

News and Notes

PLEASE PRAY FOR:


- Holley Brewer** - Recovering from injury in auto accident.
- Paul Brantley** - Elder at Bellview, Pensacola, Fla. Heart damage and constant pain.
- Earlene Holley** - Sherlene's mother. On hospice care in Elkwood Assisted Living.
- 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.

BIBLE CLASSES- Where will you be at 9:30 a.m. this Lord's Day? In bed, or in Bible class? Where you will be is determined by your devotion, or lack thereof, to the Lord.

KENYA REPORT - Recent contributors to the Kenya Fund were Ron Skinner, Lexington, Okla.; Holley Brewer, Weatherford, Okla.; and Gary and Jacque Rogers, Quanah, Texas. Thank you all for your support of this good work.

BELLVIEW LECTURESHIP - The 43rd Annual Bellview Lectureship in Pensacola, Fla. is about a month away, June 8-12. Theme is "The Church" and Jerry will speak three times. Benard Kagaga will attend from Kenya and report on his work during the Open Forum at 3 p.m., Saturday, June 9, and speak on the topic of, "What's Right With The Church" at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, June 11. Lectures will be live streamed on Bellview's website at www.bellviewcoc.com. The Brewers will be two days on the road each way, accompanied by Dub McClish, leaving June 6 and returning on June 14. Pray for safe travel for all participants.

Website - www.necocelkcity.com Face Book - www.facebook.com/nechurchofchristecok You Tube - www.youtube.com/channel/UCjd5rSEV1vXCXN52ouOrXoQ	
Those Who Serve Sunday Morning, May 6, 2018 First Prayer - Landry Brewer Closing Prayer - Patrick King Communion - Jerry Brewer Offering - Earl Reed Sunday Afternoon, May 6, 2018 First Prayer - Earl Reed Closing Prayer - Jerry Brewer	Records - April 29 Bible Class.....15 Morning Worship.....18 Afternoon Worship.....15 Contribution.....\$505.00
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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A Deadly Mixture

Jerry C. Brewer

The deadliest mixture in religion is small amounts of error mingled with truth. That was the deceptive combination in the Garden of Eden when the serpent added a single three-letter word to God's prohibition and changed its meaning—“Ye shall *not* surely die” (Gen. 3:4). “Mainstream churches of Christ” have apparently copied that tactic, couching what truth they offer in generic language that is palatable to the religious world at large, and changing its meaning. That formula makes their doctrines as deadly to the soul, as a few drops of arsenic in a glass of pure water is deadly to the body.

To maintain their facade as “Churches of Christ,” there are certain “core” doctrines to which they cling, offering them as proof that they are what they claim to be. Their websites note that, “our singing is a cappella,” meaning they do not use mechanical instruments in worship, and generally teach faith, repentance, confession, and baptism for the remission of sins. So do Hard-Shell Baptists, who sing without mechanical instruments, and Mormons who baptize for the remission of sins.

In the evening of my memory, I recall faithful brethren, now long gone, who once thundered the message of salvation from pulpits across our little corner of western Oklahoma. One clarion message that echoes through my consciousness is that God's people “call Bible things by Bible names;” that it isn't “my church,” or “our church,” but “Christ's church,” and it isn't “our kingdom,” but “God's kingdom.” As I emerge from those quiet moments of memory, a cacophony of Ashdod rises within the body of Christ. “Sound speech that cannot be condemned” has been abandoned by “mainstream churches of Christ” and replaced with the indistinct sounds of foreign terms.

They have adopted a modern version of the language of Ashdod—a mixture of “speaking as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11), and denominational jargon—perhaps to avoid giving offense to their religious neighbors. To avoid mentioning the church of Christ, they

substitute sectarian language like, “church family,” “my church family,” or “our church family.” The church is the family of God. Paul told Timothy, “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 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...” (1 Tim. 3:14-15). God’s “house” is His “family,” but it is *not*, “our church family.”

Typical of those is the “Church of Christ” in Fort Cobb, Okla. As many others do, they have a creed posted on their website, under the heading of “What We Believe.” They introduce their creed with, “As a church family (a group of imperfect people seeking the Lord), we believe the Bible is God’s message revealed to us for the purpose of guiding us toward Him.” Each of their succeeding credal statements begins with, “Our family believes...” Hence, in their estimation, the church is not the *church* Jesus promised to build (Matt. 16:18), over which He is Head (Eph. 1:22-23), and which He will save in heaven (Eph. 5:23, 27), but simply, “a church family,” or “our family.”

