

LIBERALISM

The Deadly Enemy of The Church

by

JOHN WADDEY

Minister

Karns Church of Christ

Knoxville, Tennessee 37921

Published by

J.C. CHOATE PUBLICATIONS

Burton Drive

Winona, Mississippi 38967

U.S.A.

BEAUMONT MEMORIAL LIBRARY

HARDING COLLEGE

SEARCY, ARKANSAS 72143

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

Searching the Scriptures. 2nd Edition (cloth)

Christianity vs. Liberalism. (cloth)

The Great Commission and You. Sermons on world evangelism, suitable also for class use. (paper)

Growing in Grace and Knowledge of Christ. Sermon outlines on Christian living, basic Bible doctrines suitable for studies with new converts. (paper)

Sermons on Saints and Sinners. Sermon Outlines on Bible Characters. (paper)

Anatomy of Sin. Full length sermons. (cloth)

Outlined Introduction to the Old Testament, Volume 1. Author's class notes and materials on Genesis through Esther.

A Child of the King and Other Sermon Outlines.

Preaching To Preachers About Preaching.

Character Cameos from the Bible. Sermons on Bible Personalities. Outline studies suitable for sermons or class.

DEDICATION

To Bro. Thomas B. Warren, my respected and beloved brother in Christ, who has admirably combined Christian scholarship and faithful proclamation, polemic and literary skills with soul-winning evangelism. Few men in our generation have done as much to help the church resist false teaching.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Waddey was born in Nashville, Tennessee in 1938. He was baptized by George Prosser in 1955. Parker French encouraged him to become a preacher. One year after his conversion, he preached his first sermon at the Blackmon congregation near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He is married to the former Reba Duncan and is the father of three daughters, Lourene, Lesia and Rebecca.

His schooling was received at the College of Evangelists and Itawamba Junior College. Most of his education was gained from his own study and experience. In his twenty years of preaching, Brother Waddey has served churches in Mississippi, Colorado and Tennessee. Evangelistic work has carried him into fifteen other states. He has made nine overseas trips, visting mission works in eighteen countries. He has done evangelistic work in eleven foreign nations. Over the years he has spoken at a number of special lectureships at Christian Colleges, Schools of Preaching and congregations.

Since 1968, John Waddey has worked with the Karns congregation of Knoxville, Tennessee. Annually that church hosts a World Mission Workshop. He has planned and directed that program since moving to Karns.

Each year the author conducts several revival meetings. He is an officer of the Teenage Christian Camp. He has engaged in four public debates and a number of radio and television talkshows where controversial subjects were discussed.

For eleven years Brother Waddey conducted a weekly radio broadcast. For several years he wrote a weekly newspaper column. Through the Rocky Mountain News of Denver, Colorado, over 50 million copies of his lessons were circulated. His articles are carried in the Firm Foundation, Gospel Advocate, Words of Truth, Christian

Echo, and other brotherhood papers.

In 1970 he assisted the Karns elders in establishing the East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions and continues to serve as a teacher in it.

In addition to his evangelistic duties, our subject is President of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life, a pro-life group fighting the abortion evil. He is also a member of the board of directors of the National Right to Life Committee. He writes and speaks extensively on the related issues of Abortion, Euthanasia and Suicide.

This is the tenth book from John Waddey's pen. For previous titles see the list of the author's other works.

CONTENTS

<i>Article</i>	<i>Page</i>
INTRODUCTION	9
AUTHOR'S PREFACE	11
THE PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT	14
THE MEANING OF LIBERALISM	17
HOW THE LIBERALS WON THE BATTLE	21
WILL WE DIVIDE?	27
WE CAN LEARN FROM LIBERALS	31
THE FIVE FACES OF A LIBERAL	35
WHERE LIBERALISM CANNOT GROW	38
THINGS A LIBERAL WILL NOT DO	41
HOW TO DEAL WITH LIBERALS	45
FREEDOM FIGHTERS	48
CONSERVATIVE IN BOTH FAITH AND PRACTICE	52
I PROTEST	59
DIAGRESSION: IGNORE IT OR MARK IT?	62
PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY	64
VOICES OF CONCERN ARE VOICES OF APOSTASY	66
TELL IT LIKE IT IS	75
THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST	79
THE DIVINITY OF JESUS	85

THE VICARIOUS DEATH OF CHRIST – OUR ATONEMENT	90
THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST	95
A BIBLE BASIS FOR FELLOWSHIP	102
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP	107
THE MODERN GLOSSOLALIA MOVEMENT IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRITURES	115
WHY WE DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE	123
JESSE FERGUSON, A VOICE OF CONCERN	125
CHURCH DISCIPLINE	131
OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CHURCH DISCIPLINE	136

INTRODUCTION

I find a genuine pleasure in being able to write an introduction for John Waddey's latest book.

When my family and I returned from the mission field, there were several things that we hoped to have and enjoy in the States before we returned to foreign service. (1) We wanted to be associated with a strong congregation in a semi-mission area — the Karns congregation fits that request. (2) Our desire was to serve under and receive guidance from godly elders — the Karns elders' strong conviction, loving guidance, and visionary planning fulfill our second desire. (3) Another need we felt was to work in a supportative role, sitting at the feet of another gospel preacher. Sound, dedicated, committed, kind, loving, humble, interesting, informative; these are the words that come to my mind when I think of my co-worker John Waddey.

As some can understand from experience, it's not always easy for five men to work together as closely as we do at Karns, working in a school and with the congregation. I believe that the wisdom and humility of John Waddey helps us have the close, personal and amiable relationship we enjoy here.

John is concerned about and involved in several areas of work to combat error. His fight against abortion has taken him to several major cities. He has been the spark plug in Tennessee in the fight against abortion, serving as President of the Tennessee Volunteers for Life. He is an amazing writer. His articles are timely, clear, easily followed and extremely useful. He is a strong defender of the faith and an able exponent of the truth. And yet, he doesn't dwell on the negative aspects that need to be mentioned. In fact, you could say that John's preaching is balanced and relevant. He can convict one of his sins. He causes us to rejoice in our salvation. He exhorts us to walk closer to God and inspires us to study His word. He serves "filet mignon" to the mature and

“milk” to the babes. Because my main role at Karns is soul winning, I deeply appreciate his passion for souls and inspiring, motivating sermons to challenge the congregation to be soul winners.

I believe that John’s love for truth, his experience in maturing a strong soul-conscious congregation and his talent in writing, warrants your close scrutiny of this book.

Jerry C. Dyer

East Tennessee School of Preaching and Missions

Karns Church of Christ

January 12, 1977

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

For some years now, a common concern of all faithful Christians has been the creeping emergence of an apostasy within the ranks of the Lord's church. Numerous articles have been published on these matters and thousands of sermons have been delivered relating to it.

Only a blind man could truly claim that he sees no evidence of this unholy departure. But there has been a great deal of confusion as to how to deal with the problem. This has led to indecision and inactivity on the part of many concerned Christians. Of those who did elect to act, not all proceeded in the most profitable way. Some felt that tolerance and loving acceptance would somehow smother out the fires of error. Of course it did not. Others blindly began to flail at everything and every man who they suspected, even as a man lashes out at snakes in a bad dream. This approach is counter-productive because good works and innocent men are often wounded along with the bad. It also further fuels the fires of the liberal brother who seeks to discredit our objections to his cause.

The times and problems demand an intelligent, balanced response to false doctrine. Brethren must clearly understand the issues at hand. They must recognize just who the enemy is. We must carefully document and identify the error and its teachers. We must be unyielding and consistent in our opposition if we are to win this crucial battle.

While we commonly call our latest intrusion liberalism and modernism, these words need to be more precisely defined in order to keep false teachers from dodging behind our imprecision. Technically the word liberalism suggests those who deny the Biblical doctrine of revelation and inspiration, the miracles of the Bible, the deity of Jesus, and other fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. We have very few men among us who have fallen to this low plane. Our trouble-makers rather question the authority of the Bible to settle religious

issues. They are questioning and rejecting principles of faith, worship and practice which we are sure are solidly based upon scriptural precedent. Their's is the ancient sin of denominationalism, i.e., the placing of human wisdom and preference above the revelation of God. Those among us who have taken the road of pentecostalism have in addition to the above elevated their subjective emotional feeling above the sacred scriptures. While they are liberal in the sense that they have taken unlawful liberties with God's Word, work and worship, they are not liberals in the classical sense of the word. They are truly modernists in that they have attempted to subvert the old Jerusalem gospel delivered by Christ and his apostles with a new gospel of human opinions.

While these terms have become valid by current usage, we must be careful and discriminatory in our use of them. Better to take the time to spell out a man's error than to cast a vague label upon him that might be easily shaken off. When we take the time to pinpoint his errors and scripturally refute them, we will occasionally discover that what we suspected was liberalism was simply a new way of doing an old thing and not a thing sinful or wrong.

Another danger in dealing with liberalism is that we become obsessed with this one issue and neglect other important aspects of our faith and work. Some become so engrossed in fighting liberalism that all evangelistic activities cease. Others become so embittered in battling enemies that Christian charity and brotherly love disappears. Some neglect the positive aspects of congregational work in their determination to stamp out liberalism. When any or all of these happen, Satan has won a subtle victory. He has the false brother, but then he has diverted the sound brother from the only work that will save the souls of the lost. Really, his infernal majesty does not care if we fight liberalism, so long as we abdicate our responsibilities elsewhere. The watch word is *balance*. When we lose that we lose everything in the long run.

The chapters of this book originated as articles submitted to brotherhood papers and sermons preached in the pulpit of the Karns congregation. It is felt that the issues to which they speak are yet alive among us. Therefore, they are being offered in this collected form.

The first article is by our respected brother, Roy Deaver, of Hurst, Texas. Our purpose for including this is to help to define and identify the problem we are discussing. This is followed by some eleven articles dealing with various aspects of today's liberalism. Then we offer a brief review of the book *Voices of Concern* which was one of the early publications of these apostates. We next offer several positive papers dealing with grand truths of Christianity under attack by some theological liberals. We close with two articles on church discipline which are fitting because this is God's appointed way to exorcize false brethren from the spiritual body, the church.

The author is grateful for the Karns congregation who love and appreciate sound doctrine. He is especially thankful for his elders who share his convictions and direct his efforts. Also, he is blest to work with men of unquestioned soundness in the East Tennessee School of Preaching.

This book goes forth with a prayer that God will protect his people from the wolves of error and that these lessons will prove helpful in some way as we make our stand for the defense of the gospel.

John Waddey

Rt. 22, Beaver Ridge Road
Knoxville, Tennessee 37921

January 12, 1976

THE PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

Even the church of our Lord has enemies — and many of them — but none are more subtle and dangerous than liberalism. Modernism and liberalism as found in other religious groups are bad enough, but far more deceitful and dangerous are the liberal tendencies found within the church itself.

Liberalism is like a killing disease. It must be found quickly and cut out or else it will destroy the body. It is not something that will go away if ignored. It is not something that we can condone and fellowship. True, we don't like to have to be negative, and we don't like the idea of having to fight, especially when we must oppose our own brethren in some instances, but still we must decisively deal with this or else we will have to deal with.

I can recall a few years ago when we were not bothered much by this deadly disease. Even then, however, some of us were telling our brethren that the next great battle to be fought would be over modernism and liberalism. We could see the signs pointing in this direction. That prediction has come to pass, sad to say.

The world has come a long way during the past few years, and for the most part it has gone in the wrong direction. Religion has been moving along with it. The rapid pace that has been set, along with all of the emphasis on materialism, has left little place for spiritual matters. Consequently, God, Christ, Bible Study, Prayer, the church, morality, and the better things of life have been pushed into the background. It is not surprising that out of this soil has come a new breed: those who doubt, question, and rebel. Therefore, if the church as a whole is to be saved from all of this, we are going to have to stand up and be counted for the Lord. We need not go to the extreme or become fanatical to do this, but we must not be shy, timid, and afraid to let it be known who we are, what we are, and what we believe. We must also take the battle to the enemy, leaving him no room to stand and no opportunity to prey on the innocent.

John Waddey is attempting in this book to make us more aware of our deadly enemy and to equip us with the knowledge and qualities that will make it possible for us to oppose liberalism while being faithful ourselves to the Lord. Remember, as long as you and I stand on the truth of God's will, no one will be able to move us, and remember too that when we resist the devil and his co-workers they will surely flee from us.

May God's will be done in our lives that through faith we may have the victory.

J. C. Choate
131 Moulmein Road
Singapore 11
August 26, 1978



John Waddey

The Meaning of Liberalism

Roy Deaver

“Liberalism” is a term which is being heard and seen with increasing frequency. It is important that we clearly understand the sense in which the word is being used.

1. What is the meaning of “liberalism?” How is the term being used in the present study?
2. The term is variously used, and a *brief* definition is difficult to come by.
3. Some writers on the subject use “Modernism” as the general term, with “liberalism” as a sub-division under “Modernism.” Others use “liberalism” as the general, with “Modernism” as a sub-division. And regardless of which term we regard as being the larger one, we must recognize that there are numerous sub-divisions.
4. A fairly general concept is to use “liberalism” as the general term, recognizing that it consists of two basic branches:
 - a. “Moderate” liberalism — which is called “Modernism,” and
 - b. “Radical” liberalism — which is called “Humanism”

Note: Though there are many points of difference, there is basic agreement.

5. Liberalism, in this sense —
 - a. Denies the miraculous, word by word, inspiration of the Scriptures;

- b. Denies that the Bible is infallible and authoritative;
- c. Holding to the Graf-Welhausen Hypothesis and the Documentary Theory, it regards the Bible as being a human product;
- d. Tends to deify Science and human reason; to *deify man* and *humanize God*.
- e. Denies the miracles of the Bible;
- f. Vehemently rejects the records of the creation of man and of the universe;
- g. Ridicules and rejects the Bible record of the virgin birth of Christ;
- h. Subscribes to the doctrine of organic evolution;
- i. Seeks a “natural” explanation for all things which the Bible presents as being miraculous;
- j. Is adept in using ordinary terms in very extraordinary ways — as,
 - A. Liberalism believes in God, but not the God of the Bible;
 - B. Liberalism believes in Christ, but not the Christ of the Bible;
 - C. Liberalism believes in inspiration, but not the inspiration the Bible talks about;
 - D. Liberalism believes in salvation, but not the salvation of the Bible.
- k. Denies the resurrection of Jesus, and rejects the idea that there will be a general resurrection of all the dead;
- l. Denies there is a judgment to come;
- m. Denies the existence of heaven and hell.

6. But, what about liberalism in the church? What is meant when this term is used?
 - a. Sometimes it means exactly that which we have already discussed. For many years the church of our Lord has been plagued with “liberals” of *that* variety.
 - b. However, the word frequently is used to refer to brethren who —
 - A. Reject miraculous, word-by-word inspiration of the Bible;
 - B. Deny and/or disregard the distinctiveness and exclusiveness of New Testament Christianity;
 - C. Insist that not all things are black or white — that some things are mushy gray; that truth is relative;
 - D. Think of the New Testament Church as being just another denomination among denominations;
 - E. Are vehement in defense of “drinking socially;”
 - F. Insist that we have no specific instruction as to when to observe the Lord’s Supper, and that — therefore — it may be observed on Thursday night;
 - G. Hold that it makes no difference as to whether or not one believes the Bible record of the virgin birth of Christ;
 - H. Are tolerant toward those who hold to the doctrine of “theistic evolution;”
 - I. Think and teach that we cannot *disfellowship* — but that we *must* fellowship — the people

of the “Christian Church;”

- J. Are concerned about “Christian Unity” but without proper regard for Bible teaching on the subject of unity;
- K. Are inclined to minimize matters of *doctrine* (“It’s the spirit that counts.”)
- L. Insist that there is no such thing as an “act” of worship, but that worship is entirely a matter of “attitude,” the “condition of heart;”
- M. Ridicule the time-honored practice of giving “book, chapter, and verse” for what is being preached;
- N. Minimize the words and influence of the great gospel preachers of a former day;
- O. Weave *everything* into their sermons excepting the word of God;
- P. Want to fellowship everybody excepting those who don’t want to fellowship everybody; tolerate everything and everybody excepting those who won’t tolerate that kind of toleration; include everything excepting those who don’t want to include everything!

How The Liberals Won The Battle

James DeForest Murch in his book, *Christians Only, A History of The Restoration Movement*, has made an invaluable contribution to the brotherhood of Churches of Christ. In his 15th and 16th chapters, he plots the course of the Liberal takeover of Protestantism and the Disciples of Christ movement. Surely we can profit by this historical study as we confront a growing liberal trend among us. The careful reader will note some painful similarities in Murch's analysis and in our state of affairs today. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

First, dealing with Protestantism in general, and her losing battle with Liberalism, he notes:

THE GREAT DENIAL

“Abandoned to the new culture were the inspiration of the Scriptures, the unique diety of Christ, the miracles, the atonement for sin, the bodily resurrection, the individual resurrection of the saints, the second coming of Christ unto final judgment, heaven, hell and every vestige of the supernatural elements of the Christian faith.” p. 224.

A few among us have already espoused these infidelic principles in part. Unbelief being a growing cancerous thing, some of them will no doubt go all the way.

THE CHURCH REVAMPED

“The church became, for liberals, merely a fraternal society with certain social benefits. It was no longer the

assembly of called out people who were saved by grace through faith in Christ, the organism of which He is the head and which enjoys mystical union with Him. Liberals saw the church as a movement which in every age becomes the vanguard for the social and spiritual development of mankind. Biblical Christianity was utterly repudiated by the liberals” p. 225.

Those who ridicule and berate the church, who would turn us away from the proclamation of the gospel to “social involvement”, are already feeding upon this bitterweed.

TRUTH BECAME RELATIVE

God-centered education was exchanged for a man-centered process. God’s will was no longer the basic norm. Man’s mind became the measure of all things. The moral and spiritual ultimates, even truth itself, were scrapped for relative values. Human social welfare became a matter of primary concern. p. 226.

