

WHY DO YOU TEACH THAT JESUS WILL NOT RETURN AND REIGN A THOUSAND YEARS ON THE EARTH?

Billy Bland

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Appreciation is expressed to the Nesbit elders and congregation for hosting this lectureship and for the invitation extended to me to be a participant. Certainly a lot of good will be accomplished to God=s glory in this year=s lectureship.
- 2 Great theme: AAnswering Common Questions people Ask members of the church of Christ.@
 - a We need to ask questions.
 - b We need **Bible** answers.
 - c Also, we need a **honest and good heart** to accept Bible answers. Luke 8:15.
- 3 Notice the question: AWhy do you teach that Jesus will not return and reign a thousand years on earth.@
 - a The answer is simple: ABecause the Bible does not teach that Christ will return and reign a thousand years on earth.@
 - b Another good question is: A Since the Bible does not teach that Christ will return and reign a thousand years on earth, why do you teach such?
- 4 Note what the question is not:
 - a It is not: AWhy do you teach that Christ will not return?@ - He will. John 14:1-3, Heb. 9:28, Mat. 25, etc.
 - b It is not: AWhy do you teach that Jesus will not reign?@ - He does. I Tim. 6;15, Rev. 20:4
 - c It is: AWhy do you teach that Jesus will not return and reign a thousand years **on earth**.@
- 5 We are actually dealing with a subject know as APremillennialism.@

I. PREMILLENNIALISM DEFINED.

- A APremillennialism@ - Apre = before;@ Amillennial = 1000 years;@ Aism = system of doctrine.@
- B Various forms of Premillennialism: Historic Premillennialism; Dispensational Premillennialism.
 - 1 Historic Premillennialism = The world will grow progressively worse. The present age ends in a great apostasy, and is climaxed with the antichrist and the battle of Armageddon. Christ will come, destroy His enemies, set up an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem and reign 1000 years. (No rapture, no great tribulation in

- this particular system).
- 2 Dispensational Premillennialism = Divides history of the world into seven dispensations
 - a Innocence - Eden to Fall
 - b Conscience - Fall to Flood
 - c Human government - Flood to Abraham
 - d Promise - Call of Abram to Mt. Sinai
 - e Law - Mt. Sinai through most of the public ministry of Jesus.
 - f Grace - Closing of Jesus= public ministry to second coming.
 - g Kingdom - The millennium , a 1000 year reign of Jesus on earth.
 - 3 According to the doctrine:
 - a Jesus will descend from heaven and the dead saints **only** will be resurrected and they and the living saints will meet the Lord in the air and will remain with him for a period of seven years. This is the rapture.
 - b Chaos on earth during this seven years. These seven years are divided into two 3 2 year periods.
 - 1/ During the first 3 2 years a world leader will arise and all the Jews will return to Palestine and the old Jewish temple will be rebuilt. The world leader turns out to be the antichrist.
 - 2/ During the second 3 2 years there will be a great tribulation takes place on the earth. Any who are converted to Christ during these seven years **will** be put to death!
 - c After the seven years expire, Christ will return with His saints.
 - 1/ The battle of Armageddon will take place in which Christ is victorious.
 - 2/ Those who were killed during the tribulation will be resurrected.
 - 3/ Christ will establish an earthly kingdom headquartered in Jerusalem and reign a literal 1,000 years on earth.
 - 4/ The earth will be a wonderful utopia. During this 1,000 years, Satan is bound.
 - 5/ After the 1,000 years Satan is loosed for a season, the wicked will be raised and the great white throne judgement will take place.
 - 6/ The righteous enter heaven and the wicked go into hell and eternity begins.
 - 4 This system was made popular by John Darby, a leader in the APlymouth Brethren@ (1830.)

II. PREMILLENNIALISM DEFEATED.

- A The teaching that Christ was unexpectedly rejected is false.
 - 1 System teaches that Christ came to establish His kingdom on earth, but was rejected by the Jews, therefore the kingdom was postponed, coming back later to establish His earthly kingdom.
 - 2 Were the prophets and Jesus wrong? Isa. 2:1-4, Dan. 2:44, Mat. 3:1-2, Mat. 4:17.
 - 3 Jesus did, in fact, establish His kingdom. Mat. 16:19, Col. 1:13, Heb. 12:28.
 - 4 If the Bible teaches that Christ came to suffer, be killed, ascend back into heaven, then He didn=t come to establish an earthly kingdom. Psa. 89:34
- B The rapture theory is false.
 - 1 This theory has the resurrection of the saints and the sinners 1,007 years apart.
 - 2 The Bible teaches that they are raised at the same time. John 5:28, (Alast day@ - both classes - John 11:24, 12:48).

- 3 Misuse 1 Thess. 4:13-18. This is a contrast between dead saints and living saints, not saints and sinners!
- C Teaching that Christ will reign on earth for a 1,000 years on earth is false.
- 1 It is thought that Rev. 20:1-6 teaches such.
 - 2 There is much reading **into** the text!
 - 3 Some things not mentioned in Rev. 20: 1-6
 - a Christ=s second coming.
 - b The establishment of a kingdom.
 - c A **earthly** reign of Christ.
 - d Christ coming to sit on David=s throne.
 - e The Jews return to Palestine.
 - f Those alive today.
 - g Yet, all these are **read INTO** this false system, which is essential to the doctrine of premillennialism.
- D What about Rev. 20:1-6?
- 1 Background is 6:9 -11
 - 2 Buried under persecution. Is it hopeless?
 - 3 Now, they reign with Christ a 1,000 years. Notice - it doesn=t state when Christ began to reign, nor how long he reigned.
- E Premillennialists also misuse Zech. 14:1 - 5.
- 1 This is describing what would happen at the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.
 - 2 Similar description given for the destruction of Babylon. Isa. 13.
 - 3 Not describing the 2nd coming of Christ, for then the whole universe, including the earth, will be destroyed.
 - 4 Josephus described what happen at destruction of Jerusalem.

III. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT CHRIST WILL NOT RETURN TO EARTH TO SET UP A KINGDOM.

- A The kingdom is already established. Mat. 16:18-19, Heb. 12:28, Rev. 1:9, I Tim. 6:15
- B Christ is on David=s throne, as promised. Acts 2:30-36
- C According to Jeremiah 22:28-30, Christ cannot reign as king in Judah and prosper. Cf. Mat. 1:11-12
- D According to Zechariah 6:12-13 Christ will not reign on the earth.
- 1 He is King and Priest at the same time.
 - 2 Yet, cannot be priest on earth. Heb. 8:4
 - 3 Therefore, cannot be King on earth.
- E He is King of kings now. I Tim. 6:15

CONCLUSION:

- 1 Christ established His kingdom, just as He proclaimed.
- 2 He is coming again. John 14:1-3, Mat. 24:35-36
- 3 When He comes, He is going to **deliver up** (not set up), His kingdom.

4 Are you, like John and all Christians, **in the kingdom**? Rev. 1:9

DOESN'T GOD WANT ME TO BE HAPPY IN WHATEVER MARRIAGE I FIND MYSELF? WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN? Matt. 19:1-12

Johnny Burkhart

THESIS: to show God wants us to be happy and we will be when we obey His will in our families.

INTRODUCTION:

1. 93% of all people will get married and 78% of those are quite sure that their marriage will be permanent (class notes Nashville Bible School, 1984).
2. Many enter into the marriage contract with the idea of keeping their word...@For richer or for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish; till death do us part.@
3. Probably one of the greatest foes facing homes today is ignorance; ignorance of the will and way of God in marriage; thus the question--@Doesn't God want me to be happy...?@
4. In this lesson:
 - a. We will look at an Old Testament illustration about marriage and happiness.
 - b. Then, we will look at a New Testament application.
 - c. Thirdly, we will consider the children.

