

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Paul Brantley - Elder at Bellview, Pensacola, Fla. Heart damage and constant pain.
David P. Brown - Preacher/elder at Spring, Texas. At home, recovering from blood clots.
Kenneth Cohn - Elder at Spring, Texas. 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.
Debbie Post - Wife of Salisbury, Maryland preacher Doug Post - Cancer.
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.

SYMPATHY - Our sympathy is extended to brother Roelf Ruffner in the death of his mother, Montrella Ruffner, in Odessa, Texas this week.

PREACHING THIS WEEK - Patrick King will preach at both worship periods this week.

KENYA REPORT - Contributing to the Kenya Fund this week were Gary and Jacque Rogers, Quanah, Texas; Charles and Nancy Verkist, Ellensburg, Wash.; the Fish Hatchery Rd. church, Huntsville, Texas; and Harold and Ruth Tydings, Broken Arrow, Okla. Benard sent this report on March meetings: Port Victoria, Mar. 2-4, 2 restorations; Openda, Mar. 2-4, 1 baptism, 1 restoration; Port Victoria Lugala (Uganda), Mar. 9-11; Kalamindi Leadership Seminar, Mar. 12-14; Sigaon (Nakuru), Mar. 12-14; Musekekwa, Mar. 12-14; Reberwet, Mar. 16-18, 1 restoration; Homa Bay County Seminar, Mar. 16-18; Simotwet, Mar. 23-25, 1 baptism; Hebuyangu, Mar. 23-15, well attended; Kalangi, Mar. 23-15, 4 restorations.

Website - www.necocelkcity.com
Face Book - www.facebook.com/nechurchofchristecok
You Tube - www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCNx52ouOrXoQ

Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, April 8, 2018

First Prayer - Dylan Brewer Closing Prayer - Landry Brewer
 Communion - Dylan Brewer Offering - Patrick King

Sunday Afternoon, April 8, 2018

First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Jerry Brewer

Records - April 1

Bible Class.....15
 Morning Worship.....16
 Afternoon Worship.....16
 Contribution.....\$476.00

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)

Published Weekly By The Northeast church of Christ
 P. O. Box 267, Elk City, Oklahoma 73648

Volume 13, No. 5

April 8, 2018

“Mainstream Churches Of Christ”

Jerry C. Brewer

“Mainstream churches of Christ” is a term we have repeatedly used to describe those churches which have changed over the years from what they once were. They are churches of Christ that at one time were sound in the faith, but are no longer standing where they once did upon “the faith once delivered.” The word, “mainstream,” is defined by dictionary.com as, “The principal or dominant course, tendency, or trend.” Thefreedictionary.com says it is, “The prevailing current of thought, influence, or activity: Representing the prevalent attitudes, values, and practices of a society or group.” In its definition of “mainstream” under “Religion,” Wikipedia says it is,

Mainstream American Protestant churches (also called “Mainline Protestant”) are a group of Protestant churches in the United States that have stressed social justice and personal salvation, and both politically and theologically, tend to be more liberal than non-mainstream Protestants. Mainstream Protestant churches share a common approach that often leads to collaboration in organizations such as the National Council of Churches, and because of their involvement with the ecumenical movement, they are sometimes given the alternative label of “ecumenical Protestantism” (especially outside the United States)

Our use of the term, “mainstream churches of Christ,” does *not* describe the church of the New Testament, but as defined above. “Mainstream churches of Christ” are those which exhibit “the principal or dominant course” that is observed by the religious world, representing to them “the prevalent attitudes, values and practices” of the group collectively known as “churches of Christ.” These are churches of Christ that are described by Wikipedia as “Mainstream American Protestant churches” among that “group of Protestant churches in the United States that have stressed social justice and personal salvation, and both politi-

cally and theologically, tend to be more liberal than non-mainstream Protestants.” Today’s “mainstream churches of Christ” differ from those which are “non-mainstream churches of Christ” in the same manner and the key factor is that “mainstream churches of Christ” “tend to be more liberal.”

The difference between these two classes of churches is the difference between man’s authority and opinion and the authority of Jesus Christ. That difference was what led to the rise of the Disciples of Christ denomination in the 19th century and will lead to the result in our time. Earl Irvin West chronicled the American Restoration Movement in his monumental work, *The Search For The Ancient Order*. In his assessment of the division that occurred in 1906, he listed some causes of what he called, “the fearful fact of division.” Those which he listed were, “The growing use of instrumental music, the trend toward denominationalism,” and, “the silence of the Scriptures” (ibid. Vol. 2, pp. 226, 239, 240). Those are the same things dividing the church today by “mainstream churches of Christ.”