COLLEGES THE SPAWNING GROUND

“In the atmosphere of the colleges and universities and their associated theological seminaries, the new intellectual movement found its most effective breeding ground. . . .” p. 227. Our schools cannot tolerate such false brethren for a single moment. All the liberal professor asks for is a stand-off or compromise. They work like leaven. The battle is never over. Eternal vigilance will be required.

HOW THE COLLEGES WERE CAPTURED

“Theological liberals first attacked strategic chairs

of religion and the well-endowed seminaries of the leading Protestant denominations.” p. 227.

SOUND TEACHERS DISCREDITED

“Bible-believing professors were discredited by a well-directed propaganda which made them appear as naive, obscurantist, unscholarly, and reactionary.” p. 227.

FALSE PLEDGES OF LOYALTY

“In many instances liberals falsely represented themselves to be evangelical, accepting under oath, evangelical confessions of faith with mental reservations, using orthodox words to convey liberal thought, and moving with caution until circumstances afford safe opportunity to take an open stand for the new doctrines.”

USE OF COMPROMISE TO CONTROL SCHOOLS

“Often they used so-called ‘inclusivist’ strategy, persuading orthodox institutions to admit liberals to their faculties on the ground that the principle of academic freedom required presentation of all viewpoints. When liberals attained majority status they set up new standards and by various devices eliminated all Bible-believing professors. Once firmly entrenched in the institutions that trained the leadership of the churches, they next directed their strategies to obtain control of important boards and commissions and finally the administrative machinery of whole denominations.” p. 227.

Bible chairs, campus programs and Christians Colleges are prime targets. We cannot turn our heads for a moment. It is not impossible that a liberal take-over can be effected

in some or all of these.

CONTROL MISSIONS TO DESTROY THEM

“The strange new liberal gospel gradually found its way into the field of Christian missions. . . . Liberals were not interested in carrying out the imperative of the great commission, but they were vitally concerned with control of machinery that would give them world influence and an opportunity to remake the international social order.” p. 228.

“Liberalism came into the missionary picture as a parasite, living on the boards, institutions, and missions built up by evangelicals, and undermining the Scriptural beliefs and practices that have made Christian missions a vital force in the world. Liberals denied that men are lost without Christ in the full New Testament sense.” p. 228.

Let no one think that because we have no missionary society, such cannot happen to us. Already a handful of liberal men have surfaced on foreign soil. Thank God for sound elders who cut them off immediately. May this policy of firmness prevail. Some mission emphasis programs have turned out to be liberal emphasis programs.

THE “METHODIST” STRATEGY

“The Methodist Episcopal church . . . is a perfect example in liberal achievement with respect to control of the denominational apparatus. A small group of liberals met in Boston early in the 1900’s and agreed to work together in liberalizing the church. A four-point program was adopted: 1) place a rationalist in every chair of English Bible in the various church colleges, 2) liberalize the Book

Concern, 3) liberalize the church rituals and the Discipline, 4) liberalize the approved course of study for the training of the ministry.” Strongly evangelical, Bishop Thomas B. Neeley said of this program. . . “the method is not that of a frontal or open attack but of the sapper and the miner.”

The strategy was overwhelmingly successful. In a generation the denomination was firmly in the control of the liberals. Every Methodist College and University was in their hands. p. 229-230. Have we such an element? The sappers and miners have already begun their work.

INTELLECTUAL PRIDE PAVED THE WAY

“Educated people began to demand that religion put off the crudities of an earlier day and put on the garments of refinement and culture.” p. 232.

NAIVE CONSERVATIVES WERE OUT-MANEUVERED

“Naive evangelicals hoped the liberalism was only a passing fad soon to be absorbed in the approach of some new millennium, while liberals, biding their time, traded concessions in theology for concessions in social ethics and action, and negotiated a strangle hold on the Council’s commissions and administrative machinery.” p. 233.

We cannot afford naivety. Too many brethren just cannot believe that it could happen to us. God forbid that we capitulate without a battle.

ARROGANCE AND NAME CALLING, LIBERAL WEAPONS

“They sneered at those who refused to admit the

validity of destructive criticism and who clung to the Scriptures, calling them ‘bibliolators’ and repudiators of ‘true revelation’.” p. 235.

One need only read *Mission, Integrity* and Gary Freeman’s works to see a “live demonstration of the above strategy.”

AN APPEAL

The same evil force of liberalism that attacked Protestantism 75 years ago is now raising its ugly head among us. Let us profit by their mistakes. The most important things in the world are at stake: the faith once for all delivered; the church for which Jesus died; the souls of millions, ours included. May every elder, preacher, editor, publisher, and college administrator take heed and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered, Jude 3.

Will We Divide?

This momentous question occupied the mind of Moses Lard in 1866. He published a paper, "Can We Divide?", in the April issue of his quarterly that year. Bro. Lard did not believe the church would or could divide; perhaps an occasional case of apostasy, but never a wholesale rending. Dying in 1880, he did not live long enough to witness the awful separation resulting from the introduction of instrumental music and missionary societies. His naivete towards division reminds one of the attitude of many brethren today, who just cannot bring themselves to accept the possibility of yet another division in the Lord's Church.

Division between brethren is a heinous crime. Every time it occurs, one or both parties stand condemned by God. God hates him that "soweth discord among brethren," Prov. 6:19.

The thoughts herein suggested are not the wish and desire of the author, nor does he write them without sorrow. Yet the situation facing the brotherhood demands that we think on these unpleasant things.

There exists within the church of Christ in America today, four, perhaps more, attitudes toward the Bible, the church and the world.

1. There is, without doubt, a small body of "theological liberals," men who being lifted up with vanity and pride in their intellectual attainments, have espoused false views about the inspiration and authority of the New Testament, the deity of Jesus, the miracles, creation, and other vital truths. These wolves hiding in sheep's clothing

would like to do for us what liberal modernism has done for the mainline Protestant churches in the last 75 years. We must never underestimate their ability and their potential for harm. Traditionally this element of men have sought for positions with religious schools, Bible School publishing houses, and journals to work their foul plans. Alert watchmen have already spotted some of these.

2. The second class is generally lumped in the same category with the theological liberals and called just that. However, it is a confusion of terms to do so and a distinction must be made. We have numerous men who have been allured into a denominational attitude toward Christianity. These men still believe in God, confess Jesus and believe the Bible to be verbally inspired, yet they have espoused doctrines that are certainly unbiblical, some even antibiblical. Some examples of this is seen in those turning to tongue speaking. Others feel good people can be saved in denominational churches and they conclude that we are but a denomination. Other examples of such human doctrines and practices *could* be cited, but these should be sufficient to make the point. I hasten to add that these errors are no less dangerous to the soul than rank liberalism, should they be carried to the grave. Only truth can save, John 8:32. However, there is a vital difference: the man who in ignorance espouses error might be taught and reclaimed since he still believes in Christ and honors His Word. The true liberal is a religious agnostic, has no love for Christ who can save him, neither does he accept the scriptures which would correct his error. He is without hope in his present frame of mind.

Against the previous two streams of thought the faithful must stand, prepared to fight lest the error swamp us. Yet there are two more variations of attitude to be seen.

3. Most vocal in any battle of this kind, is that element who love a good fight, regardless of the merit of the occasion. If there is no issue, they may make one. They have a warped conception of Christianity that glories in "mote picking" and "scalp hunting." Anyone who dares to be different from the traditional method of saying and doing things is immediately suspect and is often tried, convicted and condemned without so much as a hearing. It is not doubted that these patriotic brethren are preaching and worshipping according to the letter of the law, they are as careful of this as was the strictest Pharisee. It is in their practice, motives and attitudes that one would have to search to find the mind of Christ. It would indeed be a painful search. Sound scriptural exegesis; logical investigation; consistency of practice; or honest searching for truth really does not count much to them. The criteria is, "what we have always believed or practiced on the question." A good synonym for that is "tradition." Needless to say, these men, in their zeal to drive out the heretic, will often do as much damage as the false teacher might have done. It is somewhat akin to burning the house to get rid of the termites. Division is sin regardless of who causes it, liberal or radical. We cannot well afford either of these in our midst.

4. The last group I will discuss is that element that seeks to stay on the road of truth between the two ditches of destruction. The proverbial pendulum swings to the extreme right and extreme left. There is a great deal of room in between, where brethren may serve God and work together in love. It is that mainstream of true Christianity that will live on and continue the work of God after the extremes are vanished into the pages of history books.

Everyone likes to fancy himself in the middle road of

truth, yet it is a most difficult road to walk. Solomon described it well in Prov. 4:25-26:

“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 and nor to the left. Remove thy foot from evil.”

This is not a way of compromise, rather it is the way of truth. It is not concession to error, but a rejection of extremes. It is a way of bold, aggressive preaching the Word of the Lord in season and out. It is a way of faithfulness and fairness. It is a way of sound doctrine, not traditionalism. Not only will it save the church from errors of departure, but also from hateful attitudes and legalistic bigotry. The question each must daily ask himself is: Am I in the way of truth and love, or in the ditch of liberal departure or legalism?

O! God: Help your weak children have the ability to discern between good and evil, the false and the true. Keep us in the narrow way that leads unto life. Help us not to hurt the church for which Jesus died. Please help those brethren who have strayed into the ditches of error to see the danger of their way and return unto paths of righteousness. Father, we need thy continual help, so much. Please be merciful to us. In Jesus Name.

We Can Learn From Liberals

As we confront the growing problem of liberal sectarianism in the Lord's church, we must not allow the enemy to gain the advantage by greater wisdom. We are confronting shrewd men who are using every advantage to subvert and destroy the faith we hold. A wise man gathers wisdom from every available source, even from his enemies. There are numerous lessons that sound brethren can, yea must, learn from our liberal adversaries. Herewith are some of the more obvious lessons:

1. Liberals are aggressively *evangelistic* in their attempts to spread their doctrines.. While brethren who are doctrinally loyal sit wringing their hands about world conditions and the spread of heresy, liberals are busily at work sowing their evil seed. We must relearn the urgent need for aggressive evangelism in reaching the lost and teaching the sound doctrine.
2. Liberals know the importance of the *Bible School* and its *literature*. They want to produce the literature our children study. They want to be teachers in the Bible classes of the local church. They put forth much energy to make classes and lessons interesting to children, while they instill in their minds ideas foreign to true New Testament Christianity. Too many good brethren take the Bible School and the religious education of children for granted. We had better learn that the church is never more than one generation from apostasy. We must train up the children in the way they should go, Prov. 22:6. They will not just happen to go right.
3. Liberals appreciate the value of *Christian Colleges* in

shaping the future destiny of the church. They are found most often on our campuses and at collegiate youth forums. Time and again liberal professors are found entrenched in Christian College faculties. If they can influence and capture the young adults of the college campus, they will soon control the congregations, journals and schools which these students will grow to lead. We must similarly appreciate and support our schools and insist that they are kept free of liberal influences.

4. Liberals believe in the *power of the printed page*. They have succeeded in corrupting and winning many disciples through the pages of such journals as *Mission Messenger*, *Mission*, *Integrity*, and *Restoration Review*. They send their lessons into the homes of unsuspecting brethren to gain their sympathy and support. Add to this their use of church bulletins and books and you see a reason for the continued growth and spread of this destructive concept about Christianity. My brethren have not yet learned the value of our faithful gospel journals. We need to have good reading materials in the home of every Christian to inoculate them against liberalism. Encourage brethren to buy good religious books and read them. We must learn from these false teachers.

5. Liberals know the value of working with *young people* to capture their minds. Youth' camps, youth ministers, youth retreats, youth rallies, campus ministries have been the major source of liberal penetration among our people. Why? Could it be that our young people have been left prey in so many instances because good brethren are too busy to pay attention to the youth? We need to learn from these deceivers.

6. Liberals know the *value, influence and power of one man*. One man in a congregation, patiently working to spread the new ideas about Christianity, can eventually gain enough support to capture it. One teacher on a Christian College faculty, by working-in fellow liberal teachers and influencing the students and school policy, will eventually lead it away from its original doctrinal posture. One preacher in a town spreads his influence and heresy into every congregation via its youth, gullible young preachers or families. Like leaven, soon many of the churches have unconsciously bought this foul package. One liberal on the staff of a gospel paper can wield influence either to capture the paper or to discredit it. Too often we abandon the post to heretics rather than to exert our influence as an individual saint.
7. Liberals know the value of *working together*. Wherever two men are found holding these unscriptural views, you can be sure they will be working together, encouraging and helping each other reach their goals. Even across the land liberals are constantly seen cooperating together, gaining momentum and increasing their hold. Scarcely ever will you see one liberal attacking a brother liberal, or engaging in petty personal striving. They save all their energy for the battle with their enemy (US). We need to learn this lesson. If we are so independent that we will not help other brethren, we are hurting the Cause. If we bite and devour one another over petty issues unworthy of brethren, we leave ourselves vulnerable to the assault.
8. Liberals know the importance of destroying the *conservative opposition*. Of course, we do not speak of physical violence, but spiritually. They label the conservative who disagrees with them. Liberal churches do not

use men for meetings and lectures who do not share their faith. They put pressure on the conservative minority in their liberal congregations, usually forcing them out. When will our brethren learn the folly of tolerating the liberal enemy in the camp? As long as we allow these false brethren to stay among us and circulate freely, we are contributing to our own downfall.

9. Liberals are *patient* and *persistent* in reaching their goals. Sometimes it takes them years to gain their objectives, but they seldom grow discouraged and give up. We must never be weary in well doing, Gal. 6:9. We must be faithful unto death as we fight the good fight of the faith, I Tim. 6:12.

With the consequences so serious and with the battle so crucial, we cannot afford to be ignorant on any point. If we can learn a wise lesson from the Devil himself we should do so. Let us never let the children of darkness outsmart us.

The Five Faces of A Liberal

The Lord's church is troubled across the nation by an element of teachers that have never shared the common salvation and faith of Jude 3, or else have abandoned it. Rather than being backsliders who fall away, they are devious heretics who stay among us to change the faith and practice of the church into a different form. The correct term to use in identifying these false teachers is difficult to decide. Since the term "liberal" has been tagged upon them, and since they are liberal in their attitude toward the authority of the Bible, we shall stick with that.

Sadly, a great number of our brethren are deceived by the sly tactics of these liberals. Like the Greek actors of old, these evil men hide behind a variety of masks, each portraying a totally different side of his nature.

First, there is the face he shows the preachers and elders of a strong doctrinally sound congregation. He says what they want to hear. He even preaches acceptable Bible lessons. He gives right sounding answers to questions. He even says he is against liberalism. (Of course, he reserves his own private interpretation of the word.) He leaves the impression (false albeit) that he is just as sound, conservative and loyal to the cause of Christ as any among us. I have observed this personally in several instances. A liberal preacher can move to any unsuspecting congregation and preach perfectly scriptural sermons for a year or two until he has established himself and then the mask is removed. Surely these are hidden rocks in our love-feasts, Jude 12.

Secondly, there is the face the liberal shows the young people of the congregation (especially the high school,

college age and the young intellectuals); when he raps with them or speaks to their youth meetings. He will be very pious and holy, speak the youth dialect and say just what they want to hear. He talks of love and service and loyalty to Jesus. If no dangerous (sound) adults are present he generally coyly ridicules and knocks the older brethren, and leadership of the congregation and brotherhood. With his smooth and fair speech, he beguiles the heart of the innocent, Rom. 16:18.

Thirdly, there is the face shown, when the liberal writes about the “conservative” opposition in the liberal media or when speaking in a forum of liberals. Here you see his *true* colors. The fangs really hang out. A transposition occurs, the gentle lamb becomes the roaring lion. The loving, pious, spiritual giant suddenly loses all his spiritual trappings and becomes a virulent spouter of venom toward all those brethren who would stand in his way and challenge his false doctrine. No terms of derision are too strong. Name-calling and “labelling” which he protests under other faces, he freely uses while speaking from this mask. Like Diotrephes, he prates against God’s faithful men with wicked words, III John 10.

Fourthly, is the face shown when confronted by a defender of the faith and exposed in his foul work. Usually the liberal takes the “bleeding heart” approach. He poses as a martyr who is persecuted unjustly. He begs sympathy and strives to avoid giving any answers that would reveal his true stance. He seeks to make the faithful defender of the faith look like a cruel, unloving persecutor.

Last, there is the face shown when the liberal is finally exposed and driven from the ranks of God’s people. Some go into the camp of other sectarians like themselves; others drop completely out of organized religion. Here you see all

disguises cast aside and the unbeliever in his naked shame. Usually you discover that his unbelief reaches far back into his career among us. He freely speaks of his disgust and revulsion at being hemmed in and restricted by Bible authority. It often becomes obvious that his apparent loyalty was a charade while he worked to convert others to his corrupt ways. Like Hymenaeus and Alexander he has made shipwreck concerning the faith, and he must be delivered unto Satan to be taught not to blaspheme, I Tim. 1:9-20.

It is no pleasure to write thus of men who have dwelt among us in the kingdom, who have shared the cup of the Lord with us. But as Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, "I tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is perdition, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame. . ." Phil 3:18-19. We must mark them, lest they destroy the cause we hold dear, Rom. 16:17-18.

Where Liberalism Cannot Grow

With the current problems of liberalism confronting the church, faithful brethren are concerned how to keep heresy out of their congregations or how to remove it if already sprouted. Some churches seem more susceptible to this problem while others seem to not be affected at all. The following are some factors that discourage the growth of this insidious bitter weed.

1. Churches with sound, alert elders have little trouble with liberalism. They do not allow speakers with an uncertain sound to stand in their pulpits and classrooms. They know what is being taught in their classrooms. They make sure the literature used in Bible Study truly teaches the doctrine of Christ. They insist that teaching is done to warn the flock of dangers that are about, Acts 20:28-29.
2. Strong gospel preachers, faithfully preaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), make it difficult for liberalism to find a fertile soil. The darkness of error cannot thrive in the presence of the light of the gospel, Eph. 5:13. Reproving, rebuking and exhorting, while preaching the Word of God, makes the liberal so uncomfortable that he will leave for more friendly fields, II Tim. 4:2. Also, sound doctrine in the pulpit so indoctrinates the brethren that they are inoculated against the error false teachers bring. A faithful evangelist will never stand idly by while an enemy of righteousness sows tares in the kingdom. Immediately, he attacks the problem and when so dealt with the problem never is allowed to take hold.