I. AN OLD TESTAMENT ILLUSTRATION OF AN UNHAPPY HOME (I SAMUEL 25).

- A. David and his army of 600 men are running from Saul..
 1. David and his men help protect Nabal=s flocks and herds; in return David and his men ask for provisions.
 2. Nabal refuses to help David.
 3. David, in his anger, decides he will destroy Nabal and all he has.
- B. Nabal is married to a beautiful lady name Abigail.
 1. Abigail learns of the problem between her husband and David and becomes the peacemaker.
 2. Abigail was a lady of good understanding and of beautiful countenance (I Sam. 25:3).
 3. Nabal was a selfish, mean-fellow and a drunkard (I Sam.25:3;7, 36).
- C. Here was a beautiful lady that found herself in a very unhappy marriage.
 1. Why did they get married in the first place.
 2. Even though she was unhappy, she remained faithful to her marriage vows.
 3. God took care of the situation in His own good way and in His own good time (I Sam. 25:32-42).

II **THE NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATION FOR A HAPPY HOME (MATT. 19:1-12).**

- A. Marriage is a plan of God (Gen. 2:18).
 - 1. There must be consent from two people and some type of ceremony (Rom. 13:1).
 - 2. A mere sexual union does not constitute marriage (I Cor. 6:16).

- B. Young people need to know that marriages are made in heaven and when men tamper with the work of God that's when people become unhappy.
 - 1. Some treat marriage as if were some Aplay thing.@
 - 2. We live in a day of throw-away-marriages.

- C. Why then did Moses command a writing of divorcement (Matt. 19:7).
 - 1. Deut. 24:1, divorce means to cut.
 - 2. Moses permitted on the bases of some Aunclean thing.@
 - 3. The Aunclean thing@ constituted two vastly different views and the Pharisees wanted to know which view was correct.
 - 4. Jesus carried them right back to the beginning (Matt. 19:4-6)

- D. Our primary concern about happiness should be how God views our homes more so than the way man.
 - 1. God hates divorce (Mal. 2:14).
 - 2. Question: If God hated divorce during the time he allowed it, what about during the day when Jesus took people back to the beginning?

- E. The world says, Adon't worry, be happy,@ and in so doing, do whatever it takes to be happy.
 - 1. God says, Aabstain from fornication: (I Thess. 4:3).
 - 2. The world thinks you can live any way you want, but the scriptures say, AGod is the avenger@ (Gal. 6:7-8).
 - 3. Anyone who destroys the work of God on the basis they want to be happy is destined for heartache and misery.

III. WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?

- A. Sometimes, innocent people have to suffer.
 - 1. The suffering of innocent people is an indication of how much the devil hates people and detests humanity.
 - 2. Moreover, when people do not live according to the Will of God, God is the one we ultimately hurt (Psa. 51:4).

- B. We need to consider our happiness before we say the AI do=s.@
 - 1. There may be situations where it is best not to get married.
 - 2. But, when we find ourselves in an unhappy situation; we need to maintain our faithfulness to God and man; then one sweet day we will be so glad we did.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Let=s not be ignorant, divorce is destroying the work of God and bringing hurt and pain to man=s life.

- 2. God wants us to be happy; that=s why he said, Aone man, one woman--for life.@

Why don't you people believe in the Old Testament?

Chris Butler

INTRODUCTION:

1. I would like to start by asking a question of the Christians here today.
 2. How many of you do not believe in the Old Testament?
 3. This question is one, perhaps, we all have faced. It may be asked in a discussion of instrumental music or dancing, where an attempt for prove the practice is made from the O.T.
 4. The question at hand is not whether one believes in the old testament, but rather, is a question of Old Testament law and whether it is binding on the Christian.
 5. It is a matter of Arightly dividing the word of truth@, (2 Tim. 2:15) and knowing how to ascertain Bible authority.
 6. Approval from God depends on our ability to rightly divide his word, and act accordingly.
 7. This is matter of great importance. Consider 2 Pet. 3:16 AAs also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.@
 8. It could be that my soul is destroyed because I mishandle the word of God.
 9. What is the standard for decisions made in religion. (Patriarchal Law, Mosaic, Law of Christ, or any and all of the above). Are we free to pick and choose that which we desire?
 10. The answers to these questions are most important, even vital to the salvation of our souls.
 11. I think it is necessary to understand two points before we answer this question.
 12. What was the purpose of the old law, and the power of Christ death on the cross.
- I. *I MUST UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.*
- A. When was the covenant made? Heb. 8:8-9 AFor finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.@
1. Quoting from Jer. 31:31
 2. It was 430 years after the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed all nations of the earth shall be blessed.
 3. It was at Mt. Sinai, where Moses would bring the law from God.
 4. This is important to understand the law was temporary. God never intended for man under Athe faith@ to live under the ten commandments.

- B. How long was it to last? It was a temporary law. Gal. 3:19 AWherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, **till the seed** should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.@
1. Till is a adverb of time. B until or (of place) up to:--as far as, for, in (-to), till, (even, un-) to,
 - a. The law was temporary, for a specific time, and to a specific people.
 - b. God=s promise to Abraham was to be fulfilled in Christ. The law would not make Athe promise of none effect.@
 - c. All nations would be blessed. Was not possible through the law.
 - d. Gal. 3:16 Aand to thy seed which is Christ@. Christ was the fulfillment of the Law
 2. God=s purpose was to establish a new covenant through his Son, the Christ, and when that time came the old law ended. See again Heb. 8:8 AFor finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah@
 - a. AHe taketh away the first that he may establish the second.@
 - b. Heb. 10:9 AThen said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.@
- C. What was its purpose? It served as a school master. A Tutor Ato bring us to Christ.@ The object of the law of Moses was to prepare the Jew for the coming Messiah.
1. Read with me Lk. 24:44 AAnd he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.@
 - a. Strong=s dict. Fulfilled B satisfy, execute (an office), finish (a period or task), verify (or coincide with a prediction), etc.:--accomplish, X after, (be) complete, end, expire, fill (up), fulfil, (be, make) full (come), fully preach, perfect, supply.
 - b. See Deut. 18:18-20, Isa. 53, Ps. 16:8-10 among many other verses.
 2. What is a schoolmaster or tutor? A instructor, Perschbacher says this: Aa term applied to the mosaic law, as dealing with men as in a state of mere childhood and tutelage.@ Strong=s Aa boy-leader, i.e. a servant whose office it was to take the children to school@
 3. It was to bring us to Christ. To prepare them for the coming Messiah and his new covenant.
- D. Why was it taken away? Heb. 8:7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.
1. For the sake of the promise made to Abraham.
 - a. In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed.
 - b. The law of Moses could not accomplish that task.
 2. The old law was added because of transgressions. Col. 2:14 reads as follows: Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was **against us**, which was **contrary to us**, (an opponent:--adversary, against.) and **took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;**
 - a. Blotting out. Same word is used in Acts 3:19 concerning sin.
 - b. The law was contrary to the Jew living under it. It pointed out sin.
 - c. It did not forgive. It condemned and provided no cure.
 - d. Thus it was to prepare those, who offered sacrifices year by year continually, for the coming of the Messiah, in which there would be

