin Bailey

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

September 24, 1992

Number 39

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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Temptation

Bobby Liddell

INTRODUCTION:

WHAT IS TEMPTATION?

Temptation may refer to trials, testing, and proving of faith (Gen. 22:1; Heb. 11:17; Jam. 1:2-12). It may also mean the encouragement, suggestion or solicitation to do evil (Jam. 1:13-16; Mat. 4:10; 1 The. 3:5). It is this second meaning we shall consider in our study.

WHO IS THE TEMPTER? (WHO TEMPTS MAN TO SIN?)

Certainly, not God (Jam. 1:13; John 1:29; Rom. 6:1-2). Satan is the tempter (Gen. 3; John 8:44; Eph. 2:2; 6:10-18; 1 The. 3:5).

WHO IS TEMPTED?

Satan seeks to wield universal influence. He would tempt every man (Jam. 1:14; 1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Cor. 2:11). He has surely been successful for every accountable person has fallen to temptation (1 John 1:6-10; Rom. 3:23).

DISCUSSION:

HOW SHALL WE HANDLE TEMPTATION?

I. RECOGNIZE TEMPTATION.

1. We must recognize what tempts us. What tempts you may not tempt another. Temptation may come through riches (1 Tim. 6:9); physical desires (1 Cor. 7:5); alcohol, tobacco, immorality or any number of other avenues.

2. We must recognize who tempts us. Satan works through men, "religious" men, even our friends and family (1 Pet. 5:8; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Cor. 15:33).

II. RESIST TEMPTATION.

1. We can resist the devil (Jam. 4:7).
2. Jesus did (Mat. 4:1-11).
3. We are not ignorant of Satan's "devices" (2 Cor. 2:11).

III. REMOVE TEMPTATION.

1. We must remove it or our self from it (Mat. 6:13; 1 Tim. 6:10-11; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14).
2. Temptation comes through the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye and the pride of life (Gen. 3:6; 1 John 2:15-17; Mat. 4:3, 9, 6).
3. Removing temptation takes wisdom and courage.
 1. A spouse, unfaithful in the past, was repeatedly tempted because of her job situation—far better to

leave that job.

2. A lady, recovering from drug addiction said the smells, sights and people in her old “drug neighborhood” brought back her craving—better to stay away from there.
3. No job, recreation, entertainment, friend, place or thing is worth the price of sin (Rom. 6:23).

IV. REPENT IF FALL TO TEMPTATION.

1. We can not blame others for our sins (Gen. 3:12-13); say, “The devil made me do it” (Gen. 3:13); or, say, “God made me that way” (1 Cor. 10:13; Jam. 1:13).
2. If we fall to temptation, we must say, “I have sinned” (Psa. 51:1-3); repent (Acts 17:30-31); and seek forgiveness in accordance with God’s will.

V. REPROVE TEMPTATION.

1. Jesus said: “Get thee hence, Satan” (Mat. 4:10).
2. We must abhor evil and cleave to that which is good (Rom. 12:9). Our speech and actions should clearly demonstrate our abhorrence of evil.
3. We must not envy sinners but reprove their sins (Pro. 23:17).

VI. REMEMBER LESSONS LEARNED FROM BATTLES WITH TEMPTATION.

1. Remember the times of triumph over temptation and be fortified.
2. Remember the tragic times of falling to temptation and be forearmed.
3. Remember the truth that we are not alone (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:12-16).

CONCLUSION:

I. DON’T LEAVE THE PLACE OF SAFETY. Jeff Spencer of Botswana reports the following true story. On September 10, 1989, in Bloemfontein, South Africa, a 23-year-old man ignored the many warning signs stating, “Beware of Lions,” got out of his vehicle and walked close to a resting pride of lions to take photos. One chased him. He ran toward the vehicle, but did not make it. Rangers retrieved his lifeless body. Who could he blame? Only himself. The lions looked slow, lazy, even “cute” and he let his guard down, left the place of safety, and stepped into their territory. Suddenly, they became quick, alert and deadly.

II. BE AWARE AND BEWARE.

1. Be aware of the dangers. Satan tempts you to sin using that which is most appealing to you (Jam. 1:14; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).
2. Be aware of the defense which God supplies (Eph. 6:10-18; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 2:18).
3. Be aware of the place of safety. Safety is found only in Christ and is dependent upon our faithfulness. Never leave the place of safety.

Is Anybody Going to Hell?

Dub McClish

Anybody who thinks we are not living in an age of super-tolerance just hasn’t been keeping up! The philosophies and reasonings of men have convinced most of the world that they can believe anything they want to on any subject or believe nothing at all and they are still all right with God. Underscoring the popularity of this belief in universal salvation was a poll taken in Dallas recently. A large radio station sent a reporter out with a microphone to ask, “Who’s going to Hell?” of a random sampling of people. Of approximately five hundred people called, ninety-eight percent said they didn’t know anybody who they thought was bound for Hell. Now that’s getting pretty close to universal Universalism!

What does the Bible say about Hell? Is Hell just a place preachers have dreamed up to gain control of people through fear? Hardly. Jesus often spoke of Hell. It is a place where both soul and body will be destroyed (Mat. 10:28). It is a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (Mat. 13:42). It is a place of eternal fire and eternal punishment prepared for the devil and his angels (Mat. 25:41, 46). Other Bible writers speak in plain language of this terrible place. Perhaps the very terribleness of the place is more than men have been willing to contemplate and they have thus tried to deny the existence of it by denying that anyone will go there. However, it must be remembered that there is as much (perhaps more) material in the New Testament to warn men of Hell as to promise them Heaven. Men are fools to believe only the teaching about Heaven while disbelieving that about Hell. The Bible not only teaches plainly that Hell is a real place in the eternal, spiritual world, but it also tells us who will go

there. Paul lists some of its populace: “Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men [homosexuals—DM], nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). He writes a similar list in Galatians 5:19-21 and likewise says that such things will keep one out of the kingdom of God. This is another way of saying that such will go to Hell. John lists several who will be in Hell, including those not written in the book of life (Rev. 20:15; 21:8; 22:15). Those who do not obey the Gospel will go to Hell (2 The. 1:8-9). Lamentably, more will be lost than saved (Mat. 7:13-14).

312 Pearl Street; Denton. TX 76201

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Gospel Meeting

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Wednesday Schedule

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 Invitation: Kevin Bailey
10-7-92 Reading: Charles Garrett
 Invitation: Jeremy Caine

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

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October 1, 1992

Number 40

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What Is Right? What Is Wrong?

Ronnie Hutchison

To many it is sometimes hard to know just what is right and just what is wrong. This is especially true of young people who have not had the experience that some who are older have had. However, it seems that there are many who are older in age, who have not “grown up” in the full sense of the word, who still have quite a bit of trouble determining what is right and what is wrong. We all are constantly confronted with this question: What is right? What is wrong?

It is true that the Bible does not condemn, by name, all things that are wrong. For example, the Bible doesn't condemn gambling by name. But it does so in principle. The Bible doesn't condemn the use of tobacco by name, but it does so in principle.

We should know that the Bible is our guide book to Heaven; therefore, it furnishes us enough information to determine what is right and what is wrong. It may not specifically condemn certain sins, but it does give principles which condemn those sins.

Let us notice a few facts that will help us determine right from wrong.

1. A person must not do that which the Bible says is wrong.
2. A person must not do that which has the appearance of evil (1 The. 5:22).
3. A person must not do that which will cause harm to the spiritual life of others (Rom. 14:21).
4. A person must not do that which breaks down the distinction between the church and the world (2 Pet. 1:13-16).

When it comes to recreation and entertainment how do we know what is right and what is wrong? The above principles would apply. Also the following principles apply.

1. Is it right?
2. Do good people generally approve of it? (Phi. 4:8-9).
3. Will it interfere with the welfare of others? (Rom. 14:7-12).
4. Will it encourage bad habits?
5. Will it lead one to be with evil companions? (1 Cor. 15:33—ASV).
6. Will it lead us to go to places where we should not go?
7. Will it influence weak Christians to fall? (1 Cor. 8).
8. Can I afford the cost of time and money?

9. Will it affect the personal or property rights of others?
10. Will it encourage me to follow the golden rule (Mat. 7:12).

At all times we should abstain from things that are questionable. Here are some of the reasons for this.

1. We are not of the world (John 15:19).
2. We are to abstain from the appearance of evil (1 The. 5:22).
3. We are not to conform to this world (Rom. 12:2).
4. We are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14).
5. We are to abstain from the lusts of the flesh (1 Pet. 2:11).
6. We are to walk circumspectly (Eph. 5:15).
7. We are not to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Eph. 5:11).
8. We are to be friends with God not the world (Jam. 4:4).
9. We are to resist the devil (Jam. 4:7).

If we study these rules and apply them to our everyday life, we will not have any trouble in determining what is right and what is wrong.

Let us study that we might show ourselves approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15), so that when we stand in His presence on Judgment Day to give an account of our deeds done on this earth, we can do so without shame and sorrow. May God help each one of us to take the right and safe course.

Via "The Harvester"; El Reno, OK

Teacher's Meeting
October 20, 6:00 P.M.
Morrison's Town & Country Plaza

“Let There Be No Strife”

Winfred Clark

Some words are inviting. Take the word “home.” Such brings to mind the security and comfort one feels when he or she is enclosed therein. But not all words are like this. The word “strife” has angry tones and sounds associated thereto. This is the word used by Abraham in Genesis 13:8. Strife had arisen between his herdsmen and those of Lot. To Abraham such became a matter of concern and needed to be corrected. We would do well to see how he approached the matter.

I. HE SAW THE PROBLEM. Abraham didn't try to act as if such did not exist. Turning his head would not make it go away. The strife was there (Gen. 13:7). All the hoping it wasn't present would not mean it wasn't a fact. This Abraham saw and he wanted Lot to see the same.

He saw the **seriousness** of that problem. The herdsmen may not see it as such for they would not look at it as did Abraham. This good man knew this could very well spread. Solomon said, “The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water” (Pro. 17:14). Anybody that has been the erosion that can take place by a trickle of water knows the dangers to a dam or dike if something is not done to stop it. It will not take long for such to cut a path large enough to empty a lake. So it is with strife in the beginning. Such will soon spread from individuals to families and whole churches.

The Hebrews writer speaks of such a danger when he speaks of a root of bitterness that begins to grow and by such most become defiled (Heb. 12:15). Such needs, therefore, to be seen as a serious matter.

Abraham also saw the **source** of the strife. In this case, one of the sources was the accumulation of cattle and herds. The land was not able to provide adequate pasture in one place.

Its source can be hatred (Pro. 10:12); or pride (Pro. 28:25); or carnality (1 Cor. 3:3); or envy (Jam. 3:13-16). So Abraham was able to see the seriousness and source of the problem.