3. Liberalism cannot flourish where the brethren are informed of the issues currently facing the church. When they know of the persons, institutions and journals involved in the liberal movement, sound brethren will reject them and their message. Conversely, when brethren are kept in the dark about these matters, they often fall into the trap of error. We must mark them, brethren, Rom. 16:17-18. The Lord's way is certainly the best. Already numerous congregations are in the throes of a liberal takeover, because the leadership itself did not know, or if they did, they refused to enlighten the membership.
4. Liberalism cannot grow where liberal preachers are not allowed to preach; conduct gospel meetings; participate in youth meetings; and teach classes in order to spread their false notions. Congregations (and Christian Schools) that continue to invite and use men whose reputation already reeks of heresy, cannot but expect to have these divisive problems emerge. It seems that some brethren go out of their way to be sure to use the tainted teacher. When the U.S. Health Department warns us that a certain company's tuna is contaminated with botulism, we scrupulously avoid that product until all doubt is removed as to its purity. If we are so careful for our "bellies", why are we not so careful for the souls of the Lord's children? Without the oxygen of a forum, the weed of liberalism dies quickly.
5. When swift, scriptural, church discipline is practiced on all heretics, factious men and disorderly walkers, liberalism vanishes. II Thess. 3:6, Tit. 3:10, Rom. 16:17. Herein lies our chief weakness and most vulnerable point today. So rarely is the properly discipline

exercised, that false brethren can operate almost undisturbed while destroying the foundations of congregations. When finally dismissed from one church, the purveyor of error simply finds another unsuspecting congregation and slips in unawares. This ought not so to be. Unpleasant as may be the task, it must be done. Neither let it be in a dark corner but let them be marked for the wolves in sheep's clothing which they are. Do not be like the kind-hearted man who did not want to hurt his dog by warning his neighbors that the creature was rabid. His soft-heart caused another's death.

May all of God's people deny the seed of liberalism a bed in which to grow. No man who has abandoned the Biblical standard of New Testament Christianity has the right to circulate among us and freely work to destroy the Lord's cause.

Things A Liberal Will Not Do

While many brethren are fully aware of the rise of heresy among us and the work of false teachers, multitudes of good brethren just cannot believe that we have a serious threat. Often they remark that they heard a brother in question preach and nothing wrong was said, or they even asked him if he was a “liberal” and he flatly denied it. This situation prompts the following lessons about liberals learned by observation, experience and wide reading.

1. No liberal will announce to his supporting church, or to a church where he is invited to speak, that he has lost his faith or radically changed. The obvious reason being that he knows full-well it would cost him his job or cancel his meeting.
2. Nor will the liberal answer forthrightly questions put to him about his teaching or convictions. Again, to flatly tell the naked truth would ruin his chances of changing the thinking of brethren who do not hold his views because they would be immediately rejected. He can think of a hundred ways to answer without stating his true posture.
3. A liberal is very hesitant to put his more radical views into writing since that can certainly be used as evidence against him. If they are only verbally presented then he can always say that he was misunderstood or misquoted when called to account. If he does put his views into writing, they are most often concluded in words so vague and generalized, so technical and mysterious, that only his sympathizers can read his true meaning. Again, leaving

him free to wiggle off the hook when questioned.

4. Seldom will a liberal present his views to the preacher, elders or deacons of a congregation where he is visiting. To do so would be professional suicide. Rather, he carefully chooses his target, listeners and the right situation. Usually it is in a young people's Bible Class or devotional that his message is spread, where no alert ears will pick up and report it. Again, it is often in the home of a sympathetic member who gathers around those whose hearts lean toward liberal ideas about religion, or the young and inexperienced that can be easily influenced. As one noted liberal plays it, he requests a private "in-depth Bible Study" with the teens and college age group with no elders, preachers or adults present. His rationale is so the youth will not be inhibited. Really it is so he will not be inhibited in spreading his evil doctrine.

5. A liberal will not turn down an invitation to speak to a sound congregation that does not hold his position. Often brethren are unaware of a man's departure from the truth and ask him in good faith. Though honesty would call upon the liberal to advise those brethren that no longer shares their faith and view of things, he will not declare himself. To do so would ruin his chance to sow more seed and find more followers. The same is true of special lectureships, radio and T.V. gospel broadcasts.

6. A liberal school, congregation, publisher or editor will not refuse to use the services of a sound brother whose faith they might despise and ridicule to his back. They can gain a lot of respectability, influence and mileage off the name of a sound, unquestioned preacher. It matters little if he is being used or his reputation hurt by this ploy.

7. Few liberals will resign their post at a college or a con-

gregation if there is a good chance they can “take control,” and move the loyal minority out. On the other hand few will stay and fight where they are sure to lose. They play the game of subversion and generally avoid open confrontation.

8. A liberal will never call himself or his compeers “liberal.” He vehemently rejects the label. He will never admit to his heresy. Really it seems they hate to face up to it. But their actions speak louder than their words. Some, even upon leaving the Lord’s church, still style themselves as faithful Christians.

9. A liberal will seldom make a clean break with the Church of Christ to go to some other group. He is determined to stay among us, recruiting disciples as long as possible. To leave would destroy all he is set upon doing. He is a master at undermining, recruiting, subverting, and propagandizing from within.

10. A liberal missionary on foreign soil will not write his sponsoring church back in the U.S.A. and tell them he is tolerating false teaching or nonscriptural worship or fellowshiping sectarian groups. He knows he would be cut off and called home immediately if he declared that he was renouncing the idea of restoring New Testament Christianity or that he was speaking in tongues. In most cases he waits until he is found out and forced out. By then permanent damage is often done to the cause in a mission field.

Brethren, our country has been victimized by Communist agents who have worked for years destroying the foundations of our freedom. A gullible public and government has allowed itself to be brainwashed into accepting this, almost without resistance. Today we stand in grave jeopardy of internal collapse. Across this land many elders and preachers are allowing the same type of subversion to

take place under their very noses. And all the while those naive leaders are assuring everyone that there is no problem. After all, they ask the suspected heretic and he denied the charges. Or they listened to an entire week of “meeting sermons” and heard no error. May God have mercy on congregations with such near-sighted leaders. Let us arm ourselves with facts and information about heretics circulating among us and reject them. Heresy cannot spread without the breeding ground of an audience. Let it not be the Lord’s church where such hellish ideas are raised and spread. Today as always, there are men who revel in their deceivings while they eat a fellowship meal with the very congregation they are victimizing. II Pet. 2:13.

How to Deal With Liberals

Many elders, preachers and brethren seem unsure as to how to deal with liberal false teachers that are surfacing in congregations across the land. This lack of knowledge leads to indecisiveness that allows the error to flourish while leadership stews over the problem. Herewith are offered a few recommendations based upon scriptural premises, observation and experience.

1. We must deal with the liberals in love, for Jesus said “love your enemies.” (Matt. 5:44.) With Paul I tell you “that they are enemies of the cross of Christ.” (Phil. 3:18.) The church has no greater enemy than the false teacher who seeks to corrupt and change the doctrine of Christ.
2. We must use *great caution* in dealing with liberals for they are a generation of vipers even as were the Pharisees of Jesus’ day. (Matt. 23:33.) Vipers are deadly if not properly handled. False teachers who seek to hide among us, knowing full well that they do not share the faith of Jesus, are as dangerous as the poisonous serpent.
3. In dealing with liberals, we must use the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17) on them for it is the one weapon they cannot face or overcome. They fear its cutting edge. Their work is successful only when knowledge of the Word is scarce.
4. We need to deal with them swiftly for their teaching spreads quietly and quickly like leaven in dough. Left alone, it will soon infect our entire congregation.

(I Cor. 5:4-7.) “Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees . . .” and the liberals. (See Matt. 16:6.)

5. There can be no compromise when dealing with liberal teachers. The truth of the gospel cannot have detente with the error of false doctrine and unbelief. Paul asks, “For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? . . . or what portion have a believer with an unbeliever?” The obvious answer is none at all. Then he concludes with the exhortation, “Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. . . .” (II Cor. 6:14-17.)
6. Liberals should be dealt with by rejecting them, for they are factious people whose work will cause division within a congregation. The Holy Spirit says, “A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned.” (Tit. 3:10-11.)
7. We should deal with them by withdrawing our fellowship from them because they are out of step, having broken rank with the army of Christ. This is the meaning of walking disorderly in II Thess. 3:6-7. An army cannot tolerate the disorderly soldier, nor can the church.
8. They must be dealt with publicly for we are instructed to “mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned” (Rom. 16:17.) If we only privately rebuke them or dismiss the liberal preacher, he will simply sneak away to infiltrate some other unsuspecting congregation. When a brother espouses some “other gospel” than the one gospel of Christ every Christian

in the country deserves to know about it!

9. Deal with the liberal brother in absolute fairness. Often a true liberal escapes conviction because those brethren who thought to expose him were discredited by their unethical handling of matters.
10. Be sure to deal in facts and documentation in confronting a liberal. He will surely accuse you of misrepresentation and will deny your charges (even if he knows full well he is guilty), unless you can pin him down with facts.
11. In dealing with a liberal, be sure to have a tape recorder or two or more witnesses so there will be no future question as to the correct representation as to what was actually said, (Matt. 18:16.) Anyone who has dealt with such problems will immediately recognize this need. The favourite liberal dodge is, "You misunderstood me or you misrepresented me." Do not allow this to happen.
12. When questions of liberalism arise, deal with each person involved as an individual. Do not lump all of them together because some may be salvagable. Is this not what Jude means "And on some have mercy, who are in doubt, and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 22-23.)
13. By all means, deal with liberalism before it becomes a local issue. Indoctrinate, vaccinate and immunize the congregation before the plague appears. Prevention is always better than the cure.

The greatest danger of all is not to deal with liberalism at all. Brethren, it will not go away by ignoring it. Let all of God's spiritual leaders deal with this evil bitter weed of heresy as the Lord directs.

Freedom Fighters

Ours is the day of internationalism. For many, patriotism is passé, even an undesirable attitude. Also in the church, it is a day of compromise with denominationalism, false doctrine and false teachers. Those who are patriots of the kingdom of heaven are dismissed with a smug smile as reactionaries and alarmists. Some even despise them and attack them as the enemies of Christ. We who would successfully wage the war for truth against error must be adequately equipped for the battle.

KNOW THE ISSUES

We must know the issues that demand the confrontation. No army will fight valiantly and endure unto victory that does not clearly understand the issues at stake. Our nation made this fatal mistake in Vietnam. Communists clearly understand their reasons for fighting, their goals and objectives. They humiliated the world's most powerful nation.

Thousands of elders and preachers do not yet understand the extent and seriousness of the present day issues confronting the church. They are not concerned to fight against the new Pentecostalism, liberalism and denominational trends now emerging. A favourite saying of Paul was, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren." So today we must inform and alert congregational leaders.

KNOW YOUR WEAPON AND HOW TO USE IT

Generals know that every soldier must be thoroughly

familiar with his weapon, inside and out. He must understand it and how to use it. So today, we must adequately train the soldiers of Christ. The Word of God is our weapon. (Eph. 6:17). We must familiarize ourselves with every book and every verse of it. We must understand each doctrine and precept and how it applies to our faith and lives. As ignorance of his weapon has cost many a soldier his life of freedom in combat, so many a saint has suffered damage to his faith, some even death, because they did not understand the truth of God. (John 8:24).

KNOW YOUR ENEMY

Where the enemy is easily identifiable, the battle is much easier. Where there is no clear-cut identification of the enemy, espionage, subversion and guerilla attacks are easy. In Vietnam the enemy seldom wore a uniform. He looked like the ally. Thousands of U.S. troops fell victim to his ambush and sabotage. So today the liberal wears no uniform or badge. He carries a Bible like faithful Christians. He has no intention of leaving our ranks. His mission and goal is restructure and capture of the strategic fortresses. Christian journals, teaching posts in Christian Colleges, production of Bible school literature, pulpits, teaching posts in the local churches are prime targets. Especially do they desire the directorship of Bible classes in college and university evangelistic programs. Preachers and elders must inform themselves not only of issues, but of men and institutions. Distasteful as it might be to some, we must mark them that are causing division, and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine revealed by the apostles. (Rom. 16:17). Every man dismissed from his post for unsoundness must be so marked, else he will simply infiltrate another outpost and bring more destruction and harm.

KNOW THE TERRAIN WHERE YOU DO BATTLE

The Viet Cong knew the hills and jungles of Vietnam and thus endured the massive bombing and assault of the U.S. Army. They were invincible because they knew the terrain. So leaders of the church must know the terrain of battle. Where is the enemy? Where are our most vulnerable points? Congregational leaders must acquaint themselves with spiritual conditions of the brotherhood in their region. Some are not even aware of preachers and churches that have apostatized in their own locality. Consequently, false teachers have established strongholds of subversion and are even now working to capture control of other congregations through young people and circulation of their propaganda.

COMBAT TRAINING IS NEEDED

Many preachers and elders would not know how to resist and defeat the enemy if he appeared openly and challenged them to combat. An untrained, undisciplined army is a worthless army that is sure to lose the battle. Soldiers are subjected to a rigorous program of discipline and training, making them combat ready. No expense or effort is spared. So must the elders train, discipline and equip their flock for the battle ahead. There is a spiritual war in progress. He who denies it is blind, living in fantasyland. We need lessons and classes restating the first century faith. We need to provide our members with materials that they may study to equip themselves for battle; that they may know the heretics by name! We need to develop spiritual vigor and toughness to accept challenges to our faith and endure the rigors of battle. We must lead them in the positive good works of soul-winning, teaching and service that Satan's warriors may have no foothold to stand on as they attempt to discredit the church and sow discord.

Faith is the victory. (I John 5:4). King Jesus is invincible. The kingdom will not be shaken. (Heb. 12:28). Soldiers of Christ arise, put your armor on. Strong in the faith, stand and do battle. May every enemy of truth go down in utter defeat.

Conservative In Both Faith And Practice

Churches of Christ in America stand at a cross-roads today. Three alternatives stand before us. We can easily turn left down the broad road of liberalism which ends in spiritual annihilation where scores of other groups have gone, losing their identity and reason for existence. We can turn right down the road of radical legalism in reaction against the menace of the left. This road will lead us into a box canyon where several other groups of brethren wandered in past years. There, cut off from the world, we will bite, devour and consume one another while we congratulate ourselves on how holy and separate we are. We will multiply our opinions, traditions and shiboleths to *our* honor and glory. The world will be lost, the church will be crippled and disabled. The third alternative is the road straight ahead. It is to Jerusalem. It is the old path. It is the way that leads unto life.

Really, if we are serious in our quest for eternal life, we have but one choice, the way of truth that stretches straight before us. We want to go that way; we want our brethren to go with us. We want every gospel preacher and every congregation in the brotherhood to go. If we are to realize this goal, we are going to have to do some clear thinking, conscientious study and hard work to change current trends that are surfacing around us.

I. Our Problem:

A practice gap has arisen among us. Too many congregations and preachers are strong on the conservative message, but weak on the practice. A similar problem affected Judaism in Jesus' day. He said of Jerusalem's most notable teachers, "They say and do not." Matt. 23:2. This practice gap has left

us vulnerable to the accusations and charges of the Devil and his helpers. Finding a soft spot, they have hammered away until they got the advantage in some congregations, often grabbing complete control.

Our message has generally been on a high plane, while often our practice was on a somewhat lower plane. We should raise our practice level to meet the New Testament message. But there are people among us urging that we lower our doctrinal standard to our inferior level of practice. This is spiritual suicide. We must, with the help of God, restore the practice of Christianity along with the faith.

We must remove those moral, ethical and spiritual blemishes that give the enemy grounds to criticize our congregations. But we should have done this long ago because Christ desires it. He wants the church to be glorious, “not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Eph. 5:27.

II. Our Recommendations:

We must involve our brethren in the true mission of the church in an active, exciting way. We must become evangelistic. Soul-winning is our primary function and reason for existence. Yet this one area of our work receives least attention in most congregations. Only 3-5% of our people ever convert a soul. Few are actively engaged in evangelism. It is a fact that churches on fire for souls, intensely evangelistic, have few problems with liberalism. It is the dead, lifeless congregation that experiences the problem. Remember, a high rate of unemployment inevitably causes problems and trouble, nationally . . . but it also affects the kingdom of Christ similarly.

In this same area, we must get actively involved in world-wide mission work. When the church fails to meet its

essential purpose for existence, it has forfeited its right to exist. Serious commitment to evangelism tends to drive us closer to God and His word, which simultaneously protects us from error.

We must be genuinely concerned for the benevolent needs of the unfortunate within and without the church and do something positive about it. This is the pure religion of Jesus, Jas. 1:27. We can get so involved in our own private world, so insulated from the realities of life, so busy with “church work” that Lazarus can die at our gate and we not even know it. Our unconcern for the poor, the suffering, the aged, often causes the way of truth to be evil spoken of. Rom. 2:24. This alone will provide dozens of jobs for the saints in every congregation.

Our next suggestion we label educational but it has many facets. First, preachers must inform themselves of the issues at hand; of the persons, papers, congregations and schools involved. We cannot afford to be ignorant. Think what it cost Israel in Hosea’s day, Hos. 4:6.

We need to properly distinguish between the three problems we currently face.

1. Theological liberalism. There are some who question the inspiration and authority of the Bible; the miracles of the Scripture; the deity of Christ; his virgin birth and resurrection; the creation of the cosmos and man by God and other fundamental beliefs of Christianity.

2. Denominationalism. This is seen in the tongue speaking; compromising with the Christian church; belittling the Lord’s church and numerous other things. This is primarily the result of failing to respect the authority of the New Testament.

3. Radical extremism. This reacts against the above in

a blind, violent way. It suspects all brethren of heresy or at least weakness towards it. It pictures itself as the only true and faithful element left for the Lord. It agitates for an immediate break in fellowship rather than a solving of problems. It confuses traditions and cultural expressions with New Testament doctrine and seeks to bind them on all. It delights in making new rules and regulations, especially prohibitions of anything new or different to the old way of doing it. Scalp-hunting and witch-burning of all alleged heretics is an almost certain fruit of this tree. As a car can wreck in the ditch on either side of the road, so can the church. It will be no consolation to boast that you did not crash into the left ditch of liberalism while you lie dying in the right hand ditch of radicalism.