- forgiveness. Heb. 10:1-4; Jn. 1:29
- e. AThe blood of bulls and goats should not take away sin.@ Heb. 10:4
 - f. The only hope was to await the Messiah.
3. The following is a list compiled by F. W. Gould taken from the Word of Life. In this list of verses, we understand the law was temporary. It would be done away.
- a. It was added until Christ came. Gal. 3:19.
 - b. It was to bring us to Christ. Gal. 3:24.
 - c. It was to last until the time of reformation. Heb. 9:10.
 - d. It was to be done away. 2 Cor. 3:7.
 - e. It is ready to vanish away. Heb. 8:13.
 - f. He taketh the first away. Heb. 10:9
 - g. He took it away. Col. 2:14.
 - h. He is the end of the law. Rom. 10:4.
 - i. It IS done away. 2 Cor. 3:11.
 - j. It was abolished in his flesh. Eph. 2:14-16.
 - k. We are no longer under a schoolmaster. Gal. 3:25.
 - l. We are dead to the law by the body of Christ. Rom. 7:4.
 - m. We are not come to Mt. Sinai. Heb. 12:18.
 - n. He is the mediator of a better covenant. Heb. 8:6.
 - o. We are not under law but under grace. Rom. 6:14.
 - p. Who is justified by law is fallen from grace. Gal. 5:4.
 - q. The law was of the flesh. Gen. 17:13.
 - r. The law was confined to the Jews. Rom. 2:14.
 - s. The law was weak through the flesh. Rom. 8:3.
 - t. No flesh was justified under the law. Rom. 3:20.
 - u. The Letter killeth. 2 Cor. 3:6.
 - v. The law was found to be unto death. Rom. 10:17.
 - w. The law did not give righteousness. Gal. 2:21.
 - x. The law could not give life. Gal. 3:21.
 - y. The priest was not perfect. Heb. 9:9.
 - z. The comers were not perfect. Heb. 10:1-4.
 - aa. The law made nothing perfect. Heb. 7:19.
 - bb. There was no inheritance by the law. Gal. 3:18.
 - cc. Sins were remembered under the law. Heb. 10:3.
 - dd. All were under a curse. Gal. 3:10.
 - ee. It had no redeeming blood. Heb. 10:4.
 - ff. It was not faultless. Heb. 8:7.
 - gg. There was no perfection of conscience. Heb. 9:9.
 - hh. It could not justify. Acts 13:39.

II. *I MUST UNDERSTAND THE POWER OF THE CROSS IN ESTABLISHING THE NEW LAW.*

- A. When was the new law established? The cross of Christ was powerful because of the blood that was shed for the remission of sins, but also because the new law was ushered in.
 - 1. Col. 2:14 ABlotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;@
 - a. Blotting outB (to smear out, i.e. obliterate (erase tears, fig. pardon sin):--blot out, wipe away.) Same word in Acts 3:19
 - b. ATook it out of the way.@
 - c. Nailed. Some have preached sermons about the Nails of the cross.

- d. In fulfilling the law through his death, Christ nailed the old law to the cross.
 2. The cross was a instrument of death, and it was feared by all. Paul wrote the law was nailed to the cross. From Johnston=s notes we read AWhen the Jews nailed Jesus to the cross they drove the nails in their own law.@
 3. It was ended, abolished, and taken out of the way as a standard of authority in religion, in the death of the testator.
 4. Notice Paul wrote the law was abolished. Eph. 2:15 AHaving abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;.@
- B. How was the law changed? The will was changed when the testator died. Heb. 9:17 AFor a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.@
1. My father may have a will, and that will may state that I get the truck, however, I will not receive the truck until after the death of the one who wrote the will. The will is not effective while my father lives.
 2. Remember from Mat. 28:18-20 After his resurrection Christ said, AAll power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.@
 - a. The commission was given after the great triumph over the grave.
 - b. However, the men that would preach the Gospel at Pentecost awaited the comforter. Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; 16:13.
 - c. The one promised in the absence of Christ.
 3. Paul said 1 Cor. 15:14 AAnd if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.@
 4. You will remember that it was after the ascension of Christ (Acts 1:11) that the first Gospel sermon was preached.
 5. Christ was ,at that time, on his throne at the right hand of God ruling his kingdom as King. Acts 2:33-36

III. *I MUST UNDERSTAND HOW TO RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH. (TO CUT STRAIGHT, TO DIRECT ARIGHT, TO SET FORTH TRUTHFULLY, WITHOUT PERVERSION OR DISTORTION.*

- A. First of all Let me say we do believe in the Old Testament, but not as a guide or pattern for our lives as Christians. It is not a standard of Authority.
1. How then do we believe in the O.T. The same way as Christ.
 - a. Lk. 24:44 Christ believed all of the Old Testament.
 - (1) Many have said the Hebrews had three divisions of the Old Testament.
 - (2) Law, prophets, and psalms.
 - b. He makes references to the time of creation concerning marriage. Mat. 19:1-9.
 - c. He makes reference to Jonah in comparison with his being in the grave three days. Mat. 12:39-40.
 - d. He makes reference to the days of Noah and the destruction that came unexpectedly upon the wicked world. Mat. 24:38-39.
 2. The same way as Paul.
 - a. Rom. 15:4 AFor whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.@

- b. 1 Cor. 10:11 ANow all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.@
 - 3. The same way as Peter
 - a. 1 Pet. 3:21-22 AWhich sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:@
 - b. 2 Pet. 2:5
- B. I must have a understanding of the Old Testament to understand the New.
 - 1. Notice many examples. In the book Types and Shadows, there is a list of some 31 type, antitype studies.
 - 2. Adam, a type of Christ. Rom. 5:12-21
 - 3. The ark, a type of the church. 1 Pet. 3:21-22.
 - 4. Allegory of Sarah and Hagar. Gal. 4:22-31.
 - 5. The Tabernacle and the church. Heb. 8:1-2; 9:24.
 - 6. As members of the Lord=s body we greatly need the study of the things written aforetime.

CONCLUSION

1. I hope we have in an adequate way answered this question.
2. I have preached many sermons since January of last year from the old testament.
3. We have devoted several months of study to Old Testament characters in Wednesday night class.
4. There are many great lessons learned from the study of the Old Testament.
5. We certainly do believe the old testament, for without it, we could not believe the New.

WHY DON'T YOU HAVE WOMEN PREACHERS?

B. J. Clarke

INTRODUCTION:

1. This lectureship always has a vital theme, and this year is no exception.
 2. We are to be ready always to give an answer to those who ask us questions about the hope that is in us (1 Pet. 3:15).
 3. So many brethren seem ill-equipped to answer some of the most basic questions that men/women are asking today.
 4. This book of outlines will serve as a valuable tool for many years to come in assisting us in pointing men to the truth that makes men free (John 8:32).
 5. In answering our assigned question, we will approach it from two angles.
- VI. *IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH...*
- A. **Tradition.**
 1. The decision not to have women preachers has nothing to do with maintaining a loyalty to any manmade tradition.
 2. If something is Scriptural, then it makes no difference whether it's been done in the past or not.
 - B. **Ability.**
 1. The absence of women from the pulpits of churches of Christ says nothing about their ability.
 2. Many women are outstanding communicators—they are very articulate.
 3. Some women are better communicators than some men, and vice versa—so it has nothing to do with whether women are capable of speaking effectively before a public assembly.
 - C. **Chauvinism.**
 1. It is not because we look down upon women as inferior to men.
 2. It is not because we discount the contributions that women have made and can make to the church.
 3. The Scriptures depict many women as very devoted to the cause of Almighty God.
 - a. The Gospel accounts frequently mention women who played a prominent role during our Lord's earthly ministry.
 - (1) The widow who gave two mites (Mark 12:41-44).
 - (2) The woman with the alabaster box of very precious ointment (Mark 14:3-9).
 - (3) A multitude of women who ministered unto Christ out of their substance (Luke 8:1-3).
 - (4) Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42).

- b. As Jesus journeyed to Calvary, a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him (Luke 23:27).
- c. Women were last at the cross and first at the gravesite of our Lord (Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41, 46-47; 16:1-6; Luke 23:55-56).
- d. Jesus first post-resurrection appearance was to a woman, Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18).
- e. The Holy Spirit led Luke to make special mention of the conversion of a number of women in the book of Acts (16:14-15; 17:4, 12, 34).
- f. Faithful women are also very prominently featured in the book of Acts and in the epistles.
 - (1) Dorcas (Acts 9:36-39).
 - (2) Priscilla (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3).
 - (3) Phebe (Rom. 16:1-2).
 - (4) Mary, who bestowed much labor (Rom. 16:6).
 - (5) Lois and Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5).
 - (6) The women who laboured with Paul in the gospel (Phil. 4:3).