II. HE SOUNDED HIS PLEA. Here is a good man who would have his voice heard on the side of peace. He made an appeal for a cessation of strife and all of its attendant evils. This is equal to Paul's plea of Philippians 2:3: “Let nothing *be done* through strife.”

His plea was a **responsible** plea. Abraham assumed personal responsibility for what his herdsmen did and said and he would have Lot do the same. He did not take the hands-off attitude that says, "I am not responsible."

Paul wrote his brethren and asked them to act in a responsible fashion (Phi. 2:3; 1 Cor. 1:10).

His plea was also set in **reasonable** terms. He would have Lot see who they were. "We be brethren," he said. So that is all the more reason that no strife be allowed to arise between them.

III. HE SET FORTH A PLAN. Abraham saw a way to avoid strife if others wanted to do so. There was a way if men were willing. His plan was **selfless** in nature. You can see Abraham was not looking out for himself first when he said, "The whole land is before us, you go one way and I'll go the other." He would not take first choice, though he had the right to do so. In this, he walks in the spirit of "Love seeketh not her own" (1 Cor. 13:5). Abraham wasn't thinking of self but rather of a solution for the strife.

His plan was **suitable**. It was workable and evidently did just that. You don't find that word "strife" again concerning those herdsmen. His attitude is good to have around.

Teachers' Meeting

All teachers, co-teachers and their spouses are requested to attend a teachers' meeting at Morrison's at Town and Country Ptaza on October 20, 1992 at 6:00 P.M.

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 Invitation: Jeremy Caine
10-14-92 Reading: Mike Peters
 Invitation: Nathan Liddell

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“He’s Mine”

Burt Jones

Perhaps you remember the scene during the track and field portion of the Olympic games recently held in Barcelona, Spain. If you witnessed it, chances are unlikely that you would forget it.

The runners in a middle distance event exploded from the starting blocks and were settling into a steady pace when one of the runners abruptly pulled up in an obvious agony having torn a leg muscle. He then appeared to regain his composure, and with all the determination he could muster he stood, took a tentative step, and amazed everyone in the stadium by half hobbling, half running, drawing from deep inside himself the sheer will to continue the race.

He called on all of his human resources, visualizing the finish line that he had unceasingly trained for years to cross, just about the time realization set in that there was no possible way that he could complete the course, exhausting his rapidly disappearing stamina, a large and loving figure appeared from somewhere and wrapped a massive arm around this struggling soul. He steadied him and the two continued where there had been one. The steadying force was the runner’s father! He had bolted from the stands, oblivious to what others thought. All that mattered to him was reaching the place where his child stood helpless. As the father wrapped his child in his unyielding arms as he had done so many years before when his child

took his first tottering step, an Olympic official approached the runner and his father. Just as he reached the two the father extended an open and protective hand toward the official, smiled and said with all authority, “He’s mine!”

The poignancy of this sight left tears in the eyes of this writer.

Dear reader, that unlikely duo then laboriously circled that track to the deafening applause of an Olympic stadium filled to capacity, and not one witness was left seated as the crowd acknowledged the TRUE winner of this race.

A footnote in the newspaper the following day quoted the father as saying, “I’m prouder of my child for having FINISHED the race as he did than I would have been if he had won the gold medal.” Paul asks, “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain” (1 Cor. 9:24). You see, the clock at these Olympic games had long since been silenced, but this valiant runner, indeed, finished the race.

How often we attempt to run this race of life using OUR moral stamina, OUR resources and OUR abilities.

May we run our race, not handicapped nor constrained by our frail abilities, but buoyed by the presence of that supportive Father who willingly left His heavenly “grandstand,” entered onto that track known to us as life, wrapped

His Spirit around and through us and held out His divine hand grasping that sword of the Spirit which is His Word', and said, "HE'S MINE!"

The Lord's Supper

Bobby Liddell

Christ is the Lord of the Supper for He instituted it, blessed it and proclaimed it (Luke 22:7-20; Mat. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-25). Since the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper and blessed it to its purpose, our partaking of it is not a matter of human tradition or man-ordained rite, but obedience to His will.

The Supper of the Lord has as its elements: (1) unleavened bread (Mat. 26:26); and, (2) the fruit of the vine (Mat. 26:29). Of the bread, Jesus said, "this is my body," and of the fruit of the vine, He said, "this is my blood." The Catholic doctrine of "Transubstantiation" (a change in substance); i.e., of the elements into the literal physical body and blood of Christ is in error on a number of points. One of them is the obvious denial of the figurative language employed by Christ.

Jesus said, figuratively, "I am the door" (John 10:9), and "I am the vine and ye are the branches" (John 15:5). He was literally and physically neither a door nor a vine. Thus, His saying, "this is my body," and, "this is my blood," indicated the elements' representation, figuratively, of His physical body and blood.

To partake of the Lord's Supper; thus, communing with the Lord, requires the right attitude of heart and the right attitude toward truth (1 Cor. 11:27-ff; John 4:24). God, in His Word, teaches us concerning the time, purpose and action of our partaking, (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11).

Our partaking of the Lord's Supper requires the right relationship with the Lord. Paul said, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10:16). Again, by inspiration, he wrote: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (1 Cor. 10:21). Those in the kingdom, and only those in the kingdom, have the right to partake. "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Mat. 26:29).

The Lord's supper, as a memorial, spans the gap between the first coming of our Lord as a sacrifice for sins and the coming of our Lord the second time without sin unto salvation (Heb. 9:26-29). Our partaking of it is a public proclamation of our faith in the Lord and in His promise to come again (1 Cor. 11:26). Only those who have been and continue to be cleansed by the blood of Christ may partake of the Lord's supper and be right in so doing (Rev. 1:5; 1 John 1:6-10).

What must You Do to Be Saved?

HEAR THE WORD OF GOD, THE GOSPEL. "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

BELIEVE IN JESUS AS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

REPENT OF ALL SINS. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

CONFESS YOUR FAITH IN CHRIST. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10).

BE BAPTIZED (IMMERSED) IN WATER. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4).

LIVE FAITHFULLY IN CHRIST, WORSHIPPING AND SERVING GOD. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

*You're Invited
To Our
Gospel Meeting
November 1-6
Jerry Martin
of Meeker, CO
Sunday: 9 A.M.
Nightly: 7:30*

Teachers' Meeting

Who: All Teachers, Co-teachers and Spouses

When: 6:00 P.m., October 20, 1992

Where: Morrison's in Town and Country Plaza. See You There!

Wednesday Schedule

10-14-92 Reading: Mike Peters
 Invitation: Nathan Liddell
10-21-92 Reading: Shebly Nall
 Invitation: Chris Mathews

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

October 15, 1992

Number 42

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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(904) 455-7595

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Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Worship or Entertainment?

Wayne Price

A dangerous tendency has been developing in the church for some time now, and it is high time that Christians everywhere step back and take a look at where the practice leads.

A number of years ago, preachers ceased bringing lessons on how God is to be worshipped, and that God is the one to be pleased with our worship. The shift in emphasis, subtly and slowly, came upon an unsuspecting brotherhood (in large part) and suddenly we began hearing that we must get away from book, chapter, and verse preaching (that was legalistic, we were told) and we must make people feel "good" about themselves! Such an idea precludes verses such as Colossians 3:17, 1 Corinthians 14:37, John 4:24, etc. Whatever it takes, even to neglecting to preach on repentance (Luke 13:3ff.), if we are to appeal to the masses and grow in numbers, we must make people "feel good about themselves" began to be trumpeted.

Selfishness reigned supreme. Expressions like "I did not get much out of worship today," or "The worship hour was boring and stiff," began to show a mind set on entertainment, rather than on worship. To enliven the worship hour, we then began to hear that some advocated the use of more entertainment, choirs, quartets, etc. to spice up an otherwise dull worship period.

In this craze to try to please everybody (which is an impossible task), some began to declare that we must give women their freedom in Christ to serve to their full potential; otherwise they will leave us for denominations where they are given greater freedom. Being interpreted this simply means: allow them to serve in leadership roles, etc., regardless of what the Bible says. Additionally, since a huge majority of the religious world out there does not agree with the Bible doctrine of salvation by means of God's grace and man's obedient faith (Eph. 2:8-9; Heb. 5:9), then some began to promote the concept of salvation by grace alone; others have warmed over the old Baptist doctrine of salvation by faith only, and are trying to palm it off on the brotherhood. After all, we will continue to lose people who reject these truths, seems to be the idea. Others demand that we begin to use instrumental music or we will continue to lose others who have a great talent as musicians.

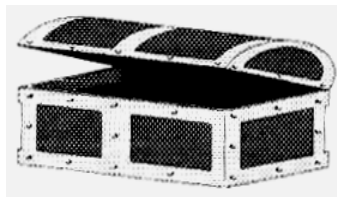
The fact of the matter is that the Lord's church is better off without those who refuse to abide by the Bible's teachings. If these who demand the right to teach and practice unscriptural doctrines do not leave, we ought to withdraw fellowship from them! We dare not ignore Bible truths in order to entice them to stay with us. Paul declared: "if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10). Preachers must dust off some of

their old sermon outlines on the subject of how worship must please God; discover once again how that “preaching the word” is what God desires (2 Tim. 4:2-4) and not pleasing the pewster (Gal. 1:10); continue to preach the “whole counsel of God” instead of falling prey to James Woodroofs doctrine of staying out of the epistles (Romans-Jude since they are legalistic, you know) and just use the four gospels instead; and above all things, begin anew bringing book, chapter, and verse sermons and discard the pleasant, cute, after-dinner-speeches that cater to a people who do not want to hear the truth (Isa. 30:9-10).

Worship is to be pleasing to God, and just because something pleases us does not mean that it pleases God. To know what is pleasing to God can be ascertained but one way only, and that is to find out what he says about it in the word of God. God is to be pleased, not man (John 4:24).

Via Olathe, KS

Unlock the Treasures of
God's Word



In Bible School

Gospel Meeting
November 1-6, 1992

with

Jerry Martin

of

Meeker, Colorado

Service Times

Sun: 9 and 10 A.M.

Sun - Fri: 7:30 P.M.

Bellview Church of Christ

Pensacola, Florida

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 Invitation: Jerry Fillingim

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THE BEACON

Volume XXI

October 22, 1992

Number 43

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Some “Why Nots” of Worship

Dub McClish

The worship of Almighty God is both an exalted privilege and awesome responsibility. Failure to grasp this truth plunged the likes of Cain (Gen. 4), Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10), and King Saul (1 Sam. 13) into terrible calamities. Our Lord chastised His contemporaries because they worshipped by man’s teaching instead of God’s (Mat. 15:9). Worshipers of God must worship Him “in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). Some Christians do not enjoy worshiping God because they mistake its purpose.