4. One other category must be included which is probably the most serious of all. That is the alarming lack of awareness and concern that exists in most congregations. This is every bit as dangerous as the raw liberalism is.

We must then educate all the members of the flock about the issues involved. Never take for granted that our people know and understand the doctrines involved in the crisis facing us. We have always said that each generation must restore for itself New Testament Christianity. Are we practicing what we preach? In the year before us, preach a sermon on every fundamental point of doctrine that distinguishes the Lord's church from human organizations. Deal especially with the problems of Pentecostalism, Fellowship, instrumental music, the oneness of the Church, the Sin of heresy, church discipline, the authority of the Scriptures and any other question where weakness is found. Let every church have an indoctrination program for young and old and let it be pursued with determination so that no error can make an inroad. Elders should have a policy that only sound preaching will be heard from the pulpit. They should insist

that the whole counsel of God be preached, Acts 20:27. False teachers and questionable men must not be indulged even for a moment, Gal. 2:5. When we preach, we need to preach to the needs of the people in language they can understand and not on abstract themes from the theological museum. Also we must avoid the language of the seminary that leaves minds clouded and convictions undecided. Plain Bible preaching will solve most congregational problems.

Furthermore, we need to supply the congregation with sound reading materials, to strengthen their faith and warn them of heresy. Good tracts and gospel papers will go far in our battle. Recommend good books and help brethren in securing them.

A wise brother has said, "Brethren can't do better until they know better." This preventive medicine will be far more effective than trying to cure it after the disease strikes.

We need to strengthen our edification efforts. God knew man's need for social fellowship, help and encouragement. He gave us the congregation to meet these needs. Many congregations have so little Christian fellowship that members suffering malnutrition in this area have been attracted to liberal congregations that offer a warm fellowship. With the proper fellowship, we know each other's needs and can help bear one another's burdens. Gal. 6:2. Lack of fellowship means lack of communication. When problems arise and false teachers attempt to subvert the church this lack of communication means mistrust, suspicion and doubt . . . an open door to trouble.

We must raise the "spiritual factor" in our congregations. Cold, lifeless, ritualistic, tradition-bound churches are ripe for trouble. This is not a normal atmosphere for Christians to live in. Not finding sufficient food in such an abnor-

mal environment, they begin to seek it elsewhere and are often deceived by the spiritual charlatans. Spiritually sick churches are easy targets for liberal penetration. We need strong, thriving, busy churches whose members live close to God each day to stand the test of these trying days. Our worship must be a rich rewarding experience that not only is scripturally correct but spiritually uplifting.

One area of practice that needs a strong Biblical emphasis is that of our attitude towards those of other races, especially the blacks, and even more particularly the black brethren. Our practice has not measured up to our message and the liberals have scored us repeatedly on this cause. Let us eliminate once and for all any racial distinctions in our congregations and in our lives. There is no respect of persons with God and there can be none with us, Jas. 2:9-10. Liberals have made headway among some black brethren because of our un-Christian practice.

We must be militant against the devil and those of his workers who seek to capture the Lord's church. Rather than meekly protesting as we see the kingdom attacked, maligned or subverted, we need to be aggressive against the enemies to drive them out. Of course, God's method for this defense is church discipline. We should mark them that cause divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine we have learned and turn away from them, Rom. 16:17. This will not only remove their influence from that particular congregation, but if publicized, it will alert others as to who the false teachers are. We can never protect ourselves unless we know who these heretics are, where their breeding grounds are, and what their organs of communication are. Like weeds in our garden, we must deny liberalism a seed bed to grow in; and if a sprig appears, root it out before it has a chance to "take over." Let our discipline be sympathetic and consistent with-

out partiality, I Tim. 5:21.

James summarizes all that we have said in 1:22, “Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding your own selves.” Like the men of Jerusalem in Nehemiah’s day, let us rise up to build Zion’s walls with sword on our side and trowel in our hand, prepared to resist the foe at whatever point he makes assault, but never neglecting to build the walls.

I Protest

The message, manner and methods of some of our “highly educated” brethren who are proposing to remake the church of Christ and the doctrine long proclaimed by it has brought them heavy criticism.

Naturally those under attack are crying about the treatment they are receiving. To their complaints about criticism, I offer these thoughts:

We do not object to their having degrees for their education. We do protest their flaunting the degree and expecting special attention because of it. We protest their casting epithets of disgust on those not so well educated. We protest one setting his educated think-so’s above what the Bible says.

We do not object to one reading the journals and books of modern denominational theologians. We do protest quoting them in preference to passages of Scripture. We do object to the using of their thoughts and ideas to make doctrinal changes in our faith and practice. We do object when one is deceived into following them in their error.

We cannot prohibit a man from believing, even teaching error, but we do protest his doing it while claiming to be a gospel preacher of the Lord’s church. We protest his leading astray innocent brethren who are not aware of his loss of faith. We protest his being used by churches, schools and papers.

We cannot stop an educator from accepting the modern liberal theories of religion. We do protest his being allowed to teach these faith destroying doctrines to our children in colleges paid for by conservative minded brethren. The

Methodists may let T.J. Altizer do so, but we will not sit idly by and hold our peace.

We do not mind dialog as long as error is answered with truth. We do protest allowing error to be presented without proper exposure by truth. Dialog is a sweet sounding sophisticated word used by some brethren to mean compromise with denominational error. They would keep quiet while the false teacher presents his case. Cowardice might also describe the underlying motive for this cry for dialog.

We do not mind a man going to a secular or sectarian school for his degree if he will leave the error there when he returns to preach in our congregations or teach in our schools.

We do not object to new ideas and methods concerning doing the Lord's work. We do protest the man or group that insists his is the only way; that immediately calls on the brotherhood to reject tried and proven methods and ideas of the past. We protest the virulent and uncomplimentary labeling of those who do not accept their new approaches.

We do not mind one criticizing our brotherhood, if he has a genuine criticism; if his criticism is constructive, if he is willing to accept criticism. I protest a man sitting in his ivory tower and heaping abuse and criticism and then crying "abuse" when the guns of criticism are leveled on him.

I do not mind if a preacher considers himself a sectarian and his congregation a denomination. I do protest his labeling me a sectarian and the Lord's church a sect. He may well be, but I am not. If he is a sectarian, if his group is a denomination, then he and they should go out of business. They have no right to exist under the name Christian if they are a sect.

I cannot stop a person or group from seeking a supernatural experience with the Holy Spirit in tongue speaking

and illumination. But, I protest their bringing these misconceptions and false emotional experiences into the Lord's church. Let them go to the *Full Gospel church*, they will welcome them whether it is of God or not!

We cannot stop a man from following the modernistic trends of the day. We can and will protest his seeking to beguile the innocent brethren and lead congregations into the same labyrinth of error.

We will mark them, Rom. 16:17-18, and warn against them at every chance for they are enemies of the cross of Christ, Phil. 3:17.

Diagression: Ignore It or Mark It?

When the two volumes of *Axe on the Root* appeared, many brethren were shocked to learn of the dangerous signs and trends toward liberalism and denominationalism among us. This writer was shocked. Although I knew there was such an element, I had seriously underestimated it.

Doubtless some brethren feel Bro. Ira Rice was too hard on these liberal brethren; that he should not have named them. Some feel it is better not to mention such problems. Rather, they would say nothing about them, hoping all will work out satisfactorily. Brethren, it just does not work that way. All that liberalism asks is that we leave them alone and say nothing.

Liberals will not force the issue at this time. They will quietly subvert and erode away the foundations of our faith. They are happy to occupy a class-room or Bible school class and there plant their insidious seeds of doubt.

Brethren, the lines of battle must be drawn. The loss of 75 percent of our brethren in the diagression of the late 1800s, the 10 percent loss to the anti-cooperation movement should teach us that we cannot ignore error. Besides this, the scripture plainly tells us to “mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them,” Rom. 16:17.

Those generous men who would warn but not identify, would thus leave unsuspecting congregations and schools unaware of who the dangerous ones are. In this way many more might be led astray and many congregations divided. We must mark them. If these men, who by their writings and

sermons have conveyed this liberal image, wish to renounce it and publicly state their loyal to the Scriptures and first century Christianity, then none will question their soundness. May God hasten the day when many will do just that. Souls are at stake.

Pin The Tail On The Donkey

As children we played Pin the Tail on the Donkey. Blindfolded, we groped about seeking the right object to tag with the tail. Herein I find an analogy to our brotherhood today.

Within our great fellowship serious warnings are being raised. Liberalism, modernism, compromise, denominational tendencies, belief in theistic evolution, subversion of truth, doctrinal corruption on Christian College faculties and in brotherhood journals are common warnings.

Some few preachers read enough and circulate enough to know just who is drifting from the truths of the gospel. However, the average elder and Christian is totally unaware of just where these false teachers are located. They are like the blindfolded child trying to pin the tail on the illusive donkey.

Two dangers are created because of this condition:

First: Not knowing who is teaching such heresy, many congregations will employ such men in teaching capacities, unaware of the wolf among them. They will discover what his theology is, but perhaps too late to save the congregation from being subverted. The same is true of our schools and publications.

Second: Some will immediately become suspicious of all our schools; of any brother they know not personally; of any one holding an advanced degree or using a more sophisticated vocabulary; or those who live in the "northeast" or on the "west coast." This unhealthy, blind reaction against an unknown phantom can hurt us as severely as the liberals them-

selves.

Brethren, we must PIN THE TAIL OF TRUTH ON THE DONKEY OF MODERNISM that has arisen among us. Does not God so counsel?

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them.” Rom. 16:17.

“Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the rest also may be in fear.” I Tim. 5:20.

Paul specifically names Phygellus and Hermogenes, Demas, Hymenaeus and Alexander and Philetus as men who were in error and a danger to the Cause of Christ. Unpleasant as the task may be to him who marks and to the false teacher so marked, it must be so done. If we continue to grope blindfolded, seeking to pin the tail on we know not what, catastrophe will overwhelm us. Let us remove the blindfold and in the clear light of facts and truth, identify where the error is and who is teaching it.

We do not need the malicious slanderers who falsely charge good men. We need to document and verify, thus letting each man be his own witness to vindicate or condemn himself.

Voices of Concern Are Voices of Apostasy

The most diabolic attack on the Lord's Church in recent times is the book, *Voices of Concern*. The editor of the volume is Robert Meyers, minister of the Riverside Church of Christ (?) in Wichita, Kansas. The contributing authors are men and women once connected with the church of Christ, who have now separated from it. It is published and distributed by Carl Ketcherside's Mission Messenger Company of St. Louis.

In the following lines I will notice a few of the general attitudes and characteristics of the contributors to the book. Some observations on the message that editor Meyers seeks to communicate will be discussed. Finally, some warning for us will be suggested.

The seventeen articles range from bitter tirades against the church, its message and its people by those who have rejected the scriptures as their authority, to the pitiful meanderings of the ignorant and confused. Since there is a general pattern observable in all of the writings, we will consider the book as a whole.

THE MESSAGE OF THE CONTRIBUTORS CONSIDERED

1. That the church is legalistic was a common charge, "... the object of Church of Christ concern is all too often a God of legalism rather than a God of love. . . ." Charles Warren, p. 200. "The scriptures were . . . not written to be complete descriptions of anything or blue prints," p.

39. "Why should the church of the twentieth century want to be like the one of the first?" p. 40. "This system (legalism j.w.) is a code of requirement, or what is often called 'the plan of salvation.'" p. 41. "Legalism sees sin as a violation of the written code." p. 41. These quotations are from J.P. Sanders. What he really means is, he objects to the command, "if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God," I Pet. 4:11. Also he resents the statement, "sin is the transgression of the law," I John 3:4.

2. They reject the Bible as the verbally inspired Word of God. Nine of them expressed their loss of confidence in the Bible as a work of divine perfection. "I came to realize that rather than making the Bible alive, the verbal inspiration theory was killing the message of the Bible," Logan Fox, p. 19. In his book *Axe On The Root*, Vol. II, p. 105, Ira Rice points out that this man is still in fellowship with an influential congregation, and recently spoke for another in a series of meetings.
3. They feel, "The church of Christ should admit the reality of their denominational status and humbly confess the possibility that they might be wrong in belief and practice," Ralph V. Graham, p. 140.
4. We should give up the idea of trying to RESTORE New Testament Christianity, is their thinking. " 'Restorationism' as advocated by the Churches of Christ is unhealthy . . . as a way of life." "Restorationism is irrelevant to man's needs." Ralph Graham, p. 139.
5. We should cease to object to the use of instrumental music in worship, according to them. "I must say, quite frankly, that while it is most likely that the first church

did not use instruments of music in their worship, I am not convinced on that account that it is wrong.” Wm. Reedy, p. 241.

6. We are told that the church of Christ inhibits the intellectual inclinations of these authors. “The free man questions, tries, tests. He acknowledges no authority to which he does not freely consent as internalized truth. He is subject to no control above his own conscience. He does not obey because it is commanded, but because it is the way of truth and wisdom,” N.L. Parks, p. 80-81. “I did not have the feeling of personal security to enable me to speak freely of my doubts and growing disbeliefs,” Cecil Franklin, p. 78.
7. They resented being pressured for their changing attitudes. “Looking back, I can see clearly how my studies, working experiences and associations with believers of different denominations led me . . . into a . . . broader Christian commitment than the restricted liberty afforded me in the Churches of Christ. Being quite outspoken in my preaching, talk, and writings, I found the restrictions placed on my freedom of expression intolerably frustrating. I and my congregation became subjected to the West Berlin type of isolation because of my views,” Ralph Graham, p. 129-130.
8. They wanted to stay and help us see and accept their new found light, and were sad that they could not do so. “I have felt that if I am right and they are wrong, then instead of leaving them, I should share with them what I believe,” L. Fox, p. 25. “This book pleads with the church of Christ to spare such men the agony of separations by creating an atmosphere in which independent minds may feel at home,” Meyers, p. 2.

9. According to them, we should join the rush for Ecumenical Unity. "They should be willing to let consensus of rational opinion of all Christian scholars of whatever church and age be the decisive factor in matters of interpreting the Bible," Graham, p. 141.
10. They want us to believe they all love us and sincerely want to save us from our self-destruction. "I have no intention of leaving them so long as one of their churches is free enough to hear such *compassionate* (emphasis mine, j.w.) strictures as fill the pages of this book," Myers, p. 262. "Their hope was that this book would so alter conditions that no other volume of this kind would ever need be written," back dust cover. "Viewed sociologically or scripturally, the Church of Christ is not the church of Christ. Its members in a sense, are neither 'Christians only' nor 'the only Christians!'" N. Parks, p. 84. "The Church of Christ appears then as a lower middle class phenomenon 'on the make' at its socio-economic level," Parks, p. 73.
11. We should be frightened because, according to them, almost all of our young intellectuals are leaving us and thousands of our members are clamoring for a change. "Many in the Church of Christ are completely unaware of how many intelligent, compassionate Christian men and women have departed from them in search of freedom from dogma," Meyers, p. 2. "Thousands are restless and dissatisfied with the aridity of exclusivism and authoritarianism," Meyers, p. 3.
12. We are already suffering from an incurable disease and they predict we will be completely out of business soon. "There are many indications that the Church of Christ is showing signs of decadence and that it is running a marathon race with catastrophe . . . there is little mani-

fest interest by those from without,” Carl Etter, p. 110. This was written in 1945. “Our system has had its day and we are even now, poised between two worlds,” Meyers, p. 261.

13. We should not seek to answer their charges, but accept them and adjust accordingly; they hope. “Those who read the contributions with a spirit of retaliation will miss its very tenor and mistake its real purpose,” dust cover, back.

OUR REACTION TO VOICES OF CONCERN

Considering the above, those familiar with God’s Word and loyal to it would agree that Voices of Concern are Voices of Apostasy! These people are apostates, like Judas who betrayed Christ; like Phygellus and Hermogenes who turned away from the apostles; like Demas who forsook Paul, having loved this present world; like Hymenaeus and Alexander who blasphemed; like Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who concerning the truth have erred . . . whose word eats like gangrene; and like a host of others who went astray down through the years.

“They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us.” I John 2:19.

We should not be overly concerned because apostates have criticisms to make of the church. Can we really expect them to have a favorable attitude toward what they have in shame rejected? A guilty conscience compels them to discredit the church and its ministers, to somehow justify themselves and ease their sense of shame. Instead of being a great tragedy that they left, we are much better off that they did. “For there must be factions among you that they that are

approved may be made manifest among you,” I Cor. 11:19. Now we see their true colors! We should be most concerned about those who are still among us as traitors and subversives, Acts 20:29-31.

In reading the book, it is obvious that almost all of the contributors lost their faith in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and absolute authority in Christianity. This happened before their exodus. Nine of the seventeen writers frankly stated or implied this rejection of this fundamental doctrine. This is well illustrated in their complaints and charges. Virtually none of them are substantiated by scriptural proof. Few Biblical references adorn the pages of this book. I noted some 28 references or allusions in its 263 pages.

Like the sectarians of the past, they have a burning, unyielding desire to make the church of Christ into a denomination, like they have gone into. Misery loves company.

Their smug assurance that the church of Christ as it has existed for the last 168 years, is finished, is humorous. Especially since in the same year in which their book was published, a news release announced that the church of Christ was the fastest growing body in the country. No doubt there were bitter tears when they were confronted with this. One is led to wonder how a poor, ignorant, legalistic bunch, as they describe us, managed to effect such a thing.

Editor Meyers claims to be a minister of the church of Christ. His production and encouragement of this diabolic attack on the Lord’s church, the inspiration of the Bible and the doctrine of Christ marks him as one who bids them god-speed and is a partaker in their evil deeds, II John 11. He is a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

Carl Ketcherside’s endorsement and praise of this book points out his true inclinations. He desires to stay among us and wears the same name, but he has long since departed

from the principle of restoring New Testament Christianity.