VII. IT HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH...

A. Colossians 3:17 and 1 Peter 4:11

- 1. Whatever we do must be authorized by the name of the Lord Jesus, i.e., by His authority.
- 2. Whatever we practice must be justified by the Oracles of God.
 - a. Where is the command in the New Testament authorizing women to preach?
 - b. Where is the approved example in the New Testament of women preaching to a mixed assembly of men and women?
 - c. Where is the passage in the New Testament which would properly imply that women are authorized to preach to a mixed audience?

B. 1 Timothy 2:11-14

- 1. By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul commands (cf. 1 Cor. 14:37) the women to learn in silence with all subjection.
 - a. The word Silence here does not enjoin absolute silence, but a quiet submission.
 - b. Instead of leading the way in the teaching process, she is to learn with all subjection.
- 2. Paul uses his apostolic authority to restrict a woman from teaching over a man, or to usurp authority over the man. Rather, she is to be in silence.
- 3. The reason for this is that Adam was formed first, than Eve.
 - a. The reason for this injunction had nothing to do with Paul being a male chauvinist.
 - b. The reason had nothing to do with culture.
 - c. It had everything to do with creation.
- 4. Furthermore, Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

C. 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

- 1. In God's order of things, the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

- a. Note that priority of rank does not imply inferiority of quality; otherwise Christ would be less God than the Father.
 - b. Christ was no less Deity than the Father, but He played a subordinate role.
 - c. Likewise, woman is not inferior to man, but she has been assigned a supporting role rather than a leading role.
2. Apparently, some of the women at Corinth were disrupting certain assemblies of the church.
 - a. As an apostle Paul regulated the conduct of these women in these assemblies by enjoining them to keep silence.
 - b. Again, he cites the Law of Moses as supporting evidence that the women are to be under obedience.

CONCLUSION:

1. Women are important to the church, and are even commanded to teach other women (Titus 2:3-4). Thus, when the Scriptures speak of women prophesying (Acts 21:9; 1 Cor. 11:4) this is undoubtedly a reference to work they did in teaching other women.
2. There were no women apostles, no women preachers or teachers in the New Testament church. We follow the NT pattern thus we have no women preachers today!

WHY DO YOU TEACH THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT OPERATES ONLY THROUGH THE WORD

Curtis A. Cates

INTRODUCTION:

1. Many people who have worked for and been a part of restoring primitive, New Testament Christianity studied their way out of Calvinism.
 - a. One tenet of Calvinism which the pioneers had to overcome was the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of man B Spirit-on-spirit.
 - b. A Denominationalism teaches the direct and immediate contact, impact, influence, and effect of the Holy Spirit in conviction, conversion, and sanctification of men. Sectarians in general believe the Holy Spirit, separate and apart from the written or preached word, convicts, converts, and saves people from their sins. They continually pray for God to send down the Holy Spirit into the hearts of both sinner and saint to carry on his work of grace@ (L.L. Brigrance). Brother Brigrance went on to say that Alexander Campbell A rejected this doctrine of the direct and immediate operation of the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the word...the word was the means through which he operated to reach the hearts of men.@ [Full documentation for the sources of the citations in this paper are given in the book by the author entitled Does the Holy Spirit Operated Directly Upon the Heart of a Saint? A Review of Neo-Calvinism Among the Lord=s People (Olive Branch, MS: Cates Publications, 1998).
 - aa. The Calvinistic teaching that there must be a direct, mysterious intervention and working upon the human heart has been soundly refuted by our brethren countless times on the polemic platform. The doctrine of total depravity Binherited guilt of Adam=s sin B has been exposed as the heresy it is; total depravity is the basis of claiming the need for the miraculous direct operation B fatal false doctrine.
 - bb. Gus Nichols said, A The Holy Spirit now through the Bible influences us to speak; but there is now no direct, independent-of-the-word= operation, or revelation for us. Such ideas >make the word of God of none effect...The whole thing is a work of Satan, who wants to belittle the >word= of God and render it ineffective.@
2. Some among us are now going to the Calvinistic position of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of the saint.
 - a. The issue is not the mode [or the A how@ of the Spirit=s indwelling, but the issue is what the Holy Spirit does. [The author holds that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian through faith, like God and Christ, not personally, but faithful brethren have never made the mode of the indwelling a test of fellowship. However, the dividing line has come when some (as the Calvinists) have the Holy Spirit working above and beyond, and separate and apart from the Word B supernaturally, miraculously in illuminating and energizing the Word and supernaturally strengthening, leading, making decisions, and giving special insights. Often, it seems to foster a condescending, boastful, superior

[sometimes mean spirited] attitude.

- b. J.A. McNutt stated that AIt is regrettable that some among us have shown utter disregard for the authority of the >mere word,= which they seem to regard as a >dead letter= until it is energized by the Holy Spirit. This is the road to apostasy, to denominational error and eventual fellowship with >one of the Pentecostal sects.@ [His prediction is already coming to past, re Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, et al.].
- c. Franklin Camp warned that the problem comes when brethren no longer Aagree that the Holy Spirit convicts, leads, directs, and edifies only through the Word....@
- d. Some like to charge that faithful brethren do not believe in providence. This false charge is soundly refuted by brother Nichols: AThe Holy Spirit does not have to operate directly upon a heart to move it [This directly contradicts the direct operation] erroristsB CAC]. There are many things God providentially does B not miraculously B in answering prayers. There is a difference between providence and miracles.@ A...he intercedes to God, not within us; and to intercede to God for us is not to work a miracle in us.@
- e. The direct operation theorists like to speak of the Aword-only position.@ David Lipscomb smashed this false charge thus, as noted by Alan Highers: AIt (i.e., denial of the personal indwelling) does not imply a denial of the work of the Holy Spirit. Advocates of the personal indwelling are fond of referring to what they call >the word-only position.= To speak of the word only, or the mere word, seems to suggest the Spirit has been eliminated altogether. The very phraseology reflects upon the Word as being insufficient. David Lipscomb once said, >So it is akin to blasphemy to call it the A mere word@ of God.= When we say the Spirit works through the Word, we are not saying that the Spirit does not work at all. We all agree B and have taught through the years B that the Holy Spirit acts in the conversion of sinners only through the Word. Now, does that mean >word-only= in conversion?...if it is not a denial of the work of the Spirit in conversion to insist that he acts through the truth, neither is it a denial of the indwelling of the Spirit to maintain that he works through the Word.@
- f. AWhen we abandon the Bible for so-called >divine illumination= and >inner light= we will end up shipwrecked. It is later than we think...@ (G.K. Wallace).
- g. Some have joined the Calvinists according to Guy N. Woods; Afor, the shocking truth is that some among us today are advocating views, concerning the Spirit=s operations, more nearly coinciding with those of Baptist Bogard (Ben M. Bogard, who debated N.B. Hardeman and >argued that the Holy Spirit operates apart from, and independent of, the word of truth B the Scriptures=), than those of brother Hardeman, thus clearly evidencing the extent of the departures now characteristic of some in the churches of Christ today.@
- h. Franklin Camp warned, AThe teaching that the Spirit works directly and apart from the truth strikes at the very foundation of the authority of the Scriptures....The proposition that the Holy Spirit works only through the Word is one that has stood the test on the polemic platform for more than one hundred and fifty years. It is my firm conviction that this proposition is as unshakable today as it has been in the past.@

I. *WE TEACH THE HOLY SPIRIT OPERATES ONLY THROUGH THE WORD BECAUSE TO TEACH OTHERWISE IS CALVINISM.*

- A. Guy N. Woods termed the direct operation doctrine to be ANew, novel and dangerous...unheard of in the churches of Christ until the last decade or two....It remained for our day and decade to produce the view that the Baptist Bogard was right in his insistence that there are influences wrought upon us, by the Spirit, in addition to the written word.@
 - 1. Franklin Camp charged, ACalvinistic teaching of total depravity was the Mother

of the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. @ He warned, AThe Bible study that has characterized us in the past will cease unless the claim of the direct leading of the Holy Spirit is repudiated B lock, stock, and barrel. The claim of the direct leading of the Holy Spirit has no place in the church. Any attempt to justify it by passages of Scripture is a misapplication of the Scriptures.... The Holy Spirit operates in conversion and sanctification only through the Word. @

