

News and Notes


PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Paul Brantley** - Elder at Bellview, Pensacola, Fla. Heart damage and constant pain.
- Kenneth Cohn** - Elder at Spring, Texas. At home, recovering from heart procedure.
- Harrell Davidson** - Hornbeak, Tenn. preacher. Recovering from surgery for blocked colon.
- Earlene Holley** - Sherlene’s mother. Severe osteoporosis in Bell Ave. Nursing Home.
- Janice Ruffner** - Roelf Ruffner’s wife, Columbia, TN. Blood clots, Fibromyalgia, Lung problems.
- Nancy Reed** - Various health issues.
- Patrick King** - Hemiplegic Migraine.
- Sandy Craig** - Ongoing kidney problems.
- Jo Ann McLerran** - COPD.
- Glenda Marble** - Lexington, Okla. - Heart problems.
- Paul Marble** - Glenda Marble’s son. Recurrence of cancer, now doing well.
- Charles and Linda Pogue** - Congestive heart failure.
- Nancy Verkist** - Ellensburg, Washington. Von Hippel Lindau disease.
- Chuck Verkist** - Ellensburg, Washington. Undergoing treatment for Prostate Cancer.
- Don Smith** - Brother in Christ persecuted for teaching fellow inmates in an Ohio prison.

NORTHPOINT MEETING - It was Jerry and Sherlene’s delight to attend two nights of the Northpoint church’s gospel meeting in Denton, Texas, April 2 and 3. Gary Summers of Winter Park, Fla. did his usual masterful job in preaching the simple soul-saving gospel of Christ and it was such a pleasure to have fellowship with him and his good wife, Barbara, Phil and Janet Smith, Dub McClish, Jess Whitlock, and all the brethren at Northpoint. We are especially grateful for the hospitality extended to us during our visit.

KENYA REPORT - Contributing to the Kenya Fund this week were the Bellview church, Pensacola, Fla.; the Berea church, Rives, Tenn.; and the Eastside church, Lexington, Okla. The preacher boys returned on April 6 to the Thomas Musick School of Preaching at Kalamindi for the next 8 weeks session.

Website - www.necocelkcity.com Face Book - www.facebook.com/nechurchofchristecok You Tube - www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ	
Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, April 15, 2018 First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Jerry Brewer Communion - Patrick King Offering - Landry Brewer Sunday Afternoon, April 15, 2018 First Prayer - Patrick King Closing Prayer - Landry Brewer	Records - April 8 Bible Class.....16 Morning Worship.....18 Afternoon Worship.....16 Contribution.....\$204.00
Weekly Meeting Times	
Sunday Morning Bible Classes.....9:30 Sunday Morning Worship.....10:30 Sunday Afternoon Worship.....5:00	



Sound Doctrine

“But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1)

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The Social Gospel Of “Mainstream Churches Of Christ” No. 1

Jerry C. Brewer

The extent to which “mainstream churches of Christ” are gripped by the Social Gospel is manifested in the “ministries” listed on their websites. Progressivism (liberalism) as infected them over at least the last five decades and there is a correlation between their loosing of God’s authority expressed in Colossians 3:17—which is what liberalism is—and the Social Gospel. Both ignore Bible authority and feed upon each other. Liberalism looses where God has bound, and is the progenitor of the Social Gospel. Resulting from that unholy union are today’s “mainstream churches of Christ.”

Mainstream Churches Of Christ Defined

Dictionary.com says “mainstream” is, “The principal or dominant course, tendency, or trend,” and the freedictionary.com says it is, “The prevailing current of thought, influence, or activity: Representing the prevalent attitudes, values, and practices of a society or group” Among synonyms for “mainstream” are, “dominant,” “average,” “common,” “current,” “general,” “normal,” “primary,” “regular,” “standard,” “accepted,” and “regular.”

“Mainstream churches of Christ” project an image which the world perceives as the principal tendency, or representing the prevalent attitudes and practices of churches of Christ. The perception of the world is that these churches are dominant, normal, standard and regular examples of churches of Christ. That image is, of course, false. “Mainstream churches of Christ” have departed from the pattern of the church revealed in the New Testament. They are denominations among denominations, liberal in their views and handling of Scripture, and have more affinity with Rome, Calvin, Luther, and Knox than they do the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is no secret, nor should we be surprised, that churches of Christ who still walk in the “old paths” are now marginalized by “mainstream churches of Christ.” Because of that, the world considers them insignificant factions—much as the pejorative term “sect” was hurled at the church by her enemies in the first century (Acts 24:5, 14). The “walking Bibles,” as members of the church were known in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, are still among us, but are shunned as

“legalists” and generally ignored as “radical” by the world. Because of their doctrinal weakness, “mainstream churches of Christ” have become “like all the nations” (1 Sam. 8:20), surrendering their distinction as the New Testament church.