It is interesting to note the repeated references of the writers to their class as the most brilliant, intelligent and sensitive among us. Assuming their judgment to be right, I summon Paul to express the divine observation. "Behold your calling, brethren, that not many wise after the flesh . . . are called; but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise . . . that no flesh should glory before God," I Cor. 1:26-29. No doubt this must be one of those areas where they have discovered the Bible to be errant!

Looking about, I wonder, where are the thousands who are waiting for a chance to grab a new liberal posture? Perhaps Carl Ketcherside's disciples will go that route. The Christian churches are going. An occasional congregation among us has been subverted by men like those of this book. However, I fear their "thousands" is a wishful dream of their minds.

TO THE BROTHERHOOD

We should profit from the criticisms of the book. Negative preaching must be balanced with the positive, and constructive message of the gospel. Doctrinal righteousness to the neglect of the practical righteousness is of the category of faith without works.

Cold, lifeless, ritualistic worship is not the New Testament kind. A warm and genuine spiritual love must fill our lives and worship.

Smugness, self-righteousness and a refusal to listen, consider and study with those who question cannot be allowed to prevail. Sometimes we show a lack of genuine interest and concern for those who have doubts. They often could be salvaged if someone cared enough to teach them the way of the

Lord more perfectly, Acts 18:26.

The charge of political maneuvering and undue power being exercised by some few in the church must be frankly considered and corrected. Service must be the measure of greatness, Matt. 20:26.

The fact that most of these men are graduates of Christian Colleges should be sufficient warning to the administrators that there might be a serious deficiency in the methods, manner and content of their Bible education program. "Take heed to thyself and thy doctrine," I Tim. 4:16, is a timely warning.

Also, many of these men have been connected with the teaching staffs of our schools or desired to be. We must beware. We cannot let the death shroud of "academic freedom" settle over our schools.

All of these men had educational experiences at state or sectarian schools of higher learning. Brethren, educational degrees are no assurance of the soundness and quality of a preacher. Even the degree from our own schools is no guarantee. Know the man, know what he believes, first hand, before he is employed.

Five of these men left the Lord's church for the Christian church. Is this not because of a weakness in teaching and attitude concerning the Christian church on our part? They are not our brethren! Surely a hundred years is enough for the Lord to remove their candlestick, Rev. 2:5. They have swung to a full denominational stance. They admit this. We have no more in common with them than we do with other Protestant sects. There is far more between us than an instrument of music! These brethren seemingly never learned that. We need more lessons on the difference.

They would have liked to stay among us and shared

their new found faith (or lack of it) with us. This should serve as a warning to the brotherhood today. Some are among us. They are sharing their error with some of us. I “tell you even weeping that they are enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is perdition,” Phil. 3-18-19a.

Brethren, the battle is upon us. Turning our head or closing our eyes will not save us. The lines must be clearly drawn. Action now will save us the disaster of a major apostasy and schism. Weakness, fear and compromise will be catastrophic. Better to lose a few now than many later.

Tell It Like It Is

Watch him, he's a Liberal! Beware, they are modernistic at that school. Perhaps ten thousand times the pronouncement has been made in recent years. One gets the impression from some brethren that the church is completely possessed with this demon of modernism.

An uninitiated one who wishes to understand this problem in the Church of Christ and document how serious it is, takes his dictionary in hand to first find the meaning of the word. It involves "implicitly or explicitly, a denial of the historic doctrines of revelation and inspiration," Baker's *Dictionary of Theology*. Everything else unorthodox, taught by liberals stems from this denial of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.

Having discovered the meaning of the word this novice sets out to sift the 6,000 preachers, the 18,000 congregations and 16 schools and half dozen major papers associated with the Churches of Christ to find any vestiges of this insidious monster, liberalism.

After months of travel, searching, interviewing, investigating, reviewing, and spying, he heads home with his game bag in hand. We ask him, "Sir, how many preachers, elders, schools, papers and colleges did you find who implicitly or explicitly denied the historic doctrine of revelation and inspiration?" He invites us to peek into his bag to see the fruits of his search. We invite each one to prepare an affidavit as to what he saw. You see, those who have really fallen into the snare of modernism are a scarce commodity among us.

BUT WHAT DID HE FIND?

Do not misjudge the purpose of this paper. I do not claim all is well. There are congregations, men, schools, and papers about which we had well be concerned. My whole point is TELL IT LIKE IT IS! It seems a fundamental human weakness to call anything new, different or suspect by BIG BAD NAMES to scare everyone away and annihilate the strange new intruder. For 90 years among our people the word was "digressive." Practically everyone who dared do anything new or different was labeled thusly. It was equated with those apostate brethren who became known as the Christian Church, (whom all rejected). Thus, any man or group called digressive was immediately looked upon as a real threat to the church (whether true or not). So those who first had separate Bible classes; used prepared literature; had modern meeting houses; used multiple communion cups; had located preachers; had college educated preachers; used visual aids in preaching and teaching; cooperated in nation wide radio work and child care; all were labeled by an element as digressives. But Were They!

Today OUR LOADED WORD is Modernism or Liberalism. True, there have been a few real liberals to appear among us. Most of them have been brought down by a swift missile of truth. If a church, man, school, or paper can be charged AND CONVICTED of liberalism let them be so labeled! Put the proof where everyone can see it!

On the other hand, if upon investigation you find a man using a Bible translation that one does not approve of, don't just hang the liberal label on him to smear him, say just what it is you object to. (Of course you may not get quite as good a hearing.)

If one has a larger vocabulary than you and does not always express himself in traditional brotherhood terminology, label him as guilty of vocabulary transgression. Tell it like it is!

Should he have a degree from a state or sectarian school, charge him with the crime he is guilty of. Do not brand him liberal unless the case is established.

Perhaps a brother is too emotional in his prayers; perhaps he does shed a tear of sorrow or joy in his devotion to God; maybe he does cling to the hand of a brother when they pray; perhaps he enjoys worshipping God on “off days” out among the beauties of nature in addition to his “church house” worship. But — do not call him a modernist, write him up for his error. (Whatever it is?)

Maybe a preacher quotes denominational authorities in his sermons and writings. Is the quotation teaching or endorsing a denial of the inspiration and authority of the Bible, or some other false doctrine? Then after we purge our library of all those denominational sermon outlines and theological books, let us brand them with their specific sin, not just a loaded word.

If a man is teaching false doctrine, pinpoint his error and expose him. The illustrations could be multiplied but I think the point is sufficiently made. We need to tell it like it is! People of all sorts can tag the liberal label on any man for a myriad of reasons. We must ask, IS IT JUSTIFIED? Jealous men, fearful men, ignorant men, bandwagon men, attention-seeking, power-seeking, power-preserving men, self defending men all find it convenient to call the object of their dislike a liberal! But we should be reminded that such

labeling from such motivation is dishonest and malicious, not conservatism, not loyalty to Christ, not being true to “the Old Paths.” It is sin!

The Virgin Birth of Christ

The Christian religion is built upon the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. That he was born not as you or I, but of a virgin by the power of God without any human father. Enemies of Christ are working unceasingly to discredit this foundation doctrine. The most shocking fact is that some Protestant Theologians and ministers are carrying Satan's flag. For example, from the *Denver Post*, Feb. 4, 1961, this statement by Martin Rist, professor at Denver's Iliff School of Theology, "that belief in the Virgin Birth is now untenable." From *Time Magazine*, Feb. 24, 1961 the Very Rev. James A. Pike, Protestant Episcopal bishop of California, said, "the Virgin Birth is a myth."

Are we who believe Jesus was the Virgin-born Son of God justified in our faith? Study with me! Let us see why we believe:

I. Turn with me to the Old Testament to view the prophecies of the Incarnation of Jesus and the Virgin Birth. The O. T. prophecies are the windows through which God admits light on future events.

A. Gen. 3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, and he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." God here tells Satan that the seed, the child of the woman shall destroy him, though he shall suffer at Satan's hands before his victory. The seed of the *woman*: nothing is said of the man! As the woman was first to sin, she also brought salvation into the world, Paul later wrote that, "when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son, *born of a woman*." Gal. 4:4.

B. Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, the Messianic prophet wrote, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: behold a *virgin shall conceive and bear a son* and shall call his name Immanuel." Is. 7:14. (which means *God with us*)! By giving the world a virgin-born messiah, God eliminated the possibility that a counterfeit messiah could come. Only the virgin-born would be able to lay claim to this office. Matthew quotes this verse as confirmation of his record of the birth of Christ. Matt. 1:22-23.

C. Is.9:6-7, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom . . ." The King would be human — "a child born", of the lineage of David, yet he would be Divine because he was called mighty God and Everlasting Father.

Mic. 5:2 foretold of a ruler in Israel whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Long before the babe was born, the Lord who came to live in that body had executed his work as the Word of God.

II. Now to the New Testament we turn to hear the testimony of those witnesses.

A. Lk. 1:26-38, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God . . . to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph. . . and the angel said unto her, "Fear not Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High . . . And Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, *seeing I know not a man?* And the Angel answered and

said unto her, the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall over shadow thee. Wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.” Here Mary testifies that she was a virgin. The angel also foretold the sex of the child.

B. Matt. 1:18-25, “Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, *before* they came together she was found with child of the Holy Spirit . . . (when Joseph was about to put her away privily) an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, Joseph thou Son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit . . . and Joseph . . . did as the . . . Lord commanded him, and took into him his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth a son.” The genealogy in Matt. 1:1-16 traces all the fathers who begat the sons in the family tree except in the case of Joseph. It is not said that Joseph begat Jesus, but that he was born of Mary. The earthly father’s name is omitted and the mother’s substituted.

C. Jesus himself taught he was the, “True Bread of Life SENT DOWN from Heaven,” Jno. 6:32-38, and in numerous cases he asserted that he was divine and no mere man!

D. Paul wrote that Christ was declared to be the *Son of God* with power, Rom. 1:4; and again that, “God was manifested in the flesh . . .,” I Tim. 3:16.

E. The following Christian leaders testify in writings still extant, that the Church of the second century believed in the Virgin Birth: Aristides, Iraenaues, Tertulliam, Justyn Martyr and Ignatius. Ignatius of the church in Antioch of Syria (who died in 117 A.D.) wrote, they were “fully persuaded as touching our Lord, that He was truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by the Divine

Will and power, truly born of a virgin and baptized by John . . .” Letter to Smyrna 1:1-2.

III. THINGS DEPENDENT upon the Virgin Birth: The Modernist who denies the Virgin Birth glibly assures us that this does not weaken the position of the Christian Faith. (By their fair words and smooth speech they deceive the heart of the innocent.) Consider the following:

A. Jesus is either divine as pictured in the Bible or else He was one of the biggest impostors the world has ever seen. If He were born naturally as the liberals say, then we should apologize to the Jews and admit they were right when they accused Him of blasphemy for making Himself equal with God!

B. His Lordship: Time and again Jesus is referred to as *Lord*, yet the word *Lord*, in both the Old and New Testaments has to do with “The supreme being or God of the Universe.” If He were human-born, He cannot be Lord!

C. The Saviourhood of Jesus. His name means “He shall save His people from their sins.” *No mere man* can save himself, much less anyone else, because he is in the same quicksand of sin. Jesus *can save* because He is divine. He has all the power of God at His hand and He was sinless, but this too demands His Virgin Birth.

D. The Bodily Resurrection: Has any ordinary man ever been raised from the dead? never to die again? Jesus was; but He was no ordinary man, He was God in the Flesh, Virgin Born.

E. The second coming of Jesus *cannot be*, if He were only human-born. For He surely died and today His dust is mingled with the soil of Palestine if He were mere man. But the Virgin-Born, Divine Man has the power to come again.

F. If He is but a human, born of an earthly father, then He could not atone for our sins on the cross.

G. If Christ is not the Word of God come down to earth, born of the Virgin Mary, then we can have no hope for a resurrection and life after this life.

H. If Jesus was not Virgin-Born, then either He was the production of pre-marital fornication on the part of Joseph and Mary, or the illegitimate son of some unknown father!

I. To reject the Virgin Birth as unscientific because it is so obviously a miracle would force us to also reject the whole Bible, God and Christ! All stand or fall together, miraculous!

IV. "The men who deny the Virgin Birth, who do so that they may the more easily be delivered from carrying the baggage of the miraculous, who shift the fatherhood of Jesus from the eternal God to the act of some sinful man, are paying a dear price for their jaunty endeavor to accommodate the supernaturalism of Christianity to the poverty smitten weakness of their own faith, and the noisy clamor of an unbelieving, spiritually ignorant and scoffing world. Jesus the pre-existent Christ, lived from the beginning with the Father. He himself was the great Creator and is the greater sustainer of all things. Christ, the Creator, through the Virgin Birth, became flesh and took the form of a created being. Through this super-natural birth Christ (who is God) became man without ceasing to be God. Jehovah brought Eve into the world from the body of a man without a mother. He brought Jesus into the world from a woman without a human father."

"Not one shred of evidence has been brought to light, either out of the earth or from the monuments, or from the shelves of old libraries. Not one single fact has been discover-

ed by telescope or by the microscope, or the spectroscope, or any other instrument of science; not one scientilla of evidence has been found either in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, to invalidate the historical integrity of the Virgin Birth of Christ.”

These modernists are like Hymeneus and Alexander — they have made ship wreck concerning the faith and they over-throw the faith of some. You who still believe in God and the Bible, should rise in holy indignation and drive them out of the houses of worship. If men wish to be Atheists, let them leave the churches to be so!

Where is the Liberal-minded man of the cloth who will meet me in a public discussion of these issues?

The Divinity of Jesus

Jesus once asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and *upon this rock* I will build my church," Matt. 16:13-18. The Christian religion is founded upon the divinity of Jesus; the fact that he was not an ordinary man like you and me, but rather a heavenly person, God, even as the Father and Holy Spirit are God. If it can be proven that Jesus was not a divine person, that he was merely a great man, then Christianity and all it stands for is of necessity a fraud and can be easily overthrown and destroyed! If Christ is not God's Son in the full meaning of that term, then the *only* bridge between man and God is destroyed; the only link between life and eternity is smashed, the only hope for sin cursed humanity sinks beneath the fathomless sea. If Christ is not divine, we are of all creatures most pitiable.

ASSAULTS AGAINST CHRIST

Knowing the magnitude of this point, Satan and his henchmen have worked unceasingly through the ages to prove him an ordinary man, a created being. Some of Satan's most diabolical, yet diplomatic assistants occupy august

positions in our land. Some are college professors, who delight in destroying the faith of the young minds entrusted to them; scoffing at the Bible, its teachings, the idea of God and the person of Jesus. It may be the man of science who leaves his proper field and seeks to replace the Christian's belief in an all powerful God and His divine Son, with an empty theory of evolution and a Godless universe of matter in motion. Many theological seminaries have become tools in Satan's hand, indoctrinating young ministerial students with the infidelic idea that Jesus was simply a good moral man, a wise philosopher and a gifted teacher. They teach that he was born naturally as you were, that he never did a miracle (only his disciples exaggerated the good he did); that he was not quite perfect; and that he died, never to rise again. They say His death accomplished no more than President Lincoln's and that His teachings must be revised to fit man's present educational level. This I charge is blasphemy! How tragic that some churches have ministers who subscribe to this unbelieving creed. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. May God have mercy on the congregations they minister to.

EVIDENCE OF HIS DIVINITY

Jesus stands unique in the annals of human history because he is divine, the Son of the living God!

His Birth marks His Divinity. Seven hundred years before he was born, the prophet Isaiah foretold, "The Lord himself will give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14. Luke, the sacred historian, records the birth of Christ in these words: "the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a *virgin* betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph . . . and the angel said . . . Fear

not, Mary for thou hast found favor with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shall bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High . . . and Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall over-shadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:26-35. Jesus was Immanuel, God with us, Matt. 1:23.

His *sinless life* proved Jesus to be supernatural. Peter bore witness that “He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,” I Pet. 2:21. His enemies stood speechless when Jesus challenged; “Which of you convicteth me of sin?” John 8:46. Judas confessed he had betrayed innocent blood, Matt. 27:4. And Pilate said, “I find no fault in this man.” John 18:38. Where is another man of any era, race or culture who *did no sin*?

His *manner and the matter of His speech* spell divinity. After hearing his sermon on the mount, “the people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority,” Matt. 7:29. Enemies sent a spy who returned awed, saying, “Never a man so spake,” John 7:46. Having completed his mission he claimed, “all authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth,” Matt. 28:18.

Jesus *claimed divinity*. His enemies challenged him because he called God his own Father making himself equal with God, John 5:18.

Only a divine person could do the *works* that Jesus did. Nicodemus confessed, “No one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him,” John 3:2. He changed water to wine, fed 5,000 with a handful of food, he stilled the tempest, he walked on the water, he healed the sick, gave sight to

the blind and raised the dead. Would God have given such power to an imposter?

Many Witnesses testified *that Jesus was the Son of God. John the Baptist bore witness that Jesus was the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, John 1:29. God, from heaven, audibly spoke to Peter, James and John saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."* The apostles after many months of living with him, confessed that he was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Even the soldiers that crucified him were forced to say, "Truly this was the Son of God," Matt. 27:54.

When lifted up on the cross, *the elements bore witness to His majesty. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour . . . and the veil of the temple was rent in two, from top to bottom and the earth did quake and the rocks were rent. And the tombs were opened and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised and entered into the city and appeared to many,"* Matt. 27:45-53. Never did another man die amid happenings like those of Jesus' death.

The overwhelming proof of his divinity was established by *his resurrection* from the dead. "He was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," Rom. 1:4. Paul told the wise philosophers of Athens that God would judge the world by Jesus and He has given *assurance* "in that he hath raised Him from the dead," Acts 17:31. He was raised never to die again!

CONCLUSION

Jesus is divine God, even as the Father and Holy Spirit are divine God. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word

was with God (the Father) and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God and all things were made through him . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among *us and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father . . .*” John 1:14. Paul states that before his earthly advent, He existed on an equality with God, Phil. 2:5. This we believe and stand ready to defend against all enemies.