It is not to please ourselves, but God. All of the Old Testament characters mentioned above pleased themselves rather than God, as did the vain worshipers Jesus rebuked. Since then, all sorts of worship practices have been adopted, including the beads-counting, Mary-worship, instruments of music, and believe it or not, a strip-tease show. These and a thousand others are done because men like them, regardless of what God’s Word says. Regrettably, even some members of the Lord’s church now care more for what pleases them than what pleases God. However, if we are not going to worship as God decrees, we worship in vain (1 Sam. 15:22; Mat. 15:9).

It is not to arouse, but to express, spiritually. “Worship” means “to bow down,” “to esteem,” “to pay reverence,” and such like. All of these relate to man’s expression of love, devotion, and willingness

to serve and glorify God. However, men often are sorely disappointed unless there is something entertaining, “different” or sensually “exciting” in their religious meetings. Now when one truly expresses his love and adoration for God as God teaches, his spirit will be stimulated and his love of God intensified. However, these are the natural by-products that flow from true worship; they are not the purpose of worship.

It is not to receive, but to give. We should come to “offer up a sacrifice of praise” (Heb. 13:15). In the very avenues ordained of God we come together to give our praise, devotion, and money because we love Him! Those who drone, “I don’t get anything out of worship,” reveal their own selfishness; they come only to get rather to give. True worshipers always receive many blessings, but again, these are wonderful by-products of giving ourselves in praise and service to God.

We are not the audience; God is. Failure to understand this turns those in the pew into hypercritics of preachers and prayer and song leaders. God observes the hearer in the pew as much as the preacher in the pulpit. He cares as much about the condition of the heart of the singer in the pew as He does the one up front leading!

Latvia: Some Observations

Good People Are Still Concerned about the Lost. Those who went and those who sent evidence that.

There Is Still Time to Seek the Lost, but Someday it Will Be Too Late. We must work while the door of opportunity is open, making wise use of our time (Eph. 5:15-16; John 9:4).

Satan Is Still Working to Steal the Souls of Men. Through atheistic communism, denominational doctrines and Far Eastern influence, Satan has influenced Latvia (2 Pet. 5:8).

Doctrines of Men Still Bring Confusion, Not Salvation. (Mat. 15:9; John 8:32; 1 Cor. 14:33).

God Still Says, "Go, Preach." Not by miraculous operation of the Spirit, but by Gospel preaching do men hear the Word (Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 10:10-17).

Men Still Need the Saving Gospel (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 1:16).

Men Still Differ in Their Reaction. Some came to the meeting in Riga because they were: curious; in opposition; or, wanting something free, but many honest seekers came.

God's Way Is Still the Best Way.

People Can Still Understand God's Word. (Eph. 5:17).

Men Can Still See the Difference in Truth and Error. (John 17:17).

Men Can Still Recognize the Difference in Worship in Spirit and Truth and Worship According to Man's Will. Many commented on the simplicity of Christian worship (John 4:24).

Christians Still Face Opposition. Some cursed us. Others hindered us. God helped us (Mark 5:10-12).

We Still must Work and Not Worry. We must not give up. God will provide. Glorify Him (Gal. 6:9-10).

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with
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Sun - Fri: 7:30 P.M.
Bellview Church of Christ
Pensacola, Florida*

Now is the time to invite your:

Spouse

Neighbors

Friends

Co-workers

Hairdresser

Barber

Parents

Paper boy

Mechanic

Relatives

Employer

Classmates

Children

Grandchildren

Teacher

Coach

Team mates

Boy / Girlfriend

Write the Stancliff's

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Stancliff
Block 465, #12-536
Jurong West Street 41
Singapore 2264

Thanks!

Thanks to all who taught my classes and preached while I was in Riga, Latvia. Brethren Dusty Wilkes, Mike Peters, Preston Silcox and Chris Mathews presented the Truth in a fine way. I suppose one of the most appreciated compliments I have received was from a sister who told me the best work I have done at Bellview was to encourage these (and other) young men to preach.

I hope you told them how much you appreciated their preaching and the good job they did.

SYMPATHY

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of our sister Mabel Simmons. She passed from this life on Wednesday, Oct. 7. Burial was Oct. 10 in Pensacola Memorial Gardens on Pine Forest Road. Sister Simmons had been a member at Bellview for many years.

We also extend our sympathy to sister Joyce Simmons in the loss of her step-daughter who died Oct. 10.

Wednesday Schedule

10-28-92 Reading: Harold Maxey
 Invitation: Jerry Fillingim
11-4-92 Reading: Bill Crowe
 Invitation: Dusty Wilkes

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

October 29, 1992

Number 44

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Backsliding *Fred Stancliff*

“Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God” (Jer. 3:22). Why is it that when we look about us in congregations that have existed for several years, we no longer see many of the faces of those we have known in the past? Where are these people? Why are they no longer with us? One of the main reasons is due to a condition commonly known as backsliding.

WHAT IS BACKSLIDING? Literally speaking, backsliding is sliding backwards. In other words, suppose we are walking on a slippery incline and we attempt to take a step forward, but in doing so we actually slip back two steps. We are backsliding. Spiritually speaking, similar actions are noted. A person who has become a Christian, but who allows himself to become entangled again in sin, can soon find himself slipping back into ways of the world.

WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF THE BACK-SLIDING INDIVIDUAL’S SOUL? The condition of the backsliding individual’s soul is serious. It is not a very pretty one as described by the apostle Peter in 2 Peter 2:20-22, “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been

better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” The story of the prodigal son, as recorded in Luke 15:11-32, describes an individual that had departed from his father and wasted his substance with riotous living. His money and his “friends” were soon gone and to survive he got a job feeding the swine. It was at that point that the narrative reveals that he came to himself and decided to return to his father as a servant.

James tells us in James 5:19-20, “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” From this passage, we can readily see that the erring Christian has a multitude of sins, he is spiritually dead, and will be lost eternally if he does not change his ways and repent.

WHY DO CHRISTIANS BACKSLIDE? One reason is a lack of faith. Paul told the Roman Christians in Romans 10:17, “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” When Christians do not study God’s Word as they should, they become weak in faith. and soon die spiritually. They are much like the parable

of the sower, Matthew 13:3-6, in which the seed fell on stony ground and because it had no root, it withered away.

Another reason is because of the temptations of the world. Some Christians know what they should do in serving God, but similar to Demas in 2 Timothy 4:10, they love the present world. They intend to correct their life someday, but that day never comes. In their quest for material things, they are never satisfied. They always want to build bigger barns, Luke 12:18-20, not realizing that their souls will be required of them when they least expect.

HOW CAN WE PREVENT BACKSLIDING? The Bible has the answer. Actions we should take each day to help prevent backsliding are:

1. Each day let God speak to you through His Word—Study. Scriptures that will help to show the value of study are: “Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psa. 119:105); “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night” (Psa. 1:1-2); “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mat. 4:4); “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); “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:1-2); “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8); “But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed” (Jam. 1:25).

2. Each day we need to speak to God—Pray. Scriptures that help to show the value of the prayer are: “For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil” (1 Pet. 3:12); “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16); “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*” (Psa. 66:18); “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (1 John 3:22).

3. Each day we should say something for God—Teach. Scriptures that help to show the value of teaching are: “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Phi. 1:27); “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15); “Let your speech *be* alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col. 4:6); “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Heb. 5:12).

4. Each day we should do something for God—Serve. Scriptures that help to show the value of service are: “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10); “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58); “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:1-2).

CONCLUSION. In this article we have described the nature of and have seen the seriousness of the problem of backsliding. We have also seen some of the causes of backsliding and some ways to prevent it. May we remember the words of Jeremiah, “Return, ye backsliding children, *and* I will heal your backslidings. Behold, we come unto thee; for thou *art* the LORD our God” (Jer. 3:22).

Fred Stancliff
Block 465 #12-536
Jurong West Street 41
Singapore 2264

Gospel Meeting
Nov. 1-6, 1992
with
Jerry Martin
Meeting Times:
Sun. 9 and 10A.M.
Sun. - Fri. 7:30 P.M.

New Address

Sister Inez Prosser has moved to a new address.

Inez Prosser
4544 Monpelier
Pensacola, FL 32506

Sick and Shut-in

Mary Ellen Muldoon had by-pass surgery on October 22 at Sacred Heart Hospital, She is undergoing therapy and is in room 331.

Ruth Branson, Floy Dell Lindesmith, Tim Lamb and Linda Parker have all been ill recently.

Marilyn Hall's father, Anthony Donoghue of New York, is not doing well. Please remember him and all the sick in your prayers.

Wednesday Schedule

11-4-92 Reading: Bill Crowe
 Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
11-18-92 Reading: Jim Roddy
 Invitation: Mike Peters

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

November 5, 1992

Number 45

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Abortion: A Woman's Right or Just Plain Murder?

Jeff Spencer

The four most common types of abortion are:

(1) HYSTEROTOMY. This is exactly like a Caesarean Section with one big difference. After a C-Section, the baby is taken to the intensive care unit and provided the best medical treatment. After a hysterotomy, the baby is cut free and left to die.

(2) HYPERTONIC SALINE INJECTION. A solution of concentrated salt is injected through the mother's abdomen into the baby's sac, poisoning the child. It usually takes an hour for the baby to die.

(3) DILATION AND CURETTAGE (D&C). The surgeon reaches through the mother's vagina with a loop shaped, steel knife and cuts the baby into pieces. The assisting nurse has the grisly task of reassembling the parts to make sure the uterus is empty.

(4) SUCTION. Like the D&C, but instead of a knife, a powerful suction tube is inserted into the uterus. The baby's body is then torn apart and sucked into a jar. Over 75% of the abortions in the U.S. and Canada are performed by this method.

Many cliches have been used to defend a woman's right to have an abortion. They appeal to the gullible and others who have not

logically thought the matter through. For example, we have probably all heard: "Every woman has the right to control her own body." On the surface, this may sound reasonable, but is it? Modern science (as well as common sense) recognizes that there are two bodies and two lives involved in pregnancy. The woman who would have an abortion is not only exercising control over her own body, but that of another as well. Since sex is determined at conception and half of those aborted are females, obviously, the pro-abortionist does not believe that every woman has rights!

Another argument used to support abortion is: "Every child a wanted child." In other words, if the mother does not want the baby, killing it is considered the compassionate thing to do. Since when is a person's worth determined by whether someone "wants" him or not? If we buy into this invalid argument, how long will it be before we start exterminating the sick, the aged, and anyone else deemed of little worth by an unfeeling society? The bottom line of the abortion controversy may be summed up with one simple question: "Is the inhabitant of the womb a living human being?" If not, one can hardly call abortion murder. If so, one can hardly call abortion anything else!