2. Refuting an article on the direct operation by one professing to be a brother in Christ, brother Camp proved that the writer=s false doctrine of the direct operation violated his protests that he did not believe in the miraculous. Brother Camp pointed out that all who believe in the direct operation are taking a miraculous position. It either has to be no direct operation or belief in the miraculous (supernatural). One cannot have it both ways. Brother Camp concluded (with tongue firmly in cheek), AOf course, it is possible that his diagnosis is correct and mine wrong, since he has some special operation of the Spirit and I only have the Bible. @

B. Let the Calvinists speak on the direct operation.

1. The Holy Spirit Amoves everywhere upon the hearts of men to restrain them from evil and to incite them to good...@ (John Calvin). A...our souls must be washed in it [the blood] by the secret cleansing of the Holy Spirit@ (Calvin).
2. The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches states that regeneration Ais affected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth....@ Compare that Calvinistic phrase with the claim by some brethren that the Holy Spirit works Ain conjunction with the Word. @ What is the difference? It is same as the difference between Tweedledee and Tweedledum. Such Adisclaimers@ no not make a false doctrine scriptural!
3. The Aenabling power of the Holy Spirit, @ the Calvinist Lewis Sperry Chafen states, Aincludes the enlightenment given to such by which the spiritual man may come to know the Word of God. @ Only by the direct operation can one understand the Word; it cannot, he says, Abe received with understanding other than by personal illumination as the Holy Spirit alone can achieve. @ He continued, averring that Aspiritual understanding is made to depend exclusively on the presence of the Spirit of God in the heart. @
4. The Canons of Dort (Third and Fourth Heads, Art.II) reads that God Apowerfully illuminates their minds by the Holy Spirit...He opens the closed and softens the hardened heart...actuates and strengthens it. @
5. Using the exact terminology as Mac Deaver and others, the Calvinist A. H. Strong avers that the Holy Spirit works directly, in his words, Ain conjunction with@ the Word. Note: AOver and above all influence of the truth, there must be a direct influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart....wrought in conjunction with the presentation of truth to the intellect...@ (emphasis CAC). He says that Asoul reaches soul, @ Aacts directly. @ A...we do not affirm that the divine Spirit accomplishes his work without accompanying instrumentality. ...although conjoined with the use of means, there is a direct operation....@ What does Strong [and other Calvinists] say happens in sanctification, that is, upon the heart of the saint? It is the same that is averred by some brethren: ASanctification is that continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by which the holy disposition imparted in regeneration is maintained and strengthened. Sanctification ...requires a direct superintendence and surgery.... the Spirit who

- dwells in believers is represented as enabling them successfully to resist those tendencies to evil which naturally exist within them.@
6. ABut there is, in addition to this [A direct fellowship of the soul with God@], the illumination of the Holy Spirit which is vouchsafed to every believer.@ The Holy Spirit Aputs to death the deeds of the body@ (Henry Clarence Thiessen).
 7. Loraine Boettner wrote, ARegeneration is said to be wrought by the same supernatural [miraculous B CAC] power which...raised Him from the dead....Nothing short of this supernatural life-giving power of the Holy Spirit will ever cause him to do that which is spiritually good.@ Boettner said the same relative to sanctification, quoting the Westminster Confession of Faith. THAT, DEAR READER, IS CALVINISM DEFINED BY THE CALVINISTS!

II. THE TEACHINGS OF SOME AMONG US ARE VERY DANGEROUS IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE.

- A. Note statements found in Image and Wineskins journals.
 1. These include the claim that we are AMoving toward an openness to the Holy Spirit...@ (Bob Hendrin); The ASpirit is holy and alive with transcendental and eschatological energy@ (John Allen Chalk); There is Athe functioning Holy Spirit in our lives...actualized in the personal presence of the Holy Spirit@ (Jeff Nelson); AThe Holy Spirit, however, opens vistas beyond what is possible by human resolve and resources@ (Rubel Shelly); the Holy Spirit dwells in us Ato give us support in our weaknesses, to infuse something of the divine nature, and to teach us...@ (Bill Smith); ASatan exercises supernatural power [in us B CAC]... surely we can believe the Holy Spirit can do the same@ (J.D. Thomas); AThe gospel...does not create worshipers@; it requires the Apower@ who indwells (Rubel Shelly; Randall Harris); et al.
 2. The Word, per the above, is not God=s power to save (Rom. 1:16); the Spirit must work directly.
- B. Note statements by the same crowd in the Nashville Jubilee, Inc. (now defunct) and elsewhere.
 1. AThe outpouring of the Spirit upon the apostles (miraculous) still persists and can be received; having the impulse to repent, that=s God=s Spirit nudging you,@ Aa force committed to bringing you to holiness,@ Athat the Holy Spirit is in your life in a power and force that overwhelms you@ (Doris Black); AThe Holy Spirit=s work is not limited to the word of God@; AHe leads us but not exclusively through the word@ (Steve Flatt); The Holy Spirit gives Atestimony to your spirit that you are God=s child@ (Bob Harrington); A...the transformation of the heart B it=s passive when it comes to our doing it. We can=t transform ourselves. That is the work of the Holy Spirit of God@ (Earl Lavender); AI=m going to tell you that the Holy Spirit speaks to us not just through the Bible, that the Holy Spirit of God will speak to us beyond that@ (Joe Beam). Beam claimed the Spirit led him to a certain home, performs miracles today, works through Aawakening or promptings,@ will Astrengthen you in the inner man,@ and will be one=s Abuddy@ or Apal.@
 2. AThe Holy Spirit=s work is not limited to the word of God [upon the heart of the Christian B CAC].@ The Holy Spirit is Aregenerating my life.@ It takes the Holy Spirit Ato make me different than what I was.@ AI want to make it clear that that=s not to say that miracles do not occur today. Because, you see, I believe they do@ (Steve Flatt, president of David Lipscomb University); AThere

is one Spirit, who...empowers our ministry and transforms our character.@ That statement fits their Calvinistic Atheology@ that man is Afallen humanity oriented to evil through a sinful nature...@ (Gary Ealy and John Mark Hicks, Cordova Community Church publication), emphasis CAC. They continue, AHowever, without the power of the Spirit in their lives fallen humanity would miserably fail to please God.@

3. Very regretfully, a beloved friend, brother Mac Deaver, some eight years ago moved from stating that one who believes in the direct operation Acannot [be] fellowshipped@ (1993) to himself espousing, defending, and promoting that very false doctrine. And, of course, now it is not to him a matter of fellowship. [If he had the Asupernatural@ wisdom and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, how did he come with such contradiction in his life and teaching? Mac teaches that the Spirit Astrengthens the Christian directly@ and Aamay directly lead a Christian in a non-informational way@ [provide wisdom]. This, he said in a May 5-7, 1997, e-mail to Kevin Townsend, is Aalways in conjunction with the word.@ [Note the parallel with the words of the Calvinists, already quoted]. Also in that e-mail, he said the action is Aas direct as the Holy Spirit affected >inspired men= or as direct as demons affected the spirits of men possessed by them.@ Further he said, AEvidently God provided something additional [to the Word, directlyBCAC] for faithful brethren to help them remain faithful.@
 - a. To brother Garland Elkins, Mac wrote, AIt is my opinion, that in the providence of God, we have come to a point in the history of the church when God wants the error taught by >Word only= [note that phrase in light of the statements by Highers and Lipscomb BCAC] advocates corrected.@
 - b. Evidently, brother Mac feels he by God=s providence is going to lead the brethren out of two hundred years of darkness and ignorance on the Holy Spirit. Really, that Calvinism into which he would lead us was forsaken by the pioneers and others since; we are not going back!