Jesus is divine. He left heaven, lived, taught, suffered and died that our sins might be forgiven. God raised Him from death and highly exalted him that every knee should bow and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, Phil. 2:9-11. Will you not forsake your sins in repentance; confess your faith in Him and be buried with Him in baptism to have your sins remitted and to be united with Him?

The Vicarious Death of Christ

Our Atonement

A modern cult of modernistic, Liberal Protestantism is working unceasingly to destroy and eliminate faith in the age old, fundamental doctrines of the Bible. These pseudo-scholars are teaching people: that the Bible is not inspired, Jesus was not the divine Son of God; that he was not born of a virgin; that he performed no miracles; that his death accomplished no more for mankind than did Lincoln's; and that he did not rise from the dead. It is to be expected that atheistic, infidels would deny this, but it is shocking that so-called Christian preachers and teachers would deny the very heart and core of Christianity. Truly they are wolves in sheep's clothing, false teachers, emissaries of Satan and should be exposed in their true colors.

The Bible holds as its central theme that Jesus' death on the cross was a vicarious death. That is, that he suffered for us, the innocent for the guilty, and this made possible the forgiveness of our sins.

Modernists reject this great doctrine for two main reasons. First: they have such a high estimate of themselves and they glory so much in man's worth, power and achievement that they will not admit that man is in such a sinful and lost condition as to require the death of Jesus. Second: they do not understand why God had to follow this course to forgive man. They reason that some other way would have been better. Like the Jews of old they do not wish to admit their need of divine grace. To them Christ is a stumbling block. They want to establish a righteousness

of their own and will not submit to the righteousness of God. Like the Greeks, to the Modernist, Christ and his death is foolishness. They seek wisdom. They would work out their own salvation, independent of God. They seem to think that man's philosophy, scientific researches, mechanical inventions, and governmental social legislation will ultimately rid the world of sin, suffering and death.

To the modernist, sin is not a violation of divine law, subject to punishment. More and more they describe it as "sickness" and seek to blame every one but the sinner. Rioting, homosexuality, adultery, theft and even murder are all being excused as "no sin"!

All who retain a sense of sanity and rationality, who know anything of God, his Bible and human nature, know mankind is lost in sin and must have a Saviour. That Saviour is Jesus. Forgiveness is in His shed blood.

I. In Genesis 2, the story of man's creation in God's image is told. He was sinless, upright, in intimate communion with God. Chapter 3 tells of his temptation, sin, and fall. It tells of the punishment for his sin. Loss of immortality brought physical death. His sin caused him to be driven in shame from this garden paradise. He was separated from God, spiritually dead. This is no fable or allegory; this is historical truth.

Today it is the same sad truth; "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Exek. 18:20. "The wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23. "For we have before proved, both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin . . . that all the world may become guilty before God. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Rom. 3:9-23. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." I Jno. 1:8.

B. As a sinner, the Bible pictures man as a slave who

must be redeemed; an enemy who must be reconciled, a corpse which must be resurrected, a captive whose powerful oppressors must be overthrown, a criminal who must be justified. Jesus alone, by His death on the cross, can satisfy man's need and offer a solution to his predicament.

II. **Redemption Must Be By Blood.** From the dawn of time, blood was used as the sacrifice for man's sins. God commanded the Patriarchs, and the Jewish nation to offer the blood of animals for their wrongs. Moses explained in Lev. 17:11, "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."

Paul states flatly, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Heb. 9:22.

III. *Jesus Death was the Sacrifice for our sins.* Is. 53, "But he was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities; the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and Jehovah laid upon him the iniquity of us all . . . yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; . . . thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. . ." vss. 5,6, 10. Rom. 5:9, "being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

Eph. 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. . ."

Col. 1:20, "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself."

Heb. 9:12, "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Heb. 9:14, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, without

spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Heb. 13:12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."

Heb. 6:19, "Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."

I Pet. 1:18-20, "Forasmuch as ye know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold . . .but with precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

I Jno. 1:7, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light,. . . the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

Jesus said in instituting the Lord's supper, "This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins" Matt. 26:28.

My friends, this settles the question once and for all for those who love God, who believe the Bible, who want to be His children and who want to go to Heaven.

It is either accept Christ's blood atonement and be saved, or reject it and be damned because of your sin!

What Christ's Death did for us.

Rom. 5:7-9, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for peradventure for the good man. Someone would even dare to die, but God commendeth his own love toward us; in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him."

1. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." Gal. 3:13.

2. He purchased the church with his blood, Acts 20:28.

3. Paul said, "That by the grace of God he should taste of death for every man" (Heb. 2:9), so we can live eternally.

4. "He saved his people from their sins," Matt. 1:21.

5. We were justified by his blood, Rom. 5:9

6. We were reconciled to God by his blood, Col. 1:20.

7. Our conscience was cleansed by his blood, Heb. 9:14.

8. We were sanctified by his blood, Heb. 13:12.

9. The door of heaven was opened to us by his blood, Heb 10:19-20.

Beloved, the human race was hopelessly lost and ruined in the depths of sin. To allow sinful man back into his presence, God had to cleanse him from sin. Only one sacrifice would suffice, a perfect one, and *only* Christ could fulfill the need. Christ volunteered to leave his heavenly home, come to this low land of sorrow, walk the paths of man, demonstrate the righteousness of God's law and then voluntarily give his life as a ransom for our sins.

God treated the sinless Christ as if He was guilty and inflicted upon Him the punishment which our sins deserved, and that made it possible for Him to treat the sinful ones as if they were actually righteous.

The grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all men, you can be saved by Christ if you will believe and obey him. Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." When in faith you obey his command to be immersed, His blood will then wash away your sins. He will fill you with His Holy Spirit and add you to His Church. You will be saved and on your way to heaven.

The Resurrection of Christ

We live in perilous times. Our world is perched on the brink of a third world war; crime runs rampant all about us; corruption at all levels threatens to undermine our very national existence; homes are crumbling; children are involved in more and more crime; and now we witness the decay and crumbling of the churches and the faith of the people which has guided us to the pinnacle of civilization we enjoy. Modernism and liberalism have eroded away the very heart and life of Protestantism.

Many major protestant bodies have theologians, educators and preachers who no longer believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God. They deny the basic facts that distinguish Jesus Christ from the mass of humanity and mark Him as the Son of God. They look upon Him as merely a good man and wise philosopher. They deny His Virgin Birth and that He could perform miracles. They say His death was tragic, but of no saving value to us and they strongly deny His resurrection from the dead.

This month's series of lessons has been presented to expose the infidelity of the modernistic, liberal preachers; to confirm the believers' faith in the fundamental doctrines of the Bible; and to convince the person who has not accepted Christ as His Saviour, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and in loving obedience to obey the Gospel and take up your cross and follow Him.

In Phil. 3:8 and 10 we read Paul's words, "Yea verily and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. . .that I may know Him

and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings become conformed unto His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” The Resurrection is one of the foundation pillars of Christianity.

In I Cor. 15:12-19 the apostle emphasizes the **IMPORTANCE** of the Resurrection. He reasons, “If Christ hath not been raised”: 1. Our preaching is vain, 2. Your faith is vain, 3. The apostles are found false witnesses, 4. We are yet in our sins, 5. The dead have eternally perished. We are of all men most pitiable, if Christ has not been raised.

But Christ has been raised from the dead, and this is no fond wish or hope. There is proof! Luke states in Acts 1:1-3 that, “he also showed himself *alive. . .by many proofs*, appearing unto them by the space of forty days. . .”

The truth of Jesus’ resurrection is substantiated by many witnesses, who swore that they saw him alive after his death! They were assured it was him!

1. On Sunday morning Mary Magdalene and another Mary went to the tomb. There was an earth quake and an angel of the Lord rolled back the stone door and showed them an empty grave. As they returned to tell the other Disciples, Jesus met them, saying, “all hail”, and they came and took hold of his feet and worshipped him . . .” Matt. 28:1-10.

2. Later Jesus appeared unto Mary Magdalene alone at the sepulchre on the Resurrection morning. He talked with her and she told the Disciple “I have seen the Lord, and that he had said these things unto her,” John 20:11-18.

3. He appeared to Peter the afternoon of resurrection day, I Cor. 15:5, Luke 24:34; and . . .

4. To the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Lk.

24:13-35, and they testified, “The Lord is risen. . .and they rehearsed the things that happened in the way, and how he was known of them in the breaking of the bread.”

5. He appeared then to all the apostles, save Thomas, on the resurrection evening. “Jesus came and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. . .he showed them his hands and his side. . .” They testified, “We have seen the Lord.” John 20:19-25.

6. A week later he appeared to the eleven apostles again. Thomas who had doubted the story of the others was told, “Reach hither thy finger and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand and put it into my side. . .” Thomas answered and said, “My Lord and my God.” Jno. 20:26.

7. A few days after, Jesus appeared to several of the apostles as they were fishing at the sea of Galilee, he caused them to have a great catch of fish. . .then he invited them to share breakfast with him. “And none of the disciples durst inquire of him, who art thou? Knowing it was the Lord.” Jno. 21:1-23.

8. He appeared to above five hundred disciples at once (I Cor. 15:6), and to the apostles on an appointed mountain in Galilee. “And when they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted.” Matt. 28:16-20.

9. James saw him alive. I Cor. 15:7.

10. He led his apostles from Jersusalem to the Mount of Olives and blessed them and ascended into heaven in their sight. Luke 24:50.

11. Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of Christians, met the risen Christ face to face on the road to Damascus, Acts 22:6-9, 14. The change in Saul; his work as the apostle Paul, established his claim to have seen the risen Lord.

These witnesses give us empirical evidence that should satisfy even the most sceptical.

They *saw him* to be the same man they had followed. They saw him eat food as he had before. They saw his wounds of crucifixion. The voice they heard was the same one that had taught them before. They felt his body and his wounds. It was no dream, ghost or illusion. They saw Jesus alive after he was raised from the dead!

The empty tomb gives testimony of His Resurrection. Joseph, Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene and other disciples tenderly took the body of Jesus from the cross, prepared it and laid it to rest in Joseph's new tomb.

The chief priests and Pharisees, remembering his prediction, that he would rise on the third day, secured permission from Pilate and, "They went and *made the sepulchre sure*, sealing the stone, the guard being with them." Matt. 27:66.

Many witnesses testify that the tomb was found empty on Sunday morning. *Mary Magdalene* and *Mary* the mother of James and Salome went to anoint the body (as the custom was). They found an empty tomb. Mark 16:1-8.

Peter and *John* on hearing the report ran and entered the tomb, finding it empty. John 20:2-6.

The *Roman guards*, whose lives were jeopardized by allowing the corpse to disappear, said it was gone. Matt. 28:11.

The *Sanhedrin Council* of the Jews verified that the body was gone, in that they paid much money to the soldiers to spread a lie that the disciples had stolen the body while they slept, Matt. 28:12.

What happened to His body? Either his *friends*; his

enemies or God took his body from the tomb. His *friends could not* have taken it because the grave was sealed and a guard place there to prevent just such a happening. His *enemies would not* have taken his body, for it was this which they were trying to prevent. Thus we are left with but one conclusion—God raised his body from death and took him from the tomb.

The evidence of his *power over death* while in His ministry convinces us he had the power to rise from the dead. As he raised Lazarus before many witnesses, he could raise himself!

The *transformation* wrought in the Apostles is proof of his resurrection. A few days before, they had deserted him and fled in fear of their lives. They cowered in a locked room in the city. Now see them stand before that same mob who had murdered their Lord, and proclaim the resurrected Christ, Acts 2.

The *prophet* foretold Christ's resurrection. "I beheld the Lord always before my face. . . Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption." Ps. 16:8.

The *Inability* of his enemies to produce the body so that they might disprove the apostle's witness is proof of the resurrection.

The *Impact* upon Jerusalem of the resurrection gospel, demonstrated that factuality of Christ being raised. Within a few days over 5,000 men had become his disciples.

The influence of the Resurrection Gospel upon those who receive it and upon our whole world is a positive testimony to its truthfulness.

What the Resurrection Means To Us Today:

1. The Resurrection is the “axle and hub” of the gospel. I Cor. 15:1-4, “I make known unto you the gospel which I preached unto you . . . Christ died for our sins . . . and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day. . .”

2. Rom. 1:4 speaks of Jesus, “who was declared to be the Son of God with power. . . by the resurrection from the dead.”

3. It approved his testimonies reliable and true, thus

4. It demands our faith. Rom. 10:9, “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

5. Rom 4:25 “Jesus . . . was delivered for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.”

6. His resurrection conquered death. “Death is swallowed up in the victory .” I Cor. 15:54.

7. His resurrection assures our resurrection and immortality. Rom. 8:11, “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life to your mortal bodies.”

8. The Resurrection gives the Christian *Comfort* at the time of death. I Thess. 4:13-18. . . “brethren, concerning them that fall asleep, . . . sorrow not even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and *rose* again even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

9. “God. . .begat us again unto a living HOPE by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. . .” I Pet. 1:3.

10. The Resurrection Gospel is a powerful force for

good in our lives. Paul speaks of the “Power of his resurrection” (Phil. 3:10), and affirms we can do all things through him that strengthens us, Phil. 4:13.

11. The disciples’ faith in the Resurrection was responsible for the phenomenal growth of the early church.

12. It made possible the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jno. 16:7, “If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you.” “Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted. . . he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.” Acts 2:33.

13. The Lord has appointed a day in which he will judge the world. . .by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” Acts 17:31.

Without the Bodily Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, there can be no Christianity. No wonder Satan seeks to disprove it and keep people from believing it. He that rejects the resurrection, must reject the whole of Christianity. True Christians believe Christ was actually Resurrected from the dead and lives today.

A Bible Basis For Fellowship

In the shadow of the cross Jesus prayed, "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; . . . that the world may believe that thou didst send me." John 17:20-21.

WE CAN HAVE FELLOWSHIP TODAY *IF*

we build together upon Christ and His word. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus." I Cor. 3:11. Current trends in Protestantism call for fellowship on a common faith in Christ. This is deceptive. These voices ignore the teachings of Christ and make every man a law unto himself. This approach might bring "instant fellowship in a package", but it is not what Christ prayed for, nor what early Christians had. "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship. . ." Acts 2:42. They taught that if a man did not abide "in the teaching of Christ, he hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." II John 9. For many, the passion for unity outweighs passion for Biblical Truth.

FIRST WE MUST AGREE ON AUTHORITY

To have fellowship, we must come to a common conclusion on the question of authority. The Father gave His Son all authority, Matt. 28:18. The words of Jesus will judge us, John 12:48. Jesus told his apostles, "He that receiveth you receiveth me," Matt. 10:40. Thus the apostles'

doctrine is Christ's will. His word has been preserved for us in the New Covenant. No faithful disciple questions these principles.

It was respect for Christ and His New Testament that made the plea of the restoration pioneers so attractive to the people. J. W. McGarvey wrote:

“It was this supreme devotion to the word of God that developed a movement having at first only a union of believers in view, into one having in view the complete restoration of primitive Christianity. For it was soon seen that the union for which Christ prayed and upon which the apostles insisted, could be brought about only in this way.” *Christians Only*, p. 211.

WHO CAN I FELLOWSHIP?

Only God's Word can answer this. Christ made both Jews and Gentile one in himself. “For we are all one man in Christ. . .” Gal. 3:26-28. Being one in Christ simply means that we have fellowship with everyone who is in Christ. But how can we determine who is in Christ? Again, God's Word explains that we are “baptized into Christ”, Gal. 3:27. This limits my fellowship to those baptized into Christ. Can we fellowship the unimmersed? The baptism of Christ is a burial with him in water, Rom. 6:4, Acts 10:48. There being but one baptism, Eph. 4:5, and is immersion for remission, Acts 2:38, we can have fellowship only with those thus baptized.

BOUNDARIES OF FELLOWSHIP SET BY GOD

Even of those properly immersed, the word of God limits our fellowship to those who conform to His rules of faith and conduct.

1. “Now we command you brethren to withdraw yourselves from *every brother that walketh disorderly*, and not after the traditions which they received of us.” “. . . that ye have no company with him,” II Thess. 3:6, 14-15.

2. “. . .if any man that is named a brother be a *fornicator*, or *covetous*, or an *idolater*, or a *reviler*, or a *drunkard*, or an *extortioner*; with such a one no not to eat . . .put away the wicked man from among yourselves,” I Cor. 5:11-13.

3. Tit. 3:10-11, “A *factious man* after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth being self-condemned.

4. Rom. 16:17-18 “. . .mark *them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling*, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned and turn away from them.”

5. II John 9-11, “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works.”

The foregoing words compel me to withhold my fellowship from those who are immoral or disorderly in conduct; those of a factious nature; those who cause division and occasions of stumbling contrary to the scriptures and who abide not in the doctrine of Christ.

Those who dream of perfect harmony between all who call on the name of Jesus are dreamers. Even from the beginning there were those who despised the fellowship of the saints: Jewish Christians shunned Gentile brethren; false brethren who led away disciples after them and others who

made shipwreck of their faith. There will always be many who say, Lord, Lord, but do not the will of the Father, Matt. 7:21. Jesus does not recognize them, nor can we.

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE ARE COROLLARIES OF FELLOWSHIP

Those who love God with all their heart, who seek first his kingdom, will love the brotherhood, I Pet. 2:17. This love for brethren is the identifying badge of discipleship. "Beloved if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." I John 4:11. Yet this very love for God insists that we keep His commandments, I John 5:3. We cannot escape the imperative of obedience to the will of Jesus, before there can ever be meaningful fellowship. Some advocate fellowship without regard to doctrinal differences. They maintain that love and faith in Jesus is sufficient. Their approach is fallacious and anti-scriptural.

A MISCONCEPTION

It is a false delusion to mistake the compromising approaches of W. Carl Ketcherside and his sympathizers as expressing the thinking of the great body of the churches of Christ who use no man-made instruments in worship. ". . .mere union in a federation of churches is not true Christian unity. Such a union would be merely something which the church would have in common with human societies. . . A mere federation in itself has nothing at all to do with real church union." "Unity movements will be futile if they eventuate in nothing more than mutual tolerance, respect and co-operation. . ." Murch, p. 365.