Often people will argue that abortion is acceptable because you are only aborting a fetus and "a fetus is not a

person.” This is not true. Medical science acknowledges that the genetic package is complete at conception. All forty-six chromosomes which determine a person’s characteristics are present. Human life has begun and for the next nine months, the child simply matures in its mother’s womb. In a tract entitled: “Language of Illusion: The Abortion Slogans,” Jean Carton writes:

“Our individual biological system begins at conception and ends at death, providing us with the obvious fact that life is a continuum. At all stages of this continuum we are human, as the science of genetics can document. Thus our humanity does not depend on our size, stages of development or place of residence.”

Calling human begins “embryos” or “fetuses” serves the same purpose as calling them “adolescents” or “adults.” These scientific terms are used to indicate where a person is in his or her development. They were never meant to imply that the unborn child is not human. As the “infant” is different from the “adolescent” in terms of development and dependence, so the “fetus” is different from the “infant.” Yet all are genetically human and, therefore, persons.”

It is interesting that the New Testament uses the same Greek word (*brepheos*) for describing the fetus as it does in describing small children. Luke 1:41 and 44 tells us that the “baby [*brepheos*] leaped in her womb.” The same word is also used in Luke 2:12, 16 and 18:15 in describing newborn babies. *Brepheos* is translated “young children” (KJV) in Acts 7:19. Some other passages which refer to the status of a child in the womb are Job 3:11, 16, where the victims of the “hidden untimely birth” or miscarriage are described as “infants which never saw light” (cf. Psa. 139:13-16; Ecc. 11:5; Jer. 1:5).

I believe that most members of the Lord’s church stand in opposition to abortion, but often, perhaps in an effort to appear charitable, we make statements which totally deny our reason for opposing abortion in the first place. For example, you may have heard some say, “I believe that abortion is wrong except in the case of rape or incest.” When such a statement is made, I have to ask, “Why do you believe abortion to be wrong?” The answer: “Because it is murder.” Exactly! So since when do we have the right to murder a child because we are unhappy with the way he or she was conceived? Pregnancy resulting from rape, incest, or, for that matter, immoral living may be “unwanted” and difficult to bear. The fact remains, however, that an innocent life has begun. To take that life constitutes cold-blooded murder regardless of the reason! Imagine someone saying, “Killing toddlers is wrong unless the child was conceived through rape or incest.” The only difference between killing a baby in the womb and killing one in the crib is that the child in the crib is older!

It has been said that the most dangerous place for a baby today is in its mother’s womb. What a monstrous society we have become! The advocates of abortion are going to find themselves in a very uncomfortable position (to say the least) when the Lord returns in judgment. God includes those “without natural affection” in the list of people “worthy of death” (Rom. 1:31-32). “Hands that shed innocent blood” are included in the list of seven things the Lord hates (Pro. 6:16-19). Those who would perform, have, or encourage another to have an abortion certainly qualify for God’s terrible wrath. Remember: “*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*” (Heb. 10:31).

As Christians, we need to stand up courageously for the rights of the unborn. We must pray that through God’s providence this slaughter will cease; but as His servants, we must also be active in speaking out. God has never been pleased with one who buries his head in the sand and ignores unpleasant issues. Know where your politicians and doctors stand on this subject and act accordingly. In addition to all this, let us not forget that there are many young girls and women who have been beguiled by the foolish philosophy of a godless world (cf. Rom. 1:21-22). They need to be shown by a compassionate brotherhood that God still holds out His promise to forgive all who respond to Him in penitent obedience (Acts 2:38).

via “The Edifier”; Denton, Texas

Thanks!

Thanks to all who helped make our Gospel Meeting a success. Only Eternity shall reveal the good done as you labored together to reach the lost and strengthen the saved.

Let us all be busy visiting and encouraging those who visited with us during the meeting. They came looking. Let us go seeking.

Sick

Mary Ellen Muldoon is recuperating from surgery. As of the time of this report, she was in Room 411, Sacred Heart.

Floy Dell Lindesmith—ill at home.

Gospel Meeting

The Jay Church of Christ will have a Homecoming and Gospel Meeting November 15-19 (Sunday through Thursday) with Clifford Dixon preaching. Services are 7:00 P.M. nightly.

Wednesday Schedule

11-11-92	Reading: Bill Crowe Invitation: Dusty Wilkes
11-15-92	Reading: Jim Roddy Invitation: Mike Peters

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

November 12, 1992

Number 46

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Blessings

Jerri Manasco

The God we worship and serve is a blessing God. He blesses us with food and raiment (1 Tim. 6:8). He blesses us with our bank accounts (1 Tim. 6:17-19)! It is He who provides us with fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17). He gives food to all flesh (Psa. 136:25). His blessings cannot be numbered.

There are some results of divine blessings that are not so good! Solomon is the greatest illustration of this. You know the story of this man whom God so abundantly blessed. Similar problems come our way, too, if we abuse what God has provided. Significantly, divine blessings can blind us to certain facts.

1. God's blessings can blind us to the Source of our blessings! He who gives can be so easily and conveniently forgotten by the recipient. God warned Israel that when they would enter Canaan and receive houses and lands and abundance of fruit to "*beware lest thou forget the LORD*" (Deu. 6:10-12). Ten lepers had been cleansed by Jesus (Luke 17), but ONLY ONE returned with sincere gratitude. Why do we tend to forget and ignore the Benefactor so often? This is repeated over and over today.

2. God's blessings can blind us to our dependent nature. God made US; we didn't make HIM! Far too many people (even church members) act as though they are responsible for God's existence! Paul forcefully showed that it is God who is Creator and that man is the creature. Further he showed that our very life rests upon God (Acts 17:25-28). "*It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves*" (Psa. 100:3). We are dependent on God. No one absolutely "pulls himself up by his own bootstraps." There are far too many providential circumstances surrounding one's success to claim a self-success story!

3. God's blessings can blind us to the needs of others. There is an obligation that accompanies material blessings. To have this world's goods, and yet withhold them from others who are deserving of assistance is a sin (1 John 3:17). There is no obligation to those who will not work (2 The. 3:10), but we certainly feel a deep sense of benevolence to those who are in distress through no fault of their own. Paul teaches us that one reason Christians work is to have the means of helping those who cannot (Eph. 4:28). Blessings are opportunities for service.

4. God's blessings can blind us to our own deeper needs. Man lives by bread but not by bread alone (Mat. 4:4). To be at peace with God and with yourself is a blessing that far surpasses anything else! Being a Christian with hope of the imperishable crown of life is worth more than the universe and all of its treasures.

The Storms of Life

Jimmy Clark

“As the whirlwind passeth, so *is* the wicked no *more*: but the righteous *is* an everlasting foundation” (Pro. 10:25). One does not have to explain to someone in northern Alabama about tornadoes and their effects. These whirlwinds are greatly respected in this part of the country, as well as in other places. The inspired Solomon used such a figure to describe the effect of the storms of life upon two types of people. Consider some lessons that are beneficial from this verse.

1. Tragic. One cannot think about the devastation and harm which tornadoes, high winds, hurricanes, and the like have done to lives without feeling for those who are affected. One realizes that lives are never the same after such storms. It is even more tragic to know that the wicked are “no more” after the spiritual storms come. They do not know where to turn. They have no refuge from the storm. The Psalmist wrote, “*God is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psa. 46:1). One cannot help but pity the ones who know not the secret of handling hardships.

2. Trying. It is not the case that the storms of life affect only the wicked. Jesus said, “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Mat. 7:24-25). James wrote, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (Jam. 1:2-3). The term “patience” is the quality to abide under stress or not to give up. This is parallel to the righteous having an everlasting foundation. His foundation is God and his faith is in God to preserve. The righteous do not ignore the trials. They see them in a different perspective.

3. Training. There are some qualities of life that cannot be developed without difficulties. Paul wrote to some who were having trouble understanding the storms before them, “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth” (Heb. 12:5-6). The oyster must abide with the grain of sand to make the pearl. The dog must endure the limits of his own will to develop into a good hunter. Discipline and self-denial are qualities essential to success. The Lord limited the children of Israel in the things which He provided for them in the wilderness. “And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every *word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live” (Deu. 8:2-3). The wicked are concerned with the things of this world. The righteous are concerned with the things of the world to come. Storms will come and go through the lives of all, but the righteous will shine through them all because of the source of their light.

Route 3 Box 425; Athens, AL 35611



Restored

Bette Crowe was restored 11-3-92. We rejoice with her. Let us all work together to help one another to Heaven. Bette's new address and phone are:

Bette Crowe
2355 West Michigan Apt. D-26
Pensacola, FL32526
Phone: 944-1861

Sick

Mary Ellen Muldoon has returned home from the hospital, and is still recuperating from her surgery.

Gospel Meeting

The Jay Church of Christ will have a Homecoming and Gospel Meeting November 15-19, (Sunday through Thursday) with Clifford Dixon preaching. Services are 7:00 P.M. nightly.

Wednesday Schedule

11-15-92 Reading: Jim Roddy
 Invitation: Mike Peters
11-25-92 Reading: Ray Dodd
 Invitation: Tony Liddell

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

November 19, 1992

Number 47

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Drive Them Out!

Allen Webster

The period of the Judges has been called the “Dark Ages” of Israel. During Joshua’s time, which preceded the judges, Israel wholly followed God (Jos. 23:10). He warned them about serving heathen gods (v. 16), intermarrying non-Jews (vv. 12-13), and entering leagues with the people of the land (v. 12; cf. Jud. 2:2). They failed to listen.

Israel was to completely subdue Canaan and drive out the inhabitants. They were to leave none (Exo. 23:32-33; Deu. 7:2). God wanted no compromise. But they did not do as God commanded (Jud. 1:21, 27, 29-31, 33).

Key to understanding Judges is learning this: “And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out” (1:28).

The problems that chapters 3-21 record all rest upon the mistake of chapter two. They did not drive them out. Notice the results of failing to completely obey God.

1. **THEY MADE LEAGUE WITH GOD’S ENEMIES** (Jud. 2:2). God’s army was supposed to completely destroy every man, woman, child and beast of the Canaanites. This was God’s punishment on those who had disobeyed (Gen. 15:16). But it was not done. Joshua’s troops subdued the land and broke the strength of the

enemy but there remained strongholds of resistance. During the time of the judges, this unfinished business led to suffering. Israel began to make compromises with their enemies.

Today, many compromise by making unlawful covenants. Some husbands and wives enter marriages unlawfully (because one has been divorced for a cause other than fornication—Mat. 19:9). Some compromise with unbelieving mates by saying, “You go with me on Sunday morning and I’ll go with you on Sunday night.” Or, “If you let me go this Sunday, we will go to the lake next weekend.” Churches compromise by swapping pulpits with denominational groups. We must not make unlawful leagues with God’s enemies.