Although he used different terminology, John F. Rowe, who edited the *American Christian Review* described the same two groups in that century. In an editorial, entitled, “The Old and the New Order,” for March 30, 1880, Rowe wrote,

That there is rapidly growing up among us a new order of things in contrast with the old order of things, as advocated by Alexander Campbell and his associates, is a fact that is becoming more apparent and pronounced every day. Anyone who will take the pains to read the *Christian Baptist*, edited fifty years ago by Alexander Campbell, and continuing seven years, will discover in reading his series of articles on ‘The Ancient Order of Things,’ that, when placed in contrast with much of our pulpit teaching there is growing up and taking form ‘The Modern Order of Things.’ ...We are grieved to say that the line of separation is becoming more distinct every day. There are two classes among us—those who represent ‘The Ancient Order of Things’ and those who represent ‘The New Order of Things.’ It is manifest that these two parties are not only not acting in sympathy, but that the men of the New Order of Things are determined to crush down, if possible, the Ancient Order of Things (Cited by West in *The Search For The Ancient Order*, Vol. 2, pp. 224, 225).

Rowe’s description of the group that he called, “The New Order of Things” is what we mean by “mainstream churches of Christ” today. They have incrementally changed the ancient order of New Testament doctrine, worship, and work over the last five decades and are poised on the brink of full-fledged denominationalism. Moreover, their rise is rooted in the same cause of which Rowe pinpointed in the editorial cited above. He wrote, “the tendency to drift unconsciously and imperceptibly into a miserable sect” was “because of the supreme indifference of our people on the question of a restored Christianity” (ibid. p, 239).

A “trend” in “The Modern Order of Things” in Rowe’s time is mirrored today by “Mainstream churches of Christ” who offer subjective authority for a “thus saith the Lord” (Col. 3:17). They are concerned with the “spirit” rather than the “letter” of God’s law and decry

appeals to the Scripture as “legalism.” That was advocated in the 19th century and “legalism” became the pejorative term used by the *Christian Evangelist* in the late 1800s. Moses Lard wrote, “...few men could be found bold enough to speak against obeying the commandments of Christ. The result here would be too glaring. But the acts are the same. Legalism and obedience to Christ’s commands are the same. To speak against that is to speak against this” (Ibid., p. 269). In 1890, F. D. Srygley wrote of the dichotomy of the “spirit” and the “letter” in the *Gospel Advocate*:

This talk about the spirit and letter of commandments usually comes from men who want to *feel* goodish, but do as they please, in religion....To put the whole thing in its simplest form, the theory is that any man who is right in *spirit or motive* will be accepted of God no matter what the outward form of his conduct may be (Ibid., p. 279).

These are the old tired, worn out, much-used, and error filled ideas of today’s, “mainstream churches of Christ,” the “second coming” of ‘The Modern Order of Things’ in the 19th century. And—these are today’s churches of Christ that will become something entirely foreign to the New Testament, as did the Disciples of Christ in the 19th century.

Liberalism Are Denominationalizing The Church

Roy J. Hearn (Deceased)

1. They are doing this by denying the identity of the church, and classifying it simply as another denomination among denomi-nations.
2. They are teaching the doctrines and commandments of men claiming that the Holy Spirit literally, actually, bodily, personally indwells Christians. Some are claiming to perform miracles, and to speak in tongues.
3. They are denying that there is a pattern of worship and thus rejecting the observance of the Lord’s supper on the first day of the week, the use of instrumental music and throwing caution to the winds in other affairs. They are advocating that scriptural bounds should be ignored and that we should embrace the fellowship of practically all denominations.
4. Liberalism tends to cheapen the cause of Christ by using cheap schemes to promote the Lord’s work instead of emphasizing the great doctrines of the gospel, which if presented and accepted are sufficient to promote the Lord’s work.
5. We emphasize, liberalism would sacrifice the Restoration Plea and Principle and ignore the work and sacrifices of those who are known as pioneer preachers, saying that they did not have the “spirit of the gospel.”
6. Liberalism is stressing the so-called “social gospel” which takes attention off man’s sins and God’s judgment to come. The social gospel takes emphasis off the authority of Christ as expressed in and through the Bible (Heb. 1-3). Therefore the social gospel is anti-social because without the recognition of the authority of Christ the gospel has no restraining power. Without its restraining power it does not curb the sensual desires, and worthy aspirations of people. Consequently, people who subscribe to the so-called “social gospel” may not act properly toward each other. (Via *The Better Way*, Spring, Texas, Dec. 14, 2014).