III. THE VOICE OF THE PIONEERS AND OTHER DECEASED BRETHREN ON THE DIRECT OPERATION.

- A. Space does not permit the statements but only the names of some of the many who fought this heresy in the heat of the day.
- B. The list of the men of the past who wrote against this error would include Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Moses E. Lard, J.W. McGarvey, Tolbert Fanning, Z.T. Swinney, David Lipscomb, Jesse L. Sewell, F.G. Allen, Ashley S. Johnson, J.W. Jackson, Oram Jackson Sivinny, Eugene W. Herndon, W.D. Frazee, C.M. Pullias, John T. Hinds, Frank D. Young, Gus Nichols, James A. Harding, L.R. Wilson, J.A. McNutt, F.W. Smith, N.B. Hardeman, Joe S. Warlick, Guy N. Woods, G.K. Wallace, Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Franklin Camp, Rex A. Turner, Sr., Eris B. Benson, and multiplied others. [Statements are found in the above mentioned Holy Spirit book by the author.]

IV WE TEACH THE HOLY SPIRIT OPERATES ONLY THROUGH THE WORD BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES.

- A. To teach otherwise is to deny the all-sufficiency of the Revealed Word.
 1. The direct operation view makes the Bible a Adead letter.@ E.R. Harper made it clear that Ain conjunction with the Word@ actually means separate, apart from, and distinct, paralleling the Calvinists. He stated, ATHIS IS THE

DIRECT MIRACULOUS OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON THE HEART OF THE CHRISTIAN, as well as the ALIEN SINNER. This is the position that every man is forced to accept who teaches this old revived, miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit issue, @ which he defined as Atranscendentalism@ and Asubjectivism.@ AThis is denominationalism with a destructive vengeance which we have fought all our lives as false, and now it has invaded the Highland Church of Christ, and nothing seemingly is being done about it....@

2. G.N. Woods wrote, ANo man of prominence in the Restoration Movement ever taught that the Holy Spirit, apart from the word and acting independently of it, ever wrought any moral influence on any child of God.@
3. Brother E.R. Harper wrote that the direct operation heresy Amust be stopped in our ranks, or we are soon to be a >forgotten people.=@
4. Brother J. Noel Merideth stated that the direct operation grew out of the Calvinist doctrine of total hereditary depravity and implies depravity. The direct operation implies irresistible grace, also.

B The direct operation denies the all-powerful Word unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

1. Mac Deaver, Glenn Jobe, Bob Berard, Terry Varner and others teach the Word alone is sufficient to reform and convert alien sinners (at least, they taught that in the past).
2. However, we ask, after a person becomes a Christian, what happens to necessitate the direct, supernatural operation of the Spirit on the child of God?
 - a. Does the Spirit=s sword (Eph. 6:17) all of a sudden become dull and lose its power?
 - b. Or, does obedience to the Gospel cause a person to become depraved the moment he becomes a Christian? If he or she became depraved, was it the cleansing blood of Christ? Was it his repentance, humble submission, and reformation of life? Was it his becoming a member of Christ=s family, born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)?
 - c. If, on the other hand, the new Christian did not become depraved, what caused the Word to lose its power? It was all-powerful before, but not after. What happened to II Tim. 3:16, 17? Is the Word dual-powered B one great degree of power for the alien, and a vastly diminished degree of power for the child of God? If so, where is the syllogism to prove it?
 - d. Is the Gospel God=s powerBexcept to God=s child (Rom. 1:16)? Does the Word make one complete, furnished completely B except for God=s child (II Tim. 3:16,17)? Is the Word of God quick and active and piercing B except to God=s child (Heb. 4: 12)? Is the Word of God=s grace Aable to build up and give you the inheritance@ B except to God=s child (Acts 20:32)? The direct operation Calvinist has a low view of God=s Word, smashing and denying its all-sufficiency!
3. These errorists are doctrinal Ahalf-breeds@ on the Holy Spirit=s work.
 - a. They reject what the Lord=s body has always taughtB the Holy Spirit works solely upon the human heart in conviction, conversion, and sanctificationB all three. (They say that sanctification of the Christian requires direct, supernatural, super-literary help from the Spirit).
 - b. They have in the past rejected, on the other hand, denominational teaching that conviction, conversion, and sanctification, all three, came about by the supernatural, direct operation of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Word. (They have said that conviction and

conversion of the alien sinner is accomplished solely by the Word, with no need for direct action by the Spirit). Thus, they are off on a tangent, having it their own way, but evidently moving more and more close to full-blown Calvinism in this area.

- c. They now have moved to affirming that the Holy Spirit immediately impacts the alien sinner directly, supernaturally when he first goes under the water in baptism B which is a direct operation upon an alien sinner! They had earlier denied any direct operation on the alien.
 - d. In addition (and something that they did not reveal, to this writer's knowledge, for a number of years B if they held it during that time), and not surprisingly, they have now moved to the baptism of the Holy Spirit [which was miraculous in the New Testament, confined to the apostles, and was poured out from heaven by Christ to guide them into all truth; if it was received by Cornelius and his household, the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon them was an exception to the rule and designed to show to the Jews present that the Gentiles were also fit subjects to become Christians]. This gives us insight as to why Deaver stated that we have what the apostles had B only to a lesser degree.@ Dear reader, they had the miraculous; John 14:26 and 16:13 was promised only to the apostles B not to us today!
- C. The Word of God is all-sufficient in all three: conviction, conversion, and sanctification.
1. The Word prospers God's mission (Isa. 55:10,11). It is His very words (I Cor. 2:13), granting to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge...@ (II Pet. 1:3). This verse alone rules out the supernatural, miraculous impact of the Holy Spirit!
 2. Any special touch of the Holy Spirit flies into the face of II Timothy 3:16, 17; Titus 2:1; John 17:17-23; James 1:25; Acts 10:34, Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; I Peter 1:17; I Corinthians 6:11; II Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 15:13; 8:9; Psalm 119:105; Acts 9:31; I Thessalonians 4:18; John 6:63; Psalm 119:50,93; II Corinthians 3:6; James 1:18; et al.
 3. Why does the devil try to snatch the powerful Word out of the heart (Luke 8:12; Acts 20:29; II John 9-11) and to pervert the Scriptures (Gal. 1:6-9)? Not one time does the Bible teach that a supra-literary, supernatural (miraculous), direct operation is necessary for God to accomplish His will in our lives! Gus Nichols said there is now no direct independent of the word operation, or revelation, for us. Such ideas >make the word of God of none effect= (Mark 7:13). Such >traditions= will make God's word of none effect today because people will >turn up their noses= at the word, and look forward to, or expect, imaginary direct revelation...The whole thing is a work of Satan.@ Again he said, AOh yes, the Spirit encourages us very much to live the Christian life; but he does it through the word. When we study that, and follow his word, we are encouraged by it, strengthened by it, and by it mortify the deeds of the body.@ This, dear reader, is a far cry from the strong affirmations of Mac Deaver that the Christian today cannot overcome the temptation to commit adultery without the supernatural strengthening of the Holy Spirit! One grows by the Word. All is not by something else that is imaginary and yet miraculous and directly

given....it is just advertising unbelief in the all-sufficiency of the word of God as a revelation from God (2Tim. 3:16-17)@ (Gus Nichols).

4. Alf the Holy Spirit operated directly today, it would not be to interpret the Word, for if the sinner can understand the Word without the Holy Spirit interpreting it for him, why could not the Christian?@ (Franklin Camp). What would be the point of revealing the Word? Camp stated further that if the Holy Spirit Aempowers man and makes it possible for him to obey...then man=s responsibility is eliminated....The Holy Spirit has taken over for him and is doing for him what he is unable to do.@
5. If the Word could keep David and other Old Testament children of God from sin (Psm. 119:11), is the new law inferior to the old? They had neither a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit nor a direct operationB Spirit on spirit. Or, are we under an inferior law? Or, did we become depraved when Christ nailed the old law to His cross and brought the new law into force? How could David become quickened by God=s Word without a supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit upon his spirit (Psm. 119:50)?