2. **THEY WORSHIPPED WITH GOD’S ENEMIES** (Jud. 2:11-13; 3:7; 8:33). Those who knew the only living and true God profaned His holy name by worshipping Baal and Ashteroth. Today some become “idol worshippers” who once followed God (cf. Col. 3:5; 2 Pet. 2:20-22). How? They forsake the priceless for something that they value more. It may be money (1 Tim. 6:10), or pleasure (1 Tim. 5:6), or worldly pursuits (Jam. 4:4), or things (1 John 2:15-17), or family (Luke 14:26), or false religion (Mark 7:7-9; John 4:24). Whatever it is, it is a foolish swap (cf. John 14:1-3).

3. THEY MARRIED GOD'S ENEMIES (Jud. 3:5-7). The Jews were not to marry outside their nation or religion (Deu. 7:1-3; Jos. 23:12). Abraham would not let Isaac marry a daughter of the Canaanites (Gen. 24:3). Rebekah remarked if Jacob took a wife of the daughters of Heth, "what good shall my life do me?" (Gen. 27:46). In other words, she felt she had been a failure in life if her son married a Canaanite. Isaac commanded Jacob to find a wife among the daughters of Laban (Gen. 28:2).

Moses gave the reason for this command, "For they will turn away thy son from following me" (Deu. 7:4). Solomon disobeyed God and married many strange women. And, "it came to pass, when Solomon was old, *that* his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as *was* the heart of David his father" (1 Kin. 11:1-4).

The application for today is obvious. There are dangers to marrying outside of Christ. The non-Christian mate will not encourage the Christian to attend services and be faithful in life (cf. Heb. 10:24-25; Tit. 2:11-14). In fact, they probably will strongly discourage regular worship, sacrificial giving, and Christian ethics. The church is greatly crippled by such marriages.

The non-Christian may not respect God's law relating to the marriage relationship (Eph. 5:22-23, 25), thus making each day a struggle. The souls of the children involved are at stake (cf. Mat. 16:26). Will they follow the Christian parent to heaven or the non-Christian parent to hell? Is it worth losing even one? (Eph. 6:1-4).

The Christian wife is especially at a disadvantage. She is to be in subjection to her husband (1 Pet. 3:1; Eph. 5:22-23), which may often put her in an awkward position. If it comes down to it, the Christian must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29; 1 Cor. 7:15). Young people, think long and hard about Matthew 6:33 (look it up) before making a lifelong commitment with one who is not a Christian.

Drive them out! Think about this lesson as you study Judges and live through the present "Dark Ages."

Route 1 Box 38; Tiplersville, MS 38674

And Then There Is You!

Shan Jackson

We remember Jesus as Herod tried to kill Him, as Peter denied Him, as Judas betrayed Him, as evil men taunted Him, as soldiers nailed Him to a rugged cross, and even as all forsook Him. Each in his own turn had to come to grips with the Savior. Each in turn had to decide what he would do with Him. Each in his own turn had to come to a moment of truth concerning Jesus, and then there is you!

Everyone of us is forced to meet the moment of truth concerning Jesus. Pilate did. Pilate reached the time in his life when the decision of his lifetime had to be made. He first tried to evade it, he then tried to avoid it, but the decision had to be made. His statement, "I find no fault in him" was too temporary and nothing could remove the responsibility he had concerning Jesus, and then there is you.

Herod also met his moment of truth. Prompted by selfishness he rejected the Savior. You see, Jesus stood for what Herod rejected. Jesus was kind and compassionate where Herod was mean and ruthless. Jesus sought faith from His followers where Herod sought fear. Jesus sought to build a kingdom where Herod sought to destroy lives. But nothing could remove the responsibility he had concerning Jesus, and then there is you.

Peter was a friend of Jesus but he also had to meet his moment. Peter, who best exemplified true love for the truth. Peter, who best showed the character which Christ sought in all men. Peter, who vowed death before dishonor. Peter, who sought to follow Jesus to the very height of glories, but his seeking for heights soon turned to the depths of the deep as he denied our Lord and pronounced upon himself lasting shame. Yes, Peter was a friend, a companion, a disciple, but nothing could remove the responsibility he had concerning Jesus, and then there is you.

Judas was also a friend of Jesus who met his moment of truth. Judas was personally called by the Lord, trusted and respected by one and all, thought honorable enough to carry the disciple's purse, however, he missed the simple message of the Master and his decision goes with him into eternity. Judas was a friend who turned his back on the Prince of glory. He sought to follow, but he wanted to make his own rules. But nothing could remove the responsibility he had concerning Jesus, and then there is you.

Pilate made his choice and failed. Herod came to that same conclusion. Peter slipped but returned and Judas removed all his chances for return with a hangman's knot, and then there is you. The Bible, however, reveals that many still followed Jesus with the same faith that brought them to Him in the first place. This faith brought them

through their moment of truth and this faith we seek today. Faith immutable in the sight of God and man, faith that shows a faithless world where our heart lies, and that is with the Christ. Faith so impelling that the world must take notice. Faith that is the very basis of our hopes and dreams, faith that supplies answers to what we cannot see. Many followed Him because they saw in Him the spirit of the Father. They realized that He was the only begotten, the Savior of the world, the bright and morning star, and then there is you. They knew His power, they knew His teaching, they followed is calling, and then there is you. Oh, for such a faith today. In Him they found life abundant, life fulfilled, life everlasting. In Him they found hope unblemished, unchallenged, undaunted. And then there is you. You also must meet your moment of truth concerning Jesus. Will we also fail? Or will we find the faith that will bring us through to glory?

P.O. Box 904; Palacios, TX 77465

Remember in Prayer

Peggy Crowe had surgery recently in the Navy Hospital. She is recuperating at home. Mary Ellen Muldoon is doing well recuperating from her surgery. Mabel Cozad (Columbia, MO) and Glen Cozad (Jacksonville, MO), mother and brother of Harold Cozad, are both ill. The husband of Mimi McQueen, co-worker of Chris Mathews, was hurt when their house burned. Inez Prosser, Rubin Malone—shut-ins.

Restored

Scot Brazell, 11-15-92, requests your prayers that he may be stronger.

Birth Announcement

Sandy and Dusty Wilkes have another daughter, Ashley Michelle born 11-11-92. She weighed 8 pounds 6.5 ounces and was 21 1/4" long at birth. Congratulations!

Wednesday Schedule

11-25-92	Reading: Ray Dodd Invitation: Tony Liddell
12-2-92	Reading: Bill Gallaher Invitation: Preston Silcox

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

November 26, 1992

Number 48

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Do You Appreciate the Price?

Steve Miller

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:20). Bought with the precious blood of Christ (Eph. 1:7), we are added to the church (all the saved who have been called out of the world—Acts 2:47). Having our sins washed away by the precious blood of Christ should be on our minds and in our hearts. Remember: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Do you appreciate the price? “By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*” (Heb. 9:12).

Christians who live immoral lives and participate in worldly pleasures are friends of the world; thus, enemies of God (Jam. 4:4). No one wants to stand at Judgment as the enemy of God, but that is exactly where many members of the church stand when they become involved in drugs, alcohol, profanity, dancing, sexual immorality or any immoral practices. Read 1 John 2:15-17, Romans 12:1-2, and Galatians 5:19-21 to get the idea that a person stands in opposition to God by practicing the works of the flesh and is headed down the broad way (Mat. 7:13-14). James 1:27 gives the remedy. To keep

ourselves unspotted from the world is the second aspect of this passage and is a difficult job. Christians must be prepared to recognize and avoid Satan’s traps and detours as they travel the strait and narrow way. Even though sinless perfection is unattainable, we can maintain righteousness by following Jesus. To avoid being lost eternally, we must: “walk in the light as he is in the light,” which results in having fellowship one with another and being cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7).

As New Testament Christians we need to truly appreciate the love God has for mankind. Paul said, “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Paul reminds them of their condition before they became Christians, and then tells them they have been washed (baptized—Mark 16:16), sanctified (set apart for God), and justified (made righteous before God). Realizing we have our sins forgiven in Christ, should make us want to strive to live pure lives for our loving Savior.

One of the biggest disappointments is to see a fellow Christian practicing an empty or vain religion. Just imagine how God must feel when He sees such behavior among His children. Brothers and sisters who live for the devil through the week and warm a pew on Sunday have surely forgotten they have been called out of the world. They should not love the world nor have, friendship with it, but are to separate themselves from its sinful devices.

Paul told Timothy, "Keep thyself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22). This is just as applicable to us today. Each child of God must seek first the kingdom of God (Mat. 6:33). When we do, we will be pleasing to our Almighty Father in Heaven. Remember only those who stay pure and unspotted will see God (Mat. 5:8), Do you appreciate the price enough to live a faithful life in order to have a heavenly home? Think about it!

9874 Knowlton Road; Garrettsville, OH

Peter Convinced Them!

Jerri Manasco

One who studies the second chapter of Acts will be amazed to discover the utter simplicity of the profound message delivered by Peter! Yes the message was most profound but the development of the message is so very simple. Peter begins with a quotation from the Old Testament and then makes a valid point from it. Essentially, his whole sermon is a series of quotes with pertinent applications. The conclusion of the sermon is masterfully wrought as Peter calls to a commitment of Jesus: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). The result was astounding as about 3,000 people inquired into salvation (Acts 2:37-41).

The message preached on this occasion fulfilled the promise of Jesus to His apostles, issued in John 16:7-13. Jesus had told them that the Spirit would convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment by guiding the apostles into all truth. On this Pentecost day in Acts 2 that grand work was begun! Peter, preaching the heavenly message, convinced those folks! Of what did he convince them? Peter convinced them of the truth concerning Jesus! Jesus Himself addressed this very issue while talking to the Pharisees. He asked, "What think ye of Christ?" (Mat. 22:42). Paul labored to convince the Jews that "this Jesus,...is Christ" (Acts 17:3). Paul and Peter used as their "textbook" the holy Scriptures to prove to the honest hearted the identity of Jesus. Apparently Peter and Paul didn't subscribe to the notion that you can't prove anything at all from the Bible! They had the idea you CAN prove the truth when you use the Bible as the source.

Peter convinced them of their guilt in crucifying Jesus! To these people Peter said directly and plainly that they had taken Jesus and crucified him (Acts 2:23). Later Peter indicted them for having killed the Prince of life (Acts 3:15). Stephen at still a later time said point blankly that these had been the betrayers and murderers of the Just One (Acts 7:52). These preachers apparently didn't seem to think that such preaching would create psychological problems in the hearers! Friends, what a shame that in our world fewer people are facing the reality of personal guilt. The world is guilty and denying won't change it.

Peter convinced them of their need to obey Jesus. The fact that Jesus is Lord calls for submission to His will. Peter's answer to their inquiry was simple: repentance and baptism would result in remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

P.O. Box 166; Boaz, AL 35957

You and Preaching!

There isn't a word that a preacher can say,
No matter how lovely or true,
Nor is there a prayer that his eager lips pray
That can preach a sermon as you.
You vowed to serve Christ and men know that you did.
They're watching the things that you do.
There isn't one action of yours that is hid,
Men are watching and studying you.
You say you're no preacher?
Yes, but you preach a powerful sermon each day.