One also wonders why the parenthetical disclaimer that they are, “a group of imperfect people seeking the Lord” must be inserted. Is this to placate those who may cry, “legalist!?” One does not have to be “perfect” to preach the gospel in plain terms, as the “imperfect” did Paul (Gal. 1:13; 1 Tim. 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 3:12). Peter was imperfect (Gal. 2:11-14), but pointedly preached the gospel, without the disclaimer that he was “imperfect” (Acts 2:22-23). Further, the statement that they are, “seeking the Lord” implies they have not come to Him yet—that they are not really Christians after all. That agnostic language may be designed to negate the retort, “Don’t judge me!”

To gain acceptance, respectability, and good will in the religious and secular worlds, “mainstream churches of Christ” express their doctrines in nebulous, “non-offensive” terms. “The house of God, which is the church of the living God” is also the kingdom of God, the body of Christ, the Lord’s vineyard, and the temple of God. It is no more “my church family” than it is my church, my body, my kingdom, my vineyard, or my temple. The phrases, “my church family,” and “our family” belong to Ashdod. They have no Scriptural basis and are an affront to the God who created us in Christ Jesus, and to Him who redeemed the church with His own blood. Those phrases betray a lack of respect for the exalted station of the church for which Jesus died. Sinners *need* to be taught that the church—not, “our family”—was in God’s scheme of redemption from eternity, and is the body in which all are saved who will enter it (Eph. 1:7, 11; 22-23; 5:23). A refusal to preach His church is a refusal to preach Christ (Acts 5:12).

Indeed, the church is God’s family, and to refer to it as that is Scriptural. But when Scriptural language is modified and/or mixed with denominational nomenclature, it becomes a deadly combination. That is what “mainstream churches of Christ are doing. Words are vehicles of thought and words have meaning. When Bible terms are corrupted, they no longer carry the meaning that God gave them. Children of God—members of the New Testament church—“are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of

darkness into his marvellous light...” (1 Pet. 2:9). That does not sound like, “our family”—a term found no where in The New Testament. Churches of Christ who adopt denominational language cease to be “a peculiar people” thereby surrendering their distinction as the church that Jesus built. And, *that* describes “mainstream churches of Christ” in our own back yards.

Illumination, Sensations, And The Holy Spirit

Doug Post

Those advocating a Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit, i.e., that the Spirit must illuminate the Scriptures by directly and supernaturally tampering with your minds, are those poor souls who disdain or ignore reason, logic, and common sense when determining or interpreting Scripture.

In fact, these poor souls tell us that the Spirit will help us interpret Scripture by giving us strong sensations (can you find that in your Bibles?). You might get a strange sensation or feeling, an uneasy or nervous feeling, which will tell you that something’s wrong concerning an interpretation. On the other hand, they tell us that we can know that God is bearing witness with our spirit when we get a particular feeling or sensation of unexplainable peace and joy—a warm feeling. If this happens, they tell us, then, we can be assured we have a correct interpretation and understanding of Scripture.

In other words, they are teaching us to ignore our God-given minds and disregard common sense, while waiting on some sensation or feeling, which they claim is directly from the Holy Spirit. I would like to know how these folks know it is the Holy Spirit and not indigestion.

However, what we do know is that the Holy Spirit, Himself, has told us to “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing [handling] the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The Holy Spirit, through Paul, is telling us to handle the Word of God correctly—to think accurately. Handling the Scripture correctly does not come from some hocus pocus direct sensation from the Holy Spirit, but rather through instruction, which Paul discusses at the very beginning of the context of handling Scripture accurately (2:1-4).

Moreover, the Spirit continues demanding of us that we “shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness” (2:16). Again, this gets back to the idea that God demands of us to use our spiritual discernment in understanding what truth is and what is error. In commanding us, God is appealing to our own minds, to our own intellects, to our own capacities to think and reason. This is what we are to do. The Holy Spirit does not think for us; does not reason for us; and does not make us understand His Word. That is an operation left up to you and me, based upon our own mental inclinations, when we devote our minds to the Bible.

For those who live according to the flesh—those advocating sensations, feelings, and other direct operations of the Spirit—set their minds on things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit—the law of the Spirit of life, what the Spirit teaches in the Word of God—the things—teachings—of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Rom. 8:5-6).

Who does the setting of the mind? The Christian! Who is the spiritual person? The Christian who is spiritually minded! Therefore, the spiritual Christian is the one setting his own mind on the teachings (things) of the Spirit as found in the Word of God. Deity does not set our minds for us, we set our own minds, because we are the ones commanded to do so. Truly the mind is a terrible thing to waste!