The Social Gospel

The connection between “mainstream churches of Christ” and the Social Gospel is manifested in the vast array of “ministries” listed on their websites and designed to “minister” to man’s physical and emotional needs. When they mention evangelism, it is usually relegated to *one* among the rest of their “ministries.” The conclusion is that “mainstream churches of Christ” have embraced the Social Gospel that germinated in the socialism of denominations in the 19th century, and reached fruition in the 20th century. Of this movement, Wikipedia says,

In the United States prior to World War I, the Social Gospel was the religious wing of the progressive movement which had the aim of combating injustice, suffering and poverty in society. Denver, Colorado, was a center of Social Gospel activism. Thomas Uzzel led the Methodist People’s Tabernacle from 1885 to 1910. He established a free dispensary for medical emergencies, an employment bureau for job seekers, a summer camp for children, night schools for extended learning, and English language classes. Myron Reed of the First Congregational Church became a spokesman, 1884 to 1894 for labor unions on issues such as worker’s compensation. His middle-class congregation encouraged Reed to move on when he became a Socialist, and he organized a nondenominational church. The Baptist minister Jim Goodhart set up an employment bureau, and provided food and lodging for tramps and hobos at the mission he ran. He became city chaplain and director of public welfare of Denver in 1918. Besides these Protestants, Reform Jews and Catholics helped build Denver’s social welfare system in the early 20th century.

The Rev. Mark A. Matthews (1867-1940) of Seattle’s First Presbyterian Church was a leading city reformer, who investigated red light districts and crime scenes, denouncing corrupt politicians businessmen and saloon keepers. With 10,000 members, his was the largest Presbyterian Church in the country. ...He built a model church, with night schools, unemployment bureaus, kindergarten, an anti-tuberculosis clinic, and the nation’s first church-owned radio station. Matthews was one of the most active Social Gospellers in America.

Another of the defining theologians for the Social Gospel movement was Walter Rauschenbusch. ...Rauschenbusch railed against what he regarded as the selfishness of capitalism and promoted a form of Christian Socialism that supported the creation of labor unions and cooperative economics.

In *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, Rauschenbusch states that the individualistic gospel has made sinfulness of the individual clear, but it has not shed light on institutionalized sinfulness: ‘It has not evoked faith in the will and power of God to redeem the permanent institutions of human society from their inherited guilt of oppression and extortion.’ This ideology would be inherited by liberation theologians and civil rights advocates and leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr.

[Washington] Gladden (1836-1918) was an American clergyman. His words and actions earned him the title of ‘a pioneer’ of the Social Gospel even before the term came into use. Gladden spoke up for workers and their right to organize unions. For Gladden, the ‘Christian law covers every relation of life’ including the relationship between employers and their employees.

The sum and substance of the Social Gospel could be expressed in no better terms than these from Wikipedia on Walter Rauschenbusch’s philosophy:

Rauschenbusch wrote that ‘Christianity is in its nature revolutionary’ and tried to remind society of that. He taught that the Kingdom of God ‘is not a matter of getting individuals to heaven, but of transforming the life on earth into the harmony of heaven.’

The Social Gospel emphasizes the life of the “here and now” rather than the one to come. Relegating the church’s mission to preach the gospel (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16) to a much lower priority is what “mainstream churches of Christ” are doing today. That will be demonstrated next week’s article.

“The New Testament Church Had No New Testaments”

Jerry C. Brewer

Our title comes from Mark Henderson’s sermon to the apostate Quail Springs church in Oklahoma City in his attempt to justify mechanical instruments of music, about 10 years ago. He said,

...The New Testament church had no New Testaments. The New Testament was being written, copied, and distributed during the last half of the first century. The earliest indication that we have of the formation of a New Testament canon is the *Muratorian Fragment* dating to about 180. We do not have a settled New Testament canon until sometime in the 4th century...

To Henderson, God’s Word is nonexistent unless it is in written form. He is obviously ignorant of the fact that God’s Word existed in inspired men before it existed in the inspired Book (2 Cor. 2:4-7), and Jude wrote that the faith had been “once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3). That was at least 110 years *before* 180 A.D. “The faith”—that body of Divine Truth was preached by inspired men in the first century (Gal. 1:20-24). Henderson’s sermon cannot be reprinted in whole because he copyrighted it. Perhaps that’s why “the New Testament church had no New Testaments.” The New Testament writers may have copyrighted their works to prohibit publication until they passed into public domain. He further said that when Paul wrote 2 Timothy 3:16, he referred to the Old Testament, which was what he learned at Abilene Christian University. Hence, the Oracle of Abilene trumps God’s inspired Word.

What Paul wrote in that passage *was* the New Testament. So, according to Henderson, Paul wrote part of the New Testament before the New Testament existed, but what he wrote did not exist until at least a century *after* Paul died. The New Testament canon existed in the first century because God said so and confirmed it with signs and wonders (Heb. 2:1-4), regardless of what men decided in later centuries. Henderson, who fellowships Baptists, would probably have no trouble accepting the spurious Catholic claim that they gave us the New Testament.