The acts of your life are the things that you teach.
It isn't the things that you say.
So Christians, remember you bear His name.
Your lives are for others to view.
You are living examples, men praise you or blame,
And measure all Christians by you.

Ridgedale Reminder

Betty Merideth Fund

Brother Noel Merideth was a capable and faithful proclaimer of the Gospel for many years. He passed away recently and sister Betty Merideth, his wife, could really use your financial help. Those wishing to help may do so by sending contributions to the following:

Betty Merideth Fund
Third National Bank
Main Office
Public Square
Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

Bellview Lectures “God’s Pattern For Christian Living” May 8-12, 1993

Wednesday Schedule

12-2-92 Reading: Bill Gallaher
 Invitation: Preston Silcox
12-9-92 Reading: Jim Loy
 Invitation: Ray Foshee

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

December 3, 1992

Number 49

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Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

A King Who Knew Not Joseph

B. C. Carr

A familiar statement to many is found in Exodus. "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph" (Exo. 1:8). This change in leadership was to result in radical changes that would affect God's people.

Under the Pharaoh who knew Joseph, Israel had been greatly blessed. They had grown from seventy souls to perhaps three million people. They had been given choice land for their cattle in the land of Goshen. Their wealth had increased. The God of heaven was respected because of Joseph (Gen. 41:32-45). When Jacob died the nobles of Egypt honored him (Gen. 50:7).

How things have changed because the new leader knew not Joseph. He did not know his God. Israel is regarded as an enemy (Exo. 1:10). They were made slaves. Cruel taskmasters were placed over them (Exo. 1:11). Orders were given to kill the male babies (Exo. 1:15-16). What changes had taken place because of a change in leadership!

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP ARE CHANGING THE CHURCH. We have seen a generation of great men pass on. Men like G. C. Brewer, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., G. K. Wallace, N. B. Hardeman, H. A. Dixon, Gus Nichols, B. C. Goodpasture and a host of others who stood for the truth without wavering. They challenged

false teachers and engaged them in debate. The church grew and remained strong in the faith. Strong elders watched over the churches. False teachers were not allowed in the pulpits. Error was condemned by their teaching. Young people felt secure under their leadership. Now these have gone on. There is a new leadership in the church. Some preachers now ridicule these men of the past. Elders are giving place to popular demands for softer preaching and entertainment. They have been deceived into thinking this will cause the church to grow.

WHAT WE HEAR TODAY. From the same pulpits where brave and faithful men stood we are hearing:

1. Salvation is by grace alone. There is nothing man can do toward his own salvation.
2. Others are saying we are saved by faith only.
3. We are told that instrumental music is a matter of tradition or opinion. We should not make this a test of fellowship.
4. Pattern theology is to be rejected. We should be less rigid in our beliefs.
5. The "old paths" mentality should be rejected.
6. We should not believe we are the only true church.

7. The Scriptures should not be used as proof-texts.
8. We need to give women a more prominent role in the church.
9. Preachers are swapping pulpits with denominational pastors.
10. Fellowship among all who believe in Christ should be practiced.

These are just a few things being heard today in pulpits of the church where they could not have been preached just a few years ago.

Lectureships which use faithful preachers to expose such false teachings are being avoided by the new breed. Faithful preachers are not being used by these liberal churches. Schools which still teach the Bible without fear or favor are not being supported by these who “knew not Joseph” because they do not know the God of Joseph. Some of the same congregations which condemned false teachers a few years ago have since employed them as their preachers. The church is suffering—because of changes in leadership.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO PREVENT APOSTASY?

1. We need to appoint and support faithful elders who will properly oversee the flock (Acts 20:28-32).
2. We need to be busy now training other leaders to take their place. Consider Joshua’s training and the influence he wielded (Jos. 24:31).
3. We need to learn again proper respect for the Word of God (Psa. 119:9-16). We must teach this to our children (Deu. 6:4-9).
4. We must vaccinate against the errors of our day by exposing all false teachers—even if this means being negative (Acts 20:29-32; 2 Tim. 4:1-5).
5. We must indoctrinate each generation. It is right to teach doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16; 2 John 9-11).
6. We need to pray fervently for elders and preachers (Jam. 5:16).
7. We must be set for the defence of the gospel (Phi. 1:17).

Via “The Harvesters”; Lakeland, FL

“I Waited Too Long to Start Any Earlier”

Burt Jones

E. L. Whitaker, Jr., the formidable gospel preacher so instrumental in the growth of the great Knight Arnold church in Memphis, several years ago asked why I had waited so long to obey the gospel and begin training to become a gospel preacher. From somewhere inside came the senseless response, “I waited too long to start any earlier.” We both sat there a moment, then burst out laughing when we realized how deprived of intellect I appeared to be with such a meaningless statement. As the years have passed, it must have appeared to some that many have been driven to “catch up” with all those years they spent outside the Lord’s church. Perhaps that was their motivation. Have you ever stopped to consider the cost of the phrase, “Wait a minute?” If you are making only \$10,000 a year, every minute you wait costs nearly ten cents; at \$20,000 per year this figure doubles. And, if you reach \$100,000 a year, your minutes will each be worth more than one dollar. Now relate that principle to the saving of souls. I realize this may sound worldly, but I do set goals for the number of souls I want to study with and bring to Christ within a given time based on my temperament and work ethic (1 Cor. 14:40). If you have as your goal, to study with, and to convert one penitent believer per month, and you delay, or otherwise, I “wait a minute,” then at the start of the next month you have TWO souls that are still awaiting your instruction, persuading, and provoking (2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 5:11; Heb. 10:24). If you fail in your objective again, then beginning your fourth month you have one quarter of one year’s work compressed into one month, because you “waited too long to start any earlier.” Brethren, there is a tiny, innocuous word, inertia, defined as “a property of matter by which it remains at rest or in uniform motion in the same straight line unless acted upon by some external force.” It is important whether you be an elder, a preacher, a personal worker, or whomever, charged with the responsibility of showing “diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:11-12).

A locomotive must exert as much as thirty pounds of pull for every ton in a rail car to start it from a standstill. Once the car is in motion; i.e., has overcome inertia, only about three pounds per ton is needed to keep it moving. Once you have overcome inertia—once you have put into motion what you said for years you were going to do in laboring in His vineyard, then it will take only a fraction of that effort to continue. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard;

consider her ways, and be wise:...How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?... The sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason” (Pro. 6:6, 9; 26:16).

Good people, we in the church today may not be able to do everything at once, but we can at least attempt to do something at once. Every time you want to try something to motivate the congregation of which you are a part to spread the borders of His Kingdom, whether it be a visitation program, a young men’s training session, or a “Timothy or Priscilla” class, you will find ten people who have thought of it before you—but they only thought of it.

“Better try to do something and fail in the deed than to try to do nothing and always succeed” (adapted). As the sun sets across the far horizon of your life, what a torturous thought it will be as you gaze at what might have been to have to exclaim, “I waited too long to start any earlier.”

Restored

Marilyn Hall (11-22) has asked our prayers for forgiveness and strength. Please remember her and her grandson, Tony, in your prayers.

Jerry Maxey was restored to his first love (11-29). We welcome Jerry to the family at Bellview. His address is:

Jerry Maxey
81 Stetson Road
Pensacola, FL 32506
Phone: 456-6570

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Olen Cozad, of Jacksonville, Missouri, who passed from this life on 11-26-92. He is the brother of our brother Harold Cozad.

Wednesday Schedule

12-9-92 Reading: Jim Loy
 Invitation: Ray Foshee
12-16-92 Reading: Charles Garrett
 Invitation: Bill Crowe

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

December 10, 1992

Number 50

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Bill Gallaher

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So Built We the Wall

Wade Webster

“So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.... So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day of the month* Elul, in fifty and two days” (Neh. 4:6; 6:15). It is amazing how much the children of Israel accomplished in just a short time. God’s people need to study this glorious book and encouraging account and apply the principles they learn. Many congregations are trying to copy the programs and gimmicks of the denominations. It seems many brethren have given up on doing things the Lord’s way and are thus doomed for failure. Let’s examine the reasons why Nehemiah and the people were so successful in their work.

First, they were successful because God was on their side. If any work is going to be successful we are going to have to have God on our side. Nehemiah clearly gave God the credit for being able to come back and rebuild the walls. We read, “Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according

to the good hand of my God upon me” (Neh. 2:7-8). Notice Nehemiah says the reason he was able to come back and to cut timber from the king’s forest was “the good hand of God” upon him.

As Nehemiah was encouraging the people to help him rebuild the walls, he told the people God was on their side. “Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me” (2:18). The enemies of Nehemiah also saw God was fighting for His people. Nehemiah records, “And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, *which is* great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work” (4:14-16). When the enemies viewed the walls finished in such a short time they realized God was helping His people (6:16).

The wall was completed in such a short time because God was helping them. Likewise today, if we are going to be successful in the work of the church we are going to have to have God’s help. Sadly, many congregations rush ahead in their work without consulting God through His word or through prayer. We must understand that if God

is on our side, nothing can stop us. Paul wrote, “What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?” (Rom. 8:31). First and foremost, if any work is going to be accomplished, God must be involved.

Second, they were successful because they had good leadership. Even the best of undertakings soon fail if there is not good leadership to oversee the work. Nehemiah was selected by God to oversee the work of rebuilding the walls. There are a number of things that made Nehemiah a good leader. (1) He felt for the condition of his people (Neh. 1:4). When Nehemiah learned of the condition of the city and the people, the Bible records he sat down, wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed. A leader cannot be removed from the suffering and sorrow of those whom he leads.

(2) Nehemiah prayed often to God. Before Nehemiah made his request before the king he prayed to God (Neh. 2:4). Also, when Nehemiah’s enemies were pressuring him to stop the work and to compromise, Nehemiah went to God in prayer (Neh. 4:4-5; 6:14). A leader must pray often to God for guidance if he is going to be successful. (3) Nehemiah analyzed the problem. Nehemiah determined the problem was sin and a failure to follow God’s word (Neh. 1:6-7). Leaders, before acting, must analyze the situation and go to the root of the problem. (4) Nehemiah gathered information and organized the work. He surveyed the city at night with a small band of soldiers to see its condition (2:12-16). Nehemiah didn’t speak about what someone had told him, but what he had actually determined to be the situation. Leaders must gather information and organize that information before acting upon it.