HERE I STAND

We occupy safe ground. History vindicates the action of those who respected the silence of the scriptures on instrumental music and the extra-congregational organizations like the missionary society. Murch's history is an eloquent witness to this fact. Those brethren who first introduced the instruments and societies never dreamed of the final destination they would lead to. The Disciples of Christ illustrate a complete circuit back into denominationalism, a situation which our forefathers struggled valiantly to escape. There is great difference between those leaving true Christianity for the Babylon of denominationalism and those leaving Babylon in search for truth and the Lord's true church.

The battle fought and the victory won was too costly for us to surrender it in compromise for a shallow token of union. The author could never enter into fellowship where instruments of music or any other addition to the Divine plan are used. Our problem today is basically the same as it was a hundred years ago. The question of the hour is, How will history record our attitudes and actions towards its solution?

Instrumental Music in Worship

Most people, when visiting the religious services of the Church of Christ for the first time, are amazed and puzzled to find that we sing without an instrument of music such as an organ or piano. People are curious as to why we do not use these instruments in our worship. Therefore, in the following pages we will endeavor to point out to you why the Church of Christ sings unto God but refuses to use organs and the like in worship.

We need to know if such a practice is pleasing to God, or not.

I. THE QUESTION CLARIFIED

To New Testament Christians, IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF:

The expense,
the beauty of instrumental music,
whether we personally like it or not,
whether we can sing better with it,
what most denominations practice,
of the sincerity of those who do use instruments,
what was done in the mosaic dispensation,
what kind of music the heavenly beings have.

With us the question is: DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORIZE THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH TODAY?

II. WHAT DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT SAY ABOUT THE WORSHIP OF GOD IN SONG?

Matt. 26:30 and Mark 14:26, “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the mount of Olives.”

Acts 16:25, “But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

Romans 15:9, “And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore, will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.”

I Cor. 14:15, “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

Eph. 5:18-19, “And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.”

Col. 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God.”

James 5:13, “Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise.”

These are ALL the scriptures that relate to the subject of church song worship in the New Testament. We can see that quite a bit is said about vocal music, singing, but not one word about using instrumental music in our worship.

III. THE HISTORY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND THE CHURCH

But you may ask, has not instrumental music always been used in the church? We will let history answer your question. As we notice the historical, remember the Bible principle.

Paul Henry Lang, *Music in Western Civilization*, pp. 53, 54: “. . . The development of Western music was decisively

influenced by the exclusion of musical instruments from the early Christian Church.

Hugo Leichtentritt, *Music, History and Ideas*, p. 34: “Only singing, however, and no playing of instruments, was permitted in the early Christian Church.”

Emil Nauman, *The History of Music*, Vol. 1, p. 177: “There can be no doubt that originally the music of the divine service was everywhere entirely of a vocal nature.”

Dr. Frederic Louis Ritter, *History of Music from the Christian Era to the Present Time*, p. 28: “We have no real knowledge of the exact character of the music which formed a part of the religious devotion of the first Christian congregations. It was, however, purely vocal.”

John Kurtz, Church History, Vol. 1, p. 376: “At first church music was simple, artless, recitative. But the rivalry of heretics forced the orthodox church to pay greater attention to the requirements of art. Chyrsostom had to declaim against the secularization of church music. More lasting was the opposition to the introduction of instrumental accompaniment.”

Joseph Bingham, *Works*, London Edition, Vol. II, pp. 482-484: “Music in churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so.”

It is evident then that the use of instrumental music in worship is a practice that came along after the apostles. In fact, Pope Vitallion was the first to introduce instrumental music in the worship of the churches. This was done in 671 A.D.

IV. WHERE IS THE AUTHORITY?

But someone says, “The Bible does not forbid using instrumental music in worship, therefore, we can use it if

we wish to.”

If you mean that the Bible does not say, “Thou shalt not use instruments in worship,” you are right. But the Bible does give us certain principles to govern our work and worship that make it wrong to add these items to worship!.

Matt. 7:28-29, “And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.”

Matt. 28:18, “. . . All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth.”

Matt. 17:5, “. . . This is my beloved Son, in whom I am pleased; hear ye him.”

Acts 3:23, “And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.”

Matt. 15:9, “But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrine the precepts of man.”

I Cor. 4:6, “Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; . . .”

II John 9, “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.”

Ask yourself how those who introduced instrumental music abide in the teaching of Christ.

The doctrine of Christ specifies SINGING for worship. To add an instrumental accompaniment is to go beyond what is written, I Cor. 4:6. It is to go onward and abide not

in the teaching of Christ, II John 9. It is a precept of men and results in vain worship, Matt. 15:9.

Paul says, "We walk by faith, " II Cor. 5:7. Heb. 11:6 tells us without faith it is impossible to please God. Rom. 10:17 says, "Faith cometh of hearing . . . the word of God." We cannot walk by faith and use instruments of music.

Friends: We have no instruments of music in our worship, because to do such would be a sin, a violation of the passages just noticed.

May we use an illustration to further emphasize the danger of adding these mechanical instruments to the worship?

When God commanded Noah to build the Ark, he specified gopher wood. Had Noah dared to include any other kind of wood, it would have been presumption and he would have placed himself and his family in danger of destruction with the others. God has commanded us to sing, dare we alter it? In Lev. 10:1-2 we read of the two priests, Nadab and Abihu, who took it upon themselves to alter the manner God has said to worship him. God had said to use the sacred fire that burned perpetually upon the altar for sacrifices and incense; these men offered a strange or different fire, and they perished, being devoured by fire as they stood before Jehovah! Their sin was the same as those who add instrumental music to the command to worship God in song.

Beloved, we dare not add to God's Word or take away from it, if we wish to please Him. Using instrumental music in worship is adding to God's Will!

V. SOME OBJECTIONS.

But someone says, the saved are pictured as playing harps in heaven, Rev. 5:8. Yes, and the same passage says

they had bowls of incense. Shall we burn incense in the church worship today? Mk. 12:25 says, "in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage." Shall we forbid marriage in the church today? Because a thing is done in heaven it does not mean that God has authorized it for the church on earth. The book of Revelation is highly symbolic and figurative. It is a mistake to think there will be literal harps used to worship God in heaven. The same passage, Rev. 5:8, tells us the bowls of incense are the "prayers of the saints." The harps are symbolic of their "praise to God!"

Another objects, "In the Old Testament they worshipped God with instruments." But we also find plural marriages, animal sacrifices, circumcision and many other things which were not incorporated by Jesus in His church. If you take one you must take them all. Heb. 8:6-9, "But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second. For finding fault with them, he saith, 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, That I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers ...'." Christ took the old law out of the way, nailing it to His cross, Col. 2:14. Today we are under His New Testament.

"But I think it is all right to use a piano in worship," says someone. In Prov. 14:12, Solomon says, "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

VI. TESTAMONIES OF SOME GREAT RELIGIOUS TEACHERS.

Charles H. Spurgeon. Speaking of one of the greatest

Baptist preachers ever to live, says John Girardeau, "The great congregation which is blessed with the privilege of listening to his instructions has no organ 'to assist' them in singing their praise, " *Instrumental Music in the Church*, p. 176.

Adam Clarke, greatest of Methodist commentators, *Commentary*, Vol. IV, p. 684: "I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them (instruments of music) productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe they were productive of much evil. Music, as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor."

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, quoted in Adam Clarke's *Commentary*, Vol. IV, p. 684: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither HEARD or SEEN."

John Calvin, founder of Presbyterianism, *Commentary on Psalms 33*: "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Baptists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostles is far more pleasing to Him."

Thomas Aquinas, Roman Catholic theologian, saint, and greatest authority of scholasticism, *Summa Theologica, Quaestio 91, Articulus II*: "Instrumental music as well as singing is mentioned in the Old Testament, but the Church has accepted only singing on account of its esthetical value: instruments were rejected because they have a bodily shape and keep the mind too busy, induce it even to carnal pleasure. Therefore, their use is unwise, and consequently the Church

refrains from music instruments in order that by the praise of God the congregation may not be distracted from concern with bodily matters.”

Alexander Campbell, who is looked upon with great respect by the Disciples of Christ and Christian Churches, *Millennial Harbinger*, Series 4, Vol. 1, p. 581: “That all persons who have no spiritual meditations, consolations and sympathies of renewed hearts, should call for such aid (Instrumental music) is but natural. Pure water from the flinty rock has no attraction for the mere toper or winebibber. A little alcohol, or genuine Cognac brandy, or good old Madeira is essential to the beverage to make it truly refreshing. So to those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature flags under the oppression of church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert.”

Churches of Christ worship God in song with a cappella singing in accordance with the scriptures. With us agree some of the greatest religious teachers of the religious world.

Beloved, the scriptures teach us that we should offer unto God the fruit of our lips as a sacrifice of praise, Heb. 13:15. We can worship Him in spirit and truth by singing praises unto Him while teaching and admonishing one another. Let us resolve to abstain from all of those humanly devised practices in religion that will keep us from eternal bliss with the Father.

The Modern Glossolalia Movement In The Light of The Scriptures

I Cor. 14:18-19, "I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all: howbeit in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

"Glossolalia" is the Greek equivalent of our expression, "tongue speaking." Until the last decade, one usually associated the idea of tongue speaking with the Holiness, Pentecostal groups. We generally categorized those who sought this experience in religion as members of small churches made up of uneducated people from the lower classes of society whose services were highly emotional and with little intellectual content.

Today the climate has changed. We read of this exercise being found among Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Christian churches. Even a few scattered individuals associated with the church of Christ have claimed to have experienced this phenomenon.

It is the purpose of this study to examine this teaching and practice in the light of God's Word. As Isaiah said, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to his word, it is because there is no light in them," 18:20. John warned, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," I John 4:1. Since the words Jesus spake will judge us in the last day, we must measure our faith and practice according to them. cf. John 12:48.

**I. The GIFT OF SPEAKING IN UNKNOWN TONGUES
was a reality in the early church.**

- A. Jesus promised this and other miraculous gifts to his apostles, Mk. 16:17-20.
 - 1. The apostles did actually receive this gift, Acts 2:1-4.
 - 2. So also did Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, Acts 10:44-46.
 - 3. The twelve disciples at Ephesus received it at Paul's hands, Acts 19:1-6.
- B. Speaking in Tongues was a **MIRACULOUS** gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. Mk. 16:17-20.
 - 2. I Cor. 12:10.
- C. The Gift of Tongues could only be received in one of two ways:
 - 1. Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Acts Chapters 2 and 10.
(For proof that Cornelius was baptized in the Holy Spirit as were the apostles, see Acts 11:15.)
 - 2. Laying on of the apostles' hands.
 - a. Acts 19:6.
 - b. Acts 8:14-17. Only the apostles could transfer the miraculous gifts to other disciples.

II. WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL GIFT OF TONGUES?

- A. Is it the ecstatic "jibber-jabber" heard in modern holiness churches, or something else?
- B. The Bible defines tongues:
 - 1. "new tongues", Mk. 16:17.
 - 2. "other tongues", Acts 2:4.
 - 3. "divers (different) kinds of tongues," I Cor. 12:10.
 - 4. "speak with tongues of men and angels," I

Cor. 13:1. (That is, the most splendid eloquence; sublime, grand, beautiful.)

5. Tongues may be interpreted, I Cor. 14:13. "Let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret."
 6. I Cor. 14:27-28, "If any man speaketh in a tongue . . . let one interpret . . . but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church."
 7. Acts 2:6-8. ". . . every man heard them speaking in his own language . . . how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born?"
 8. Acts 2:11. "We hear them speaking in our own tongue the mighty works of God."
- C. The gift of tongues was simply the ability to speak in an intelligent way, a language one had not acquired by natural means of study and learning.
- D. The tongues of Corinth and Acts 2 are identical. There was but one promise concerning tongues, so the fulfillment is one regardless where it occurs. The same Greek word, "glossa" is used uniformly in both cases. It is defined "language." Strong.
1. Luke's description in Acts defines what Paul wrote about in Corinthians. "For Luke is the one who fully describes what the tongues are while Paul takes for granted that his readers know what they are and therefore offers no description. Luke writes for a reader "Theophilus" who may never have heard of this gift in operation. Paul writes for readers who have often heard members of their own congregation speak in tongues." Lenski.
 2. EX. If you had lived then, God may have im-

powered you to speak Latin, Hebrew, etc.; to you an unknown tongue.

III. THE PURPOSE OF TONGUES.

- A. To aid in the rapid spread of the gospel into many different lands and tongues.
 - 1. Mk. 16:15-16.
 - 2. Acts 2:4ff. "Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven."
- B. This and other gifts of the Holy Spirit were to confirm the words of the preachers, Mk. 16:20. With no written New Testament, they needed to be able to prove that God had given them their message. See also, Heb. 2:3-4.
- C. It was a sign to unbelievers, I Cor. 14:22.

IV. ABUSES OF THE GIFT AND REGULATIONS OF ITS USE.

- A. In I Corinthians, Paul deals with the subject of miracles. In Chapter 12 he introduces the supernatural gifts and shows their common source and unity. He shows that all members of the body as well as all gifts, whether great or small, have a purpose and important function in the church, the body of Christ. Note that Paul placed tongues last in his catalogues in vss. 8-10 and 28-30. He then urged them to desire earnestly the greater gifts, and promised to show them a more excellent way. In Chapter 13 he exposes the real problem at hand. There was a debate among the brethren as to which spiritual gift was the most excellent. It was a contest primarily between those who had the gift of tongues and those who had the gift of prophecy. In

their competition for public position and praise they had lost the most important Christian virtue, LOVE. Thus their whole conduct was now unbecoming to the name of Christ.

He concludes the chapter by affirming that the gifts are of a temporary nature and thus to be “done away.”

In Chapter 14 he sets forth the proper usage of the gifts, so long as they should last. In this he deals especially with tongues, contrasting it with prophecy (teaching, 14:3) and showing the superiority of the latter. He also points out the logical results of the abuse of tongues.

Keep in mind the purpose of tongues: 1. To empower the church in preaching the gospel to every nation and tongue, Mk. 16:15-16. 2. To be a sign to the unbelieving, I Cor. 14:22; by confirming the words spoken as from God, Mk. 16:20.

Instead of using their gift of tongues to convert the aliens, misguided brethren in Corinth were wanting to stay at home and “show off” their gift before the church. They had become vain, pretentious and unchristian in their conduct.

Paul corrects them thusly:

Vs. 2, “He that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth.”

Vs. 4, “He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.”

Vs. 5, “Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.”

Vs. 6, “If I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you . . .”

Vs. 9, “Unless ye utter by the tongue speech easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye will be speaking into the air.”

Vs. 13, “Wherefore let him that speaketh in a tongue pray that he may interpret.”

Vs. 16, “Else if thou bless with the spirit, how shall he that filleth the place of the unlearned say the Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he knoweth not what thou sayest? For thou verily giveth thanks well, but the other is not edified.”

Vs. 19, “In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.”

Vs. 20, “Brethren, be not children in mind;” (they were being childish in their attitude and conduct concerning tongues.)

Vs. 22, “Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving.”

Vs. 23, “If therefore the whole church be assembled together and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad?”

Vs. 26, “Let all things be done unto edifying.”

Vs. 27, “If any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three (sentences) and that in turn; and let one interpret.”

Vs. 28, “But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God.”

Vss. 32-33, “And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; for God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.”

Vs. 34, “As in all the churches of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not

permitted unto them to speak . . .”

Vss. 39-40, “Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. But let all things be done decently and in order.”

V. THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS CEASED AT THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

A. I Cor. 13:8-10. Paul argues, “love never faileth,” it is enduring while gifts (miraculous knowledge, prophecy, and tongues) are temporary and therefore, “shall be done away.” (vs. 8) That which was “in part” (vs. 9) was the miraculous revealing of God’s Word part by part, with the various accompanying signs. Thus the argument is as follows:

1. That which is “in part” shall be done away.
2. But that which is “in part” is the miraculous revealing of God’s word and the various accompanying signs.
3. Therefore, the miraculous revealing of the Word, with the various accompanying signs, shall be done away.

When were these miraculous elements to be done away? Vs. 10 provides the answer, “when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away.” But what is “that which is perfect?” The context must supply the answer.

Vs. 10 is introduced by the term “but,” a contrasting conjunction. The “in part” (vs. 9) is in contrast to “perfect” (vs. 10). But the “in part” has reference to the revealing of the Word of God in parts, hence, “the perfect” is the Lord’s Word perfectly or completely revealed. This is further seen by the definition of “perfect” (Gr. TELEION)

which means, “brought to its end, finished: wanting in nothing necessary to completeness; perfect;” Thayer. Wayne Jackson, *Christian Courier*, Feb. 1969.

Some argue that “that which is perfect” is Jesus, hence miracles will continue till he comes. “This interpretation fits neither the context, as shown above nor the grammatical construction of the passage.” The expression “the perfect” is a substantive in the Greek (an adjective used as a noun), hence it refers to the perfect “something.” But the perfect what? The declension of TELEION reveals that it is *neuter* gender, literally meaning therefore, “when the perfect THING is come,” not “when the perfect ONE is come.” Jackson, *ibid*.

Since that which is perfect, the completed New Testament, has come, then that which is in part, the various miraculous gifts including tongues has been done away. TONGUES SHALL CEASE! 13:8. Today no one speaks in tongues as did those people in apostolic days. That gift ceased to be given with the close of the miraculous age. Whatever possesses the charismatic people to do what they do cannot be laid to the Holy Spirit of Jehovah God.

Why We Do Not Participate In The Billy Graham Crusade

In a few weeks the famous Baptist evangelist, Billy Graham, will be in our city and with the cooperation of most Protestant churches and a tremendous program of advertising and promoting, thousands will flock to hear his message. Practically every week an invitation has come asking us to participate. Perhaps some of you wonder why not? Many are the reasons — space permits listing only a few:

1. The message Dr. Graham preaches is not the gospel of Christ. He teaches sinners they can be saved by believing only — before and without water baptism. The New Testament says, “Ye see that by works a man is justified, and not only by faith,” James 2:24. On Pentecost the sinners asked, “What shall we do?” Peter said, “Repent ye and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus for remission of sins,” Acts 2:38.
2. Mr. Graham calls people to Christ then stops them just before they find salvation. II Tim. 2:10 says, “. . . that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus . . .” Paul says we are “baptized *into* Christ, Gal. 3:27. Therefore, we must be baptized to be saved. This he does not teach.
3. This man does immeasurable harm by leading his followers to think they are saved when they have never had their sins washed away, Acts 22:16. They may well lose their souls in hell because of his influence and teaching.