(5) Nehemiah informed the people. He didn’t keep the people in the dark, but rather, informed them and encouraged them to rise up and help (2:17-18). Leaders must inform those under their oversight of their plans. Leaders do not have to lead necessarily by popular opinion, but they should keep the people informed. (6) Nehemiah divided the work among the people. The third chapter of the book of Nehemiah is a list of families to whom Nehemiah divided the work. This is extremely important. Leaders cannot do all the work and thus must incorporate the talents of those under their oversight. (7) Nehemiah supervised the work and helped in it. Nehemiah made sure everyone was working and then he joined in and helped them (Neh. 4:23; 5:16). In fact, Nehemiah worked while others were sleeping (Neh. 2:12-16). Leaders must oversee the work but they must also engage in the work to be successful. (8) Nehemiah encouraged the workers. When the people began to become discouraged by the enemy, Nehemiah encouraged them by telling them God was there to help them (4:14). Leaders must be great encouragers if the work of the church is going to be successful. (9) Nehemiah would not compromise. When asked to go down to the plains of Ono, Nehemiah replied, “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?” (Neh. 6:1-4). Leaders must not compromise with the enemy if they are going to be successful. (10) Nehemiah listened to the problems of the people and tried to solve them (Neh. 5:13). Leaders must be willing to listen and to provide solutions. (11) Nehemiah would not tolerate sin (Neh. 13:10-11; 7:63-64). Leaders must deal with sin in the congregation lest the problem grow and souls are lost (2 The. 3:6). Any work that is going to be successful is going to have to have good leadership. We must remember it is God’s desire that every congregation ordain elders when they have qualified men (Tit. 1:5-9). Good leadership is a necessity if the work of the church is going to prosper for.

Third, they were successful because the people were willing to work. Any work that is successful must be characterized by members who are willing to be used in the Master’s vineyard. The Jews who helped in the work were willing from the very start. When Nehemiah suggested the work, they said, “Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for *this good work*” (2:18). Chapter three pictures the people working on various parts of the wall. It is interesting to note how many times the words “built, builded, and repaired” are used. The words “builded” and “built” are used 7 times, and “repaired” is used 35 times. Nehemiah said concerning the work, “So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work” (Neh. 4:6). The enemies of the people thought it was impossible for them to rebuild the walls. Sanballet said, “What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?” (Neh. 4:2). Tobiah also added to Sanballet’s statement: “Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall” (Neh. 4:3). The enemies of God thought the task was impossible, yet, because of God’s help, Nehemiah’s leadership, and the willingness of the people, the work was accomplished in a very short time. Likewise today, the church can do great things when there are members who have a mind to work. We need members that will volunteer to teach classes, lead prayers, lead singing, serve the communion, preach and many other things.

Nehemiah records a success story: “So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day of the month* Elul, in

fifty and two days” (Neh. 6:15). This should inspire us to do our part in the Lord’s work so we too can enjoy the success of working with the Lord and one another. Great things can be accomplished when we have God’s help, good leadership, and working members.

Sick and Shut-in

Tina Foshee-West FL, Room 426; III at home: Elmer and Mary Ellen Muldoon; Rubin and Viola Malone; Harold Cozad; Joyce Simmons.

Restored

We rejoice with Denise Mowery who was restored on Sunday, 12-6. Let’s remember her in our prayers as she requested.

New Members

We gladly welcome Michael and Sheryl Lowry, 831 Christy Ct., 32508 (457-7200). Be sure to meet them and welcome them!

Bellview Lectures

“God’s Pattern For Christian Living”

May 8-12, 1993

Wednesday Schedule

12-16-92 Reading: Charles Garrett
 Invitation: Bill Crowe
12-23-92 Reading: Ray Williams
 Invitation: Paul Brantley

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

December 17, 1992

Number 51

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
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“Now Is the Day of Salvation”

Joe E. Galloway

After quoting from Isaiah 49:8, “I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee:” the apostle Paul wrote: “behold, now *is* the day of salvation.” (2 Cor. 6:2).

Isaiah’s statement was made in the midst of a prophecy about Christ being God’s servant to preserve Israel and to bring light to the Gentiles. In other words, it was discussing the Gospel Age when salvation would be available to all on the same basis—Jew and Gentile alike. This was to be “in an acceptable time,” that is, a time when God determined everything was ready for it to occur. Paul was showing that this time was now here since the Christian Age had now begun. What he says here is equivalent to what he also wrote in Galatians 4:4-5: “when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

We, just as all responsible people, have sinned. Yet, “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19). For His death to bring this about men can no longer “live unto themselves,” but must live “unto him which

died for them, and rose again” (5:15).

We are blessed to be living in God’s “Day of Salvation!” Yet, to be living at the time when salvation is available will not help us at all unless we avail ourselves of God’s salvation. Immediately before writing “now is the day of salvation,” Paul urged them not to receive “the grace of God in vain.” All that God has done through Christ will be in vain for us unless: (1) We obey the gospel, becoming reconciled to God (5:20) and, (2) We live a new, changed life in Christ (5:17).

Why not make this “accepted time” and “day of salvation” which God has so graciously provided your day of salvation? You can do this by obeying the gospel and then living the changed, new life for the Lord!

218 Pinecrest Drive; Greenville, TN 37743

Following in the Steps of Faith

Robin Haley

Last night two men from one of our local Baptist churches came by to invite me to “come to church.” We had a cordial visit at my door and, before parting, they wanted to ask me one question: “If you were to die tonight...” (the reader knows how it goes). After giving my answer, the one fellow asked, “Are you 100% certain?” I assured him that I was. “Upon what do you base that?,” he asked. What a question! After giving him a 45-second sermon on God’s plan of salvation, he then said, “So, you have accepted the Lord into your heart as your personal savior?” “Well,” I said, “as you folks mean that, no, I haven’t. I have never been able to find in the Bible where that is taught. No one in the Bible did such a thing. What I have done,” I explained, “is received Christ by following in the steps of faith (Rom. 4:12), and now I continue to walk in Him” (Col. 2:6).

Well, if you are at all familiar with “faith only” type doctrine, you can well imagine the looks on their faces when I pointed out that their “method of being saved” is not in the Bible. They tried to explain to me that one must understand he is a sinner (I agreed), and that Christ paid for our sins with His blood (so true), and that there is nothing we could do to save ourselves (to which I said, “The apostle Peter thought there was!”). Having ignored this statement, he went on to his final point: we must pray to Jesus and ask Him into our hearts.

No matter how I tried, no matter how I baited him with questions, he would not commit himself to discuss what the Bible says about his doctrine. What has happened to the Baptists?!? They used to be so willing to accept most any challenge to their teaching.

“Steps of Faith” is not a pleasing phrase for those of “faith only” persuasions. Yet, when pinned down, even they will admit one is not saved before faith...that they must believe, which involves something on their part. Too, they will admit one must repent and confess. But (they hurriedly will point out), there is no “work” that can be done. When they are shown that all of the above are works, that even their starting place (faith) is a work (John 6:28-29), they will say, “Well, that is the ONLY one!” How convenient! Who said it is the only one?

The bottom line is, they want convenience, not commitment; salvation on their terms, not God’s. Let us not stop with Romans 4 when we study the faith of Abraham. Let us investigate what God means by these “steps of faith.” Let us also look into Hebrews 11 and James 2. “By faith Abraham, when he was called...obeyed; and he went...By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*” (Heb. 11:8-9, 17). “Was not Abraham our father justified by works,...[we ask how?] when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?” (Jam. 2:21). This action fulfilled Scripture which was spoken twenty years earlier!

We learn that faith causes us to “walk” in a certain way. As it caused Abraham to walk in certain steps, so too for us. Simply put, faith ought to cause us to obey, or else it is as James called it, DEAD! May we always, as our father Abraham (Gal. 3:7) follow in the steps of faith that we may be justified.

912 E. Teresa; Sapulpa, OK 74066

Free Bible Correspondence Course

Write to:

Bible Correspondence Course
% Harold Maxey
20 Emory Drive
Pensacola, FL 32506

“...And ye visited me.”

Watch this space for exciting news about our visitation program.

We hope to begin some new things, in connection with this part of our work, by the first of the year.

Will you remember this effort in your prayers?

Will you be a part of our visitation program?

We'll be looking for you at our first meeting (time to be announced).

Classes for the New Quarter

Take advantage of these great learning opportunities in our Adult classes.

SUNDAY

ADULTS I—Premillennialism (Bob Liddell)

ADULTS II—Fellowship (Paul Brantley)

ADULTS III—Mark (Jim Loy)

NEW CONVERTS—Christian Doctrine (Bill Gallaher)

WEDNESDAY

ADULTS I—Proverbs (Bill Crowe)

ADULTS II—The Bible Only Makes Christians Only And The Only Christians (Ray Foshee)

ADULTS III—Forgiveness (Bob Liddell)

NEW CONVERTS—Christian Doctrine

Pantry Items for December

Bring canned vegetables for those in need. If you would rather make a donation than bring canned items, see Bill Crowe. Thanks!

Write to Missionaries

Fred and Rheba Stancliff
Block 456, #12-536
Jurong West, St. 41
Singapore 2264
Republic of Singapore

Randy Watson
Dzirciema Iela 27-38
Riga LV1 083
Latvia
EUROPE

Bellview Lectures

“God’s Pattern For Christian Living”

May 8-12, 1993

Wednesday Schedule

12-23-92 Reading: Ray Williams
Invitation: Paul Brantley
12-30-92 Reading: Kevin Bailey
Invitation: Scot Brazell

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

December 24, 1992

Number 52

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
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“True Understanding”

Jerry Smith

“My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee” (Pro. 7:1).

Solomon, sometimes referred to as The pinnacle of Israel’s wise men,” gives us this instruction, an integral point if we are seeking to please God.

The book of Proverbs is full of warnings, not the least of which is the fact that one should always strive to keep God’s commandments. The terms, “words, commandments, laws, understanding and wisdom,” are found synonymously in the book. It tells us true wisdom begins with study and appreciation of God’s commands (Pro. 1:7-8). Thus, we should always have God’s commandments before our “mind’s eye” (Pro. 7:2), and see that future generations are instructed in a similar manner (Deu. 11:18-19).

In Proverbs 2:1-4, we find the secret for obtaining true wisdom; that is, one should: (1) receive the Word; (2) hide the commandments within him (as to make obedience part of our lives); (3) lend an ear and one’s heart to understanding; (4) cry out for knowledge; and, (5) seek it as precious silver. This shows the proper attitude one must have to find true “knowledge, wisdom, and understanding”; i.e., to find true happiness in serving God. Men who do not “lend an ear” to such understanding will never fully appreciate nor gain the goal

mentioned in this context (Pro. 2:5-8).

Remember the words of the Lord as He discussed His teaching in parables in Mark 4:9: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” God’s Word will fall upon people with different attitudes. Their reception of that word depends on the attitude with which they perceive it. Then, naturally, their interpretation of the same will be based on their “wisdom,” or “understanding” of the same. Thus, the words of our Lord come to a clearer meaning in such passages as Matthew 7:21 and Luke 6:46.

Today, we can be successful in “understanding” if we follow God’s will revealed in his word and not supplant our own ideas for his. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death” (Pro. 16:25).

We must: (1) Obtain God’s plan, through hearing His Word (Rom. 1:16-17; 10:17); (2) Believe what is revealed therein to us (John 8:24; 14:21); (3) Turn in repentance from our past sinful ways (Acts 17:30; 3:19; Rev. 2:5); (4) Confess our faith in Christ (Mat. 10:32; Rom. 10:9; 1 John 4:15); (5) Have our sins washed away in Baptism, and be added to the church as the “saved” (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 2:47); and, (6) Live faithful to inherit eternal

life (Rev. 2:10; 22:14).

P.O. Box 664; Parrish, AL 35580

The following is a letter recently received from one of the preacher training students supported by Bellview.

Dear Brethren,

Love and best wishes from Austin, TX. I am not exactly sure what this type of letter should be called, but it is sent forth with a big thank you for the support you provide, and with genuine concern for a troubled brotherhood. Over three years ago in Cambridge, England I was searching for God. I attended a Tuesday night Bible study which was advertised in the local newspaper by the Church of Christ. What I discovered changed my life. I became a Christian and began a journey which I know will one day take me to heaven (Col. 1:23).

I looked put into the brotherhood of Great Britain with great expectation and excitement. I firmly believed that everyone welcomed the Bible “not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God” (1 The. 2:13). I was convinced that I had found a people who had the true knowledge of the God who is revealed in the Bible, and that they stood for His truth. Brethren, I began to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 3:18), and I soon realized that everything was not quite what it had first seemed to be.

I looked around for someone who would speak out for the Lord, His church, and for what is right, and I began to wonder whose responsibility it was to try and make things better. Brethren, you can look around for so long, I realized the responsibility had fallen upon me, and I made plans to attend the Southwest Bible School.

It wasn't long before I was looking out into the American brotherhood with great expectation and excitement. Brethren, how sad it was when I soon realized that everything was not quite what it had first seemed to be.

Now here is the point of this letter. I am now speaking to each individual member of your congregation. The Lord's church has problems and if your reading this letter wondering who has the responsibility of trying to make things better, I would like to let you know that the responsibility has fallen upon you. The Lord has said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). Young men especially, if you are able, you need to start making plans to attend a sound Bible school just as soon as you can. Your congregation has already accepted responsibility in this area by supporting me at Southwest. Young men, I challenge you to be the next student they support.

Yours sincerely,
Brian Chadwick

Men and Families from Bellview to Memphis School of Preaching

In August, 1993 (less than eight months away), Dusty and Sandy Wilkes and their four children; Preston Silcox and Tanya (Brantley now, but Silcox after May, 1993) Silcox; and, Mike Peters will begin classes at the Memphis School of Preaching in Memphis, Tennessee.

MSOP, under the oversight of the elders of the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, is now in its twenty-sixth year. Curtis A. Cates is its capable and dedicated Director. It is certainly one of the best preacher training schools anywhere.

While we hate to see our brethren leave Bellview, we are delighted they have dedicated themselves to preaching the Gospel. They have been exemplary in their service to the Lord and; thus, have been a great help in the work at Bellview. As they prepare themselves for the great task before them, we wish them well and bid them, “Godspeed.”

At the moment, they are busy securing funds and making the arrangements necessary to leave their homes and jobs in Pensacola to go to Memphis. On their behalf, I wish to appeal to those who care for the truth and who know we must train sound men to preach the Gospel to a lost and dying world to help Dusty and Sandy, Preston and Tanya, and Mike.

Financial support would need to begin in August, 1993 and continue two years. Brethren, funds contributed to help them prepare to preach would bear fruit for decades and be a wise expenditure by an individual or church.

Having been with them for almost five years, I know each of them well and am confident and joyful as I consider their future service in the Kingdom. I have pledged to help them gain the financial support needed and ask you (for I know the type of people who read this bulletin) to join us in helping them.

Will you help? If so, you may contact them through the Bellview church address or give me a call for more information. They will be glad to tell you of their plans and needs. *BL*

Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the family of Mrs. Faye Batten of St. John's, Kansas, who passed from this life on Saturday, December 12, at the age of 97. Mrs. Batten's daughters, Alberta Cozad and Wanda Batten are members of the Bellview congregation.

Restored

Tim Lamb recently confessed wrong and sought forgiveness (12-13). Please remember Tim in your prayers. We commend his desire to do right and his courage to confess wrong.

Baptized

Daniel Barker was baptized Tuesday, December 15 by Mike Peters. We rejoice with Daniel and welcome him to the Lord's family. His address will be in the new directory.

Wednesday Schedule

12-30-92 Reading: Kevin Bailey
 Invitation: Scot Brazell
1-6-92 Reading: Harold Maxey
 Invitation: Nathan Liddell

Bellview Church of Christ Presents

THE BEACON

Volume XXI

December 31, 1992

Number 53

BELLVIEW CHURCH OF CHRIST
4850 Saufley Road
Pensacola, FL 32526
(904) 455-7595

MINISTER
Bobby Liddell

BISHOPS
Hairston Brantley, Paul Brantley,
Bill Gallaher

DEACONS
Henry Born, Elward Brantley,
Jerry Caine, Bill Crowe, Charles Garrett,
Louis Herrington, James Loy, Harold
Maxey, Richard Parker, Dusty Wilkes

MISSIONARIES
Ira Rice, Fred Stancliff

MEETING TIMES
SUNDAY:
9:00 A.M. Bible Classes
10:00 A.M., 6:00 P.M. Worship
WEDNESDAY: 7:00 P.M.

Absolute Truth?

Dale Jenkins

According to Barna Research Group over two thirds of all Americans do not believe there is such a thing as absolute truth. This is a crisis. It is perhaps the saddest statistic I've ever read. If there is no truth there is no hope, and we have a real problem on our hands. The interesting thing is that in this same survey nearly 90% of those polled said they believe the Bible is God's Word. How has this happened? By the effect of: (1) Preachers who claim God gives them the words to say; (2) Televangelists who speak of conversations with God and make the listener believe God calls them as often as a homesick boy calls his mom; (3) Churches who change doctrine at yearly conventions leaving nothing untampered with; and, (4) Debating even things the Bible is very explicit against; i.e. homosexuality, women preachers, etc.

Yes, if the Bible is the Word of God, then there is absolute truth. To say you believe the Bible but then do not believe in absolute truth is just foolish enough to assure me that you have not read the Book you believe God authored, for it is full of statements of absolute truth. Consider the following:

THE BIBLE IS TRUTH WHICH, IF FOLLOWED, WILL SANCTIFY ONE. John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

JESUS, THE WORD INCARNATE, IS TRUTH. John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

PEOPLE CAN BE "OF THE TRUTH" OR BELONG TO THE TRUTH. John 18:37: "Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

PEOPLE CAN WORSHIP GOD IN TRUTH. John 4:23-24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

WE CAN KNOW TRUTH AND TRUTH CAN FREE US FROM SIN. John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

THE SPIRIT, WHO WOULD COME AFTER CHRIST ASCENDED BACK TO THE FATHER, WOULD GUIDE THE APOSTLES INTO ALL TRUTH. John 16:13: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

THE TRUTH CAN BE MISHANDLED AND THOSE WHO DO SO WILL BE PUNISHED. Romans 1:18: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.”

GOD’S TRUTHS CAN BE TWISTED SO THAT THEY BECOME LIES. Romans 1:25: “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”

PEOPLE WHO REALLY LOVE REJOICE NOT WHEN THE TRUTH IS TWISTED, BUT WHEN IT IS TAUGHT. 1 Corinthians 13:6: “Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.”

THE TRUTH CAN BE OBEYED OR DISOBEYED. Galatians 3:1: “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”

WE CAN SPEAK THE TRUTH. Ephesians 4:15: “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ.”

TRUTH IS PART OF THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER’S PROTECTION. Ephesians 6:14: “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.”

GOD HAS A DESIRE THAT ALL MEN COME TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH. WOULD THAT NOT BE CRUEL IF THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH? 1 Timothy 2:4: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

THE CHURCH IS TO BE THE EARTHLY FOUNDATION THAT IS TRUTH. 1 Timothy 3:15: “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

ONE CAN RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH. 2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

ONE CAN COME TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH OR CAN MISS IT COMPLETELY. 2 Timothy 3:7: “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

THE TRUTH CAN BE OBEYED. 1 Peter 1:22: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently.” 2 Peter 1:12: “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.”

WE CAN LIVE IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE TRUTH WILL BE DAMAGED IN REPUTATION. 2 Peter 2:2: “And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”

Let me close with John’s inspiring inspired words: 3 John 1:4: “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

Route 6, Box 28; Hamilton, AL 35570

Prayer

Bobby Liddell

Listed below are some brief comments we hope shall help us all to be scriptural in our praying whether public or private.

Christians pray to the Father through Christ (Mat. 6:6, 9; Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 John 2:1). Keeping that in mind would prevent our sounding as if we did not know the truth from denominational error concerning the persons in prayer.

Pray reverently (Mat. 6:9). Prayer to God involves praise and adoration; thus, speech denoting reverence should be used. We dare not approach God frivolously or as if we were His equal.

Pray frequently (1 The. 5:17). Have set times of daily prayer. In addition, pray all during the day.

Pray fervently (Jam. 5:16); that is, with great earnestness.

Pray faithfully (Jam. 1:6-7). We may show the limits of our faith by the limits we place on our prayers.

Pray thoughtfully (Mat. 6:7-8). The flowery eloquence of a string of memorized phrases and clauses (dangerously close to “vain repetitions”) may be appealing to the ear of man, but not necessarily to God. A simple thoughtful prayer of appropriate length was the pattern given by Jesus (Mat. 6).

Pray thankfully (Col. 3:17). Thanksgiving should be a natural and consistent attitude in our prayers.

Pray unselfishly, remembering the needs of others. Pray penitently, remembering the need for forgiveness. Pray obediently, according to God’s will (1 John 5:14). Pray asking for those blessings of which you have need (Jam. 4:2). Pray with the right attitude of heart. Lastly, when leading in public prayer in the assembly or elsewhere, pray appropriately, remembering the place and the purpose of the prayer.

January Pantry Item

Bring CANNED MEAT. Bill and Peggy Crowe take care of the preparation, distribution and record keeping in connection with our help to the needy through the food pantry. If you would rather make a financial contribution, it will be used to buy needed pantry items.

New Visitation Program Starting Soon!

We will be looking for you at the first meeting. Please remember our new program in your prayers and plan to give your BEST to God.

Bellview Lectures

“God’s Pattern For Christian Living”

May 8-12, 1993

Wednesday Schedule

- | | |
|---------|---|
| 1-6-92 | Reading: Harold Maxey
Invitation: Nathan Liddell |
| 1-13-92 | Reading: Shelby Nall
Invitation: Jerry Fillingim |