4. Mr. Graham's crusade is a denominational cooperative effort where people are taught to join the church of their choice upon being saved (?). This is a practice wholly unknown to the New Testament and contrary to the spirit of Christianity. Christ established only one church, Matt. 16:16, and condemns in strongest words religious division of His day, Matt. 23:15, Matt. 12:25. When one's faith has led him to repentance and baptism, the Lord adds him to the one true church of Christ, Acts 2:4, I Cor. 12:13. Should he tell the people at his rally that, the sponsoring denominations would drop him in a moment. He could not, he would not, *preach* the same message Peter preached on Pentecost and for that reason we have no fellowship with him. To do so would make us partakers in his sin, II John 11.

Of Course, Mr. Graham is free to preach this doctrine of his and all have the God-given right to hear and even follow it. But know for sure, Mr. Graham and his followers will give account for their words and actions in judgment, II Cor. 5:10. The words of Christ will be the rule of judgment, John 12:48, not the smooth sayings of Billy Graham.

Jesse Ferguson, A Voice of Concern

From scattered quarters, we hear brethren assailing the pioneer preachers of the church and asserting their freedom and liberty from “brotherhood” conformity. Some of our pseudo-intellectuals feel they have something new to tell us, new concepts and insights. When rejected several of these disciples have renounced the church of Christ. Some lost all their religion while others joined denominational churches.

While thumbing through the *Millennial Harbinger* of 1885, I found a story that would make a very appropriate chapter for the book, *Voices of Concern*. In fact, it seemed to me that the contributors to that book had “stolen some old thunder.”

The article is entitled “The Fall of Mr. J.B. Ferguson.” He was a preacher for the church in Nashville from 1847-1856. “He was born eloquent and brilliant and he knew it. Flattery fell abundantly on his head, and he grew vain and proud, losing at the same time his spirituality.” Earl West, *Search for the Ancient Order*, Vol. 1, p. 261.

Having recently read both *Voices of Concern* and Ferguson’s apology, I find the likeness of content and spirit striking. Hear him:

“... in March, 1847 (I) as pastor, took charge of that congregation. During the five succeeding years the most flattering success attended our ministry, and it was decided to erect a more commodious edifice.” (Those of his stripe usually feel the need of telling the world of their greatness and success.)

“... We defined our position upon their charges of

heresy and *infidelity* by showing our independence of all Church creeds, *written* or *unwritten* and our views upon Unitarianism, Universalism and Spiritualism . . .” (Through the years, a certain type of men have protested an unwritten creed in the church especially when charged with heresy!)

“I speak plainly: man was not made to be subservient to religious or any other associations, and when they prescribe his *native integrity by rules fit for hideous brothels*, it is better for religion and morality to break up. Politic movements in religion are criminating and desolating scourges of the world. Every man that enters this house is my brother, let him be more or less worthy.” (The complaint of mind-control and political power in the church is still a favorite smoke screen of those walking the paths of apostasy. Seamy adjectives to describe one’s revulsion to the rules of the church is still a favorite mode of expression. It is proper to say that then as now the only rule for the church was the Word of God. Hence, he says it was “fit for hideous brothels.”)

“The dome of God’s Temple includes all mankind, and there is no door into or out of it, NO ACCESSIONS OR EXCLUSIONS, and no knocking for admission into it. We go in and come out without our choice, for whomsoever God creates and vivifies, He, and not man, admits.” (In his broadmindedness, he would claim religious brotherhood with all mankind, regardless of their faith or practice.)

“Thinks that a common end and destiny awaits us all. . . . We would plant no dissension by stirring up “Divine Wrath;” we would not stir up the offensive acts of old comrades to contaminate others; but with pitying affection will declare, that we have no selfish heaven or

hopeless hell.” (His type always pleads innocent to schism after they have wrecked the church about them.)

“... the world is my church; mankind are its members; forms are the rights of the heart. If I comply with your ordinances, or if I do not, you perceive clearly my position. I once admitted your ceremonials, but now they are dead; your organization ceasing to act, is not *nominally*, but *really dead*, under my teaching in this house.” (He was certain the church of Christ was on its death bed, after all he was leaving. Would he not be chagrined to see the church today? No doubt, he would be disappointed.)

“The human mind is bursting the shackles of a superstitious tradition favoring religious dogmatists.” (Over and over we hear this type of disenchanting preacher predict that every “intelligent” person will reject the restoration concept. Really it is but the fond wish of his imagination.)

“In our day, God is rearing up a temple whose sunlight will teach you to know, be free, be candid, be a man and think, feel, and act for the day in which you live.” (He called for a movement in new directions that would be RELEVANT to 1855! That seems vaguely familiar, does it not?)

“I know religiously but one church — the world of intelligences constitute my church, and the human race are its members, whether appearing as men or as angels, and *its only ordinances are the dictates of the heart.*” (Human wisdom and conscience, was not set above all other authority by God.)

“We are free to serve any society seeking our labors of their own accord. We pay no servile respect to the

doctrines of antiquity — even 5,000 years consecrates the Bible no further than the truths developed in such books.” (He felt free to share his ministry with denominational churches and not limit it to narrow confines of one church! Do you suppose he called it “dialog”? He refused to be bound to the doctrines of the old paths of the first century.)

“Even Mr. Campbell, who worries his disciples of the ‘Reform of the 19th Century’ with the *flippant* heraldry of faith, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins” (He must have read some of our church bulletins and *Voices of Concern!* It is remarkable the way this element always attacks great men of the past when they reject a doctrine. I wonder why they do not attack the scriptures these pioneers preached? But that would be obvious!)

“What heathen idolatry can be compared with such absurdities, such blasphemous teachings?” (When he viewed the brotherhood’s affirmations on the reality of Satan and Hell, and yet the denial of the possibility of communicating with the righteous dead, he grew white with rage. This reminds me of the way some of our present day prophets react to our stand against modernism, denominationalism and the like.)

“The pentecost of the ‘reformed church’ is a penitence due to Demons. My church will yet love those who deliver it from separating strife and narrow bigotry.” (The great growth of the church was, he charged, because people were afraid of the devil. Come to think about it . . . I still hear some complaints about preachers preaching on sin, death, judgment, hell and the Devil. Perhaps they sprouted from his stump.)

“In spirit communion, we heard the voice of the

Lord God, as did the *fabled Adam . . .*” (He thought God was talking directly to him. For those who feel the Holy Spirit speaks to them, he should be a welcome guest. And there is the FABLED Adam. The liberal who viewed the first 12 chapters of Genesis as fable has nothing new . . . he is 113 years behind J.B. Ferguson.)

“We must learn to know man in one brotherhood, though in many families. . .” (He could have been an associate editor for the monthly from St. Louis with a line like this.)

“Self-knowledge is the consciousness of the Divinity in ourselves, for as we are so is God in us Let the scope of man’s thoughts embrace the Divine germ of spirit growing in his system.” (I offer this to let you compare it with the vague meanderings of the present. A marvelous similarity.)

All the above quotations were from *The Millennial Harbinger*, 1855, pages 636-640.

The man whose words we have considered came to Nashville and found a congregation of some 600 members. In 10 years, “the church was wholly broken up, and disbanded; so that when a call was made by a few who desired to renew the worship according to the old faith, . . . only fifteen or twenty at first responded to the call.” J.E. Scobey, *Franklin College and Its Influences*, pages 45-50. Moreover, he led many other congregations off with him. True to his colors, he soon went into universalism and finally quit preaching altogether. He died in obscurity. H.L. Boles, *Biographical Sketches of Pioneer Preachers*, page 190.

Had not Alexander Campbell publicly exposed Ferguson’s error, likely he would have swept the greater part of the southern churches down the road of apostasy with himself.

The lessons are obvious:

- 1. We must constantly try the spirits, I John 4:1. We must take heed what we hear, Mk. 4:24. No matter how highly respected a preacher may be, our faith must go beyond him to God's Word.**
- 2. Public exposure of doctrinal error is the only way to stop a false doctrine that is being publicly promoted, Rom. 16:16.**
- 3. The defense J.B. Ferguson made is heard now in some areas, perhaps a similar sickness has affected those who show similar symptoms.**
- 4. Now as then, when Satan cannot defeat us by our enemies, he will attempt to subvert us from within. "Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom," in Christianity as in democracy.**

Church Discipline

Jesus said, "And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into hell . . ." (Mk. 9:43). In this startling passage, Jesus sets forth an eternal principle. A diseased member must be cured or removed for the protection of the rest of the body. Failure to do so always brings dire results. The implications of this teaching are far reaching.

No society can long exist without proper discipline of offending members. An army would not survive if it did not maintain discipline. An undisciplined child is a problem to parents and the community. Obvious as this is, many congregations of God's church are seeking to operate while ignoring the principle.

THE COMMAND

Many are the passages that relate to church discipline.

Rom. 16:17, "... mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling . . . and turn away from them."

I Cor. 5:4-5, "in the name of our Lord Jesus, . . . deliver such a one unto Satan." "... with such a one no not to eat," vs. 11. "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves," vs. 13.

Matt. 18:17, "... if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."

II Thess. 3:6, "... we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourself

from every brother that walketh disorderly . . .”

Tit. 3:10, “A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse.”

DISCIPLINE DEFINED

An understanding of what discipline means would contribute much to the solution of our problem. Misconception of the real meaning of discipline, causes many to fear to practice it.

Webster defines discipline, “Instruction . . . Training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects . . . Punishment or chastisement. Control gained by enforcing obedience or order, as in a school or army; hence or order, as in a school or army; hence orderly conduct.”

THE ACTION OF DISCIPLINE — THE HOW!

When Paul instructed Timothy to “preach the word, reprove, rebuke and exhort,” (II Tim. 4:2), he was calling for the first definition of discipline, i.e., instruction, training which corrects, molds, strengthens or perfects. Since it is sin that will destroy the Christian, we must watch for the spiritual welfare of our brother. (Heb. 3:12.) If he is overtaken in a fault, we must seek to restore him. (Gal. 6:1.) We entreat the Father in his behalf. (I John 5:16.) If we convert him, we save a soul from death. (Jas. 5:19-20.)

This is what Jesus is saying in Matt. 18:15, “If thy brother sin against thee, go, show him his fault between thee and him alone, if he hear thee thou hast gained thy brother.”

If, however, public and private teaching fails to produce the desired results, then sterner methods are necessary. He must be “delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the

flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (I Cor. 5:4.) The church as a family is to withdraw its fellowship from the offender. (II Thess. 3:6.) It is to be a public marking of the sinner. (Rom. 16:17.)

When the church acts according to the divine instructions, the things bound on earth are bound in heaven. (Matt. 18:18.)

SUBJECTS OF DISCIPLINE

Christians whose attitude and/or conduct causes them to persistently engage in sinful acts are the proper subjects of church discipline. Scripture lists several specific sins deserving discipline: fornication, covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, extortion. (I Cor. 5:11.) General blanket-type classifications are also given. For example: Rom. 16:17, “them that cause divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which ye learned.” II Thess. 3:6, “Every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us.” Tit. 3:10, “a factious man.” These generalities cover a multitude of specific sins.

Most cases of sin are corrected without the last severe steps. Simon the Sorcerer was guilty of a sin that would have demanded discipline, but he repented. (Acts 8:18-24.)

Discipline is generally needed because of the DISPOSITION . . . not the deed. One’s attitude manifests an honest mistake, ignorance or weakness or else presumption, rebellion and refusal to humble oneself. When the honest offender is properly shown his sin, he repents. The presumptuous rebel is nearly always the only one that would require the public discipline of withdrawal. I might add that discipline can be executed toward an individual, a family of adults or a group of brethren who ally themselves in sin.

THE DESIGN OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

There is a two-fold purpose in discipline; corrective and protective. We deliver the persistent sinner unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, “that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (I Cor. 5:5.) We “have no company with him to the end that he may be ashamed.” (II Thess. 3:14.) Discipline encourages self-correction by impressing the awfulness of his condition upon the senses of the sinner.

God ordained discipline to *protect* His church. She is to be “as a pure virgin to Christ.” (II Cor. 11:2.) Christ would have His church to be glorious, “not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. 5:27.) To save the good influence of the church in the community, the rebel is marked. The world then knows that the church does not condone his sin. Because a little leaven leavens the whole lump (I Cor. 5:6), we must discipline the impenitent. The example of one lawless brother could lead part or all of the church into the same sin. The adage of the bad apple in the barrel spoiling all, is certainly true in religion. As Jesus well put it, “It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” (Matt. 5:29, KJV.) By reproving the sinner in the sight of all, the rest will be in fear. They will have a healthy respect for God and His law and an aversion to sin. (I Tim. 5:20.)

HOW CHURCH DISCIPLINE WORKS

Social pressure is the key to church discipline. It is not good for man to be alone. We are creatures of society . . . it is a must for normal beings! Notice the Lord’s method to humble the proud sinner: Withdraw yourselves from him (II

Thess. 3:6); Refuse him (Tit. 3:10); Mark him and turn away from him (Rom. 16:17); Do not eat with him (I Cor. 5:11); Make him ashamed (II Thess. 3:14-15); Treat him as a Gentile and publican, or shun him (Matt. 18:17); Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. (II Thess. 3:15.)

The above treatment will make those curable ashamed. Then filled with godly sorrow, they will come to repentance. (II Cor. 7:10.) It did this to the adultrous brother in Corinth. (II Cor. 2:6-7.) The sinner is thus converted from the error of his way and restored to the fellowship of God's family.

To the impenitent, this discipline will sever him evermore from God and His people. Being bound on earth, it will be bound in heaven. (Matt. 18:18.)

One brief word to those brethren who would ignore the *just* action of church discipline toward a brother. By bidding him God-speed, you become a partaker in his evil deeds. (II John 11.) Just as our courts will not ignore him who aids and abets a criminal, God will not wink at our disregard of church discipline.

As we strive to restore the Christianity prevalent in the first century, may we meet our obligation in this solemn responsibility. To willfully ignore it is to know to do good and do it not. In God's sight, such is sin. (Jas. 4:17.)

Observations and Recommendations Regarding Church Discipline

God has appointed a method of discipline for the church to save erring members from damnation and to preserve the spiritual body from disintegration and loss of public reputation. Compare II Thess. 3:6, 14-15; Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16 17-18; Tit 3:10. When elders faithfully administer this discipline, one of two responses may be seen in the subjects of the discipline. They may realize their sin and sincerely repent or they may refuse to repent and resort to any of a number of schemes to escape the force of the action. Here-with are some observations and recommendations to a congregation where a case of discipline is in progress.

1. Sometimes those who are disciplined seek to recruit a following of sympathizers rather than repent. Do not encourage such, it will make you a partaker in their sins, II John 11.
2. They may launch a vicious attack against the character of the elders and/or preacher or whoever actively participates in the administering of their discipline. Do not lend your ears to attempts to discredit the leaders of the congregation by such who have been disciplined. They think this will offset or undo their discipline. The leadership is not on trial, rather the impenitent brother is being dealt with according to God's will. Also, Paul admonishes us, "against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses," I Tim. 5:19. Remember that you are not obligated to

listen to such charges whether in person or by phone. The faithful Christian will politely refuse to give the party even a moment of attention if such is attempted.

3. Do not allow the person who has been disciplined to entice you to ignore the regulations of disfellowship . . . some will make special efforts to enforce their fellowship upon you. God instructs, “with such a one, no, not to eat,” I Cor. 5:11. Have nothing to do with him until he repents.
4. Sometimes the disfellowshipped seek to weaken the impact of the discipline by trying to force a “compromise” deal upon the elders. This cannot be allowed. Jesus said that sinners must repent or perish, Lk. 13:3.
5. Sometimes the withdrawn from the brother or sister seeks to intimidate the congregation and its leaders by threats of trouble, disruptions or other pressures that might be applied, thinking to make them back down. Such sinners have been known to even threaten lawsuits, or violence. Still, we must obey God regardless of the “consequences” sinners might threaten, Acts 5:29, 40-42.
6. The impenitent often will point out the failures or problems of other Christians suggesting that they have been unfairly treated. Do not allow this to side-track your judgment. Remember two wrongs can never make a right. Granted, others may have their problems and yet have an humble penitent attitude and want to do better. The person disciplined not only sinned, but refused to repent when shown his wrongs and then exhibited a rebellious attitude toward the church, its elders and Scriptures.
7. Sometimes, the one disciplined will demonstrate an

extra sweet and smooth disposition and seek to leave the impression that they are really the good, innocent member and the elders and congregation are persecuting them. See Rom. 16:17-18. In reality he is attempting to deceive those who do not realize his true motive and thus use them for personal advantage.

8. Do not allow yourself to be the crack in the walls of the congregation into which the rebellious brother might drive a wedge of discord. A shrewd person will manipulate a brother or sister for their own selfish purposes to escape the force of their discipline.
9. If any charges are made or questions are raised that you do not know how to answer, do not seek to argue the point with the erring brother, rather get in touch with your elders and they will gladly discuss and answer these matters for you.
10. Demonstrate your loyalty and support to the Lord, the Scriptures, the church and your elders by cooperating fully in the implementation of God's ordained discipline for His kingdom. Only good will come when God's people faithfully practice Christian discipline. Erring Christians will be salvaged if there is any "desire to be saved" in their souls.

Remember, discipline is an act of the church and is only effective when the congregation as a whole cooperates with the elders in the action. We count not the sinful brother or sister as enemies, but as erring Christians who have stubbornly refused to repent. It is because we love their souls that we enforce God's discipline, II Thess. 3:6, 14-15. It is with the sincere prayer that their souls will be saved in the day of the Lord, I Cor. 5:5.