CONCLUSION:

1. Is it possible that the direct operation people believe that Word is more powerful and can do more for the alien than for the child of God?
2. Dear reader, do you take the absurd view that the Word is powerful enough to bring about self-control in the alien (even to the point of getting him out of adulterous or homosexual Amarriages@) and yet it becomes/is so impotent for the Christian that it cannot (without some immediate, supernatural help) keep him from committing fornication?
3. That is what the Mac Deaver (et al.) Calvinistic doctrine requires, unless the alien becomes depraved at the point of the blood=s contacting and purifying his soul in obedience.
4. Any degree of Calvinism is fatal error, is not to be fellowshipped, and will [if allowed to go unrefuted] carry the New Testament church into apostasy.

Why Do We Preach That Attendance Is Necessary?

James Eaves

Alf ye love me, keep my commandments.@

John 14:15

Thesis: To show all men that attendance to all services is necessary to their salvation.

Introduction:

A) Jesus Christ said, Alf you love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

- 1) How do I determine what passages are commandments and which ones are simply things that I ought to do?
 - a) Paul records an interesting statement in his first letter to the Corinthians.
 - b) 1 Corinthians 14:37 - If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*
 - c) Paul penned half of the books of the New Testament.
 - a) Paul=s commandments are of the Lord.
 - b) Should we conclude that the rest are not commandments of the Lord?
- 2) We should wholly follow God=s Word.
 - a) 2 Timothy 3:16 - All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*
 - b) It is all sufficient to the saving of our souls.
 - a) 2 Peter 1:3 - According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*
 - b) James 1:21 - Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

B) Why Do I Preach That Attendance To All Services Are Necessary?

- 1) Because Neglecting the Services is a Sin!
- 2) Because We Have Bible Authority To Teach Such.

Discussion:

I) Y Because Neglecting the Services is a Sin! (How?)

A) YBecause Stealing is a Sin!

- 1) Romans 13:10 -Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*
- 2) Stealing is not looking out for our neighbors.

- 3) How is neglecting services stealing?
 - a) As members of the Lord's church we are told to come together for a reason.
 - (1) *Hebrews 10:24* - *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*
 - (2) *Ephesians 5:19* - *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
 - b) If we are not coming together then we are depriving our brethren of spiritual encouragement.
 - (2) *Ephesians 5:19* - *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
- 4) Neglecting services is also stealing from God!
 - a) *1 Corinthians 16:1-2* - *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

B) YBecause Suicide is a Sin!

- 1) Have you ever owned rechargeable batteries?
 - a) They are great to have as long as you continue to charge them.
 - b) But what happens if you don't charge them?
- 2) Why is neglecting services suicide?
 - a) *1 Corinthians 6:19-20* - *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
 - b) When we neglect services we deprive our spirit of much needed nourishment.
 - (1) Peter said,
 - (2) *2 Peter 3:18* - *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*
- 3) If we aren't assembling with the saints then we are not feeding our souls and without that nourishment it will soon die.

C) YBecause Idolatry is a Sin!

- 1) ABut I don't worship any idols.@
 - a) When I decide to:
 - (1) Hook up that book trailer.
 - (2) Put the deer stand in the truck.
 - (3) Throw the golf clubs in the car.

- (4) Or run down to the nearest shopping center.
- b) Yinstead of going to worship God, I have put that thing before God.
- c) Anything that I put before God is an idol, because that thing has become more important than God.

(1)Matthew 10:37-38 - He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

2) ABut I go to Sunday morning services. I only miss in the evenings. Besides, I feel like I can talk to God out in the woods.@

a) *Matthew 6:24 - No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

b) *Matthew 12:30 - He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.*

3) When we neglect the attendance are saying that what I want to do is more important than what God wants.

D) YBecause Adultery is a Sin!

1) It is a sin against:

a) God B

(1)Genesis 39:9 - There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

b) The Body B

(1)1 Corinthians 6:19 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

c) The Family B

(1)Ephesians 5:21 - Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

2) When I neglect services we commit spiritual adultery.

a) This ties in with the last point.

b) The church is the bride of Christ B *Rev 22:17.*

(1) When I become a member of that body I take on certain responsibilities.

(2) Like being faithful to Christ.

(3) Just like a physical marriage.

(4) When I decide to go fishing, hunting, shopping, or anything instead of being faithful to my God, I commit spiritual adultery.

c) *James 4:4* - *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

II) **YBecause We Have Bible Authority To Teach Such.**

A) **To establish Bible authority you must have one of three instances. In the case of attending services you not only have one instance, but you have all three.**

1) **Example.**

a) *Acts 20:6-7* - *And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. 7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*

b) Notice that these people met on the first day of the week.

c) Notice also that Paul did not have to ask them if they were going to have services are not.

2) **Implication.**

a) Every book in the N.T. implies in some fashion that gathered together faithfully.

b) *1 Corinthians 16:1-2* - *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*

(1) You can't give if your not there.

c) *Ephesians 5:19* - *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

(1) You can't sing together if your not there.

3) **Direct Statement.**

a) *Hebrews 10:25* - *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

b) The Greek word translated *Assembling* is *Aepisunagoge*.

(1) Meaning *B Aa* gathering together in one place; the religious assembly of Christians. (Allen Webster)

(2) And in the words of brother Curtis Cates, *Aif that=s not direct I=ll eat this podium.*

Conclusion:

A) **Why Do I Preach That Attendance Is Necessary?**

1) **YBecause it is a Sin Not To Attend!**

2) **YBecause We Have I Have Bible Authority To Do So!**

B) What Would It Take To Get Us To Come To Every Service?

1) More love from God?

a) *James 1:17* - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

b) *John 3:16* - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

2) More Sacrifice from Christ?

a) *Matthew 27:26-35* - Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. 28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. 29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! 30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. 31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. 32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross. 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

b) *Hebrews 9:28* - So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

3) A Better God To Worship?

a) If we ever get this attitude we would do good to read the words of Isaiah.

b) *Isaiah 40:25, 28* - To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. 28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth,

fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

4) A Better Book To Study?

- a) *Psalms 19:7-10* - *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*
- b) Do you know any other book that can save your soul?
- c) *James 1:21* - *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

5) Maybe a Better Group With Which To Fellowship?

- a) *Galatians 3:28* - *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*
- b) Can you think of a better group of people than those who have been washed by the blood of the lamb?
- c) *Revelation 7:14* - *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

C) Why Do I Preach That Attendance Is Necessary?

- 1) *2 Timothy 4:2* - *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*
- 2) It's our job!

WHERE DOES THE BIBLE SAY YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE LORD=S SUPPER EVERY SUNDAY?

Garland Elkins

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible is composed of the Old and New Testaments. Both are the word of God.
 - a. However, we live under the New Testament - not the Old (Col. 2:14; Heb. 7:12; 10:9,10).
 - b. All the days of the week have names by which they are called - Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
 2. I am affirming that God requires Christians to worship Him on the first day of the week, that He has specified a worship for that day and expects His people to honor Him by meeting His requirements.
 - a. One of the required acts of worship is the Lord=s supper.
 - b. This act is limited to the first day of the week.
- I. *SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS THAT MAKE THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK IMPORTANT.*
- A. God in the scriptures shows the importance of some things accomplished on that day.
 1. Jesus arose from the dead on the first of the week (Mk. 16:9).
 2. No greater event than the resurrection of Christ ever occurred on any day, but this occurred on the first day of the week (Mk. 16:9).
 3. Regeneration was completed on the first day of the week (I Pet. 1:3; Psa. 2:7; Mk 13:32,33) we learn that this was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus.
 - B. All of this adds importance to the first day of the week (Lev. 23:11,15,16).
 - C. Some of the great events that happened on the first day of the week - the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of our Lord are:
 1. The Holy Spirit came upon the apostles in fulfillment of Joel=s prophecy (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:1-4,16,17).
 2. The Church - the mountain of the Lord=s house was established on that day (Isa. 2:23; Acts 2:17).
 3. Christ was crowned king on that day (Zech. 6:13; Acts 2:29-36).
 4. The new law went into effect as the word of the Lord went forth from Jerusalem on that day (Isa. 2:3; Lk. 24:47-49).

II. THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK BEGINS TO COME INTO PROMINENCE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

- A. His first appearance was to Mary Magdalene, and that occurred on the first day of the week?
 1. Matthew tells us that on that same day, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and to another (Mt. 27:9,10).

2. On Athat same day@ - the first day of the week - two of His disciples were on their way to Emmaus when Jesus appeared to them (Lk. 24:13-15).
3. Immediately they returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together, and as they discussed these things, Jesus appeared to them (Lk. 24:33-36).
4. We read in John 20:19 AThen the same day at evening, being the first day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for the fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, peace be unto you.@

5. And in John 20:26 we learn that Aafter eight days@ which would be in the next first day of the week, Jesus appeared to them again as they were assembled.
6. These appearance of the Lord to His disciples following His resurrection began to give prominence to the first day of the week.

III. THE LORD=S SUPPER AND THE ASSEMBLY.

- A. Jesus commanded His disciples to partake of the supper (Mt. 26:26,28).
 1. Luke records Him as saying, AThis do in remembrance of me@ (Lk. 22:19).
 2. Paul mentions the same thing in I Cor. 11:24,25).
 3. So, the Lord has definitely revealed that He has commanded His people to eat of His supper.

- B. The Lord=s people are commanded to assemble (Heb. 10:25).
 1. This does not say what day the assembly must occur.
 2. This must be learned from other passages.
 3. However, it does imply that some day is necessary - there could be no assembly without some time for the assembling.

- C. Two things are thus for established.
 1. The disciples are commanded to eat the Lord=s supper.
 2. They also were commanded to assemble. This is shown in I Cor. 11:20.

- D. They were perverting the Lord Supper by making a full meal out of it.
 1. But the passage does reveal what was God=s will in the matter.
 2. This was not an eating at home but when they came together for the purpose of eating the Lord=s Supper.
 3. Read I Cor. 11:33, AWherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.@
 - a. What did they come together to do? Paul said they came Atogether to eat.@
 - b. This was the purpose of their assembling.
 - c. Thus we see that their eating the Lord=s supper and their assembling were closely related.
 - d. Jesus commanded both of them and when they ate the Lord=s supper, they did it in an assembly; and the assembled for the specific purpose of eating.
 4. Also bear this in mind: the Lord=s supper is the only thing God has ever required Christians to eat in assembly.
 5. Put another way God has never required Christians to assemble to eat anything else but the Lord=s supper.

- E. Now, if we can learn when Christians assembled - or came together to eat, we will know when they partook of the Lord=s supper in remembrance of Jesus.
 1. We have the record in Acts 20:7.
 2. Here is an assembly - the Acame together.@ And the Lord commanded an assembly (Heb. 10:25).
 3. They broke bread and the Lord commanded Christians to do that (I Cor. 11:24-26; I Cor. 10:16).
 4. Furthermore, they came together to break bread - i.e., the purpose breaking bread.
 5. Therefore since the Lord has never commanded His people to come together to eat anything else but the Lord=s supper, this is the Lord=s supper.
 6. Question: When was it done? AOn the first day of the week.@

- F. So, here is a worship God has ordained for the first day of the week.

IV. THE MEETING AT TROAS.

- A. It was characteristic of Paul and his companions as they journeyed to spend a week at a place.
 - 1. For example such a practice is revealed in Acts 21:3,4.
 - 2. Just what their purpose was in remaining at Tyre for seven days is not at this point revealed.
 - 3. We learn that the ship unloaded her cargo there, and Paul and his companions took advantage of this opportunity to find disciples of the Lord; and having found them, they tarried seven days.
 - 4. We have similar history revealed elsewhere (Acts 28:13,14).
 - 5. This occurred while Paul was on his way to Rome as a prisoner.
 - 6. At Puetoli they found brethren or disciples of our Lord, and they desired Paul and others to Atarry with them seven days.@
 - 7. Why would they specify seven days? Why not tarry five days, six days, or eight days?
 - 8. Evidently seven days would bring them to the time of their regular worship, and they wished for Paul to be with them at that time.
 - 9. Here are two instances where they tarried seven days in order to be with the Lord=s people.
 - 10. But in another remarkable instance in the meeting at Troas (Acts 20:6,7).
 - a. Note that they abode at Troas seven days.
 - b. Furthermore, this text gives us a reason for the custom of waiting seven days, for upon the first day of the week they might together with the disciples for worship.
 - c. Luke is very specific about it, they did not say that they came together to hear Paul preach but to Abreak bread@ (Acts 20:7).

V. THE TIME AND FREQUENCY OF THE LORD=S SUPPER.

- A. The Lord=s supper was placed in His kingdom (Lk. 22:29,30).
 - 1. The ALord=s table@ means the ALord=s supper@ (I Cor. 10:16,21).
 - 2. So what he calls Athe communion of the blood and body of the Lord@ in one verse he calls Athe Lord=s table@ in the other.
- B. There must be a time for that service.
- C. There must be a recurrence or frequency of it.
 - 1. You cannot eat the Lord=s supper unless you eat it at some particular time, and on a some particular day.
 - 2. The only time revealed is the first day of the week.
- D. The early church frequently (every first day of the week) partook of the Lord=s supper (Acts 2:42).

VI. THE CORINTHIAN CONTRIBUTION.

- A. I Cor. 16:1,2 - every first day of the week.
- B. The command to give upon the first day of the week applies to all Christians everywhere.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Lord instructs His church to partake of the Lord=s supper each first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1,2).
2. When they assemble on the first day of the week Christians are to partake of the Lord=s supper (I Cor. 11:20-29).
3. Since the first day of the week comes each week then the church must partake of the Lord=s supper each Lord=s day.

WHY DO YOU NOT EXTEND FELLOWSHIP TO EVERY PERSON WHO BELIEVES IN JESUS?

Barry M. Grider

TEXT: Mt. 7:13-24

THESIS: All who profess belief in Christ are not Christians, and are not following the Lord, and, therefore, cannot be in fellowship with those who do follow Christ by submitting to His will.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Misunderstanding and confusion concerning the answer to the above question has, perhaps, produced more division and bitterness toward members of the church of Christ than any other.
2. Sincere individuals will remark:
 - a. All love Jesus and you love Jesus and that is all that is important.@
 - b. All we are all trying to get to the same place, just taking different roads.@
 - c. All is the man, not the plan.@
3. They do not understand belief in Christ involves much more than acknowledging Christ as the Savior.
 - a. The scribes All believed@ in Jesus (John 12:42).
 - b. The devils All believe@ in Jesus (James 2:19).
 - c. What did Jesus say concerning our acknowledging Him as All Lord@ and our obedience? (Lk. 6:46).
4. The religious world would no doubt be more accepting of the church of Christ if only we concluded that:
 - a. Singing without instruments is our preference.
 - b. The Lord=s Supper partaken upon every first day of the week is our preference.
 - c. Baptizing for the remission of sins is our preference.
5. However, since the Lord=s church refuses to endorse that which is not authorized, and will only engage in that which is authorized (Col. 3:17), and refuses to fellowship those whose are in error (2 John 9-11), the denominational world will continue to ridicule and attack the Lord=s church.
6. Because some among churches of Christ desire acceptance outside the Lord=s body, they will compromise God=s truth.
 - a. Joining ministerial alliances.
 - b. Convincing some the church of Christ is just another denomination.
 - c. Avoiding doctrinal confrontations.
 - d. Even extending fellowship to those outside of Christ.

- (1) Lucado- AWhen I hear a man call God, AFather,@ I see a brother.
- (2) Walling- ALet=s lasso them [those who Abelieve@ in Jesus] into our fellowship.

7. Since Jesus is the Savior, does He expect us to fellowship all those who Abelieve@ in Him?

I. A PROCLAMATION (V. 13,14).

- A. Man is in need of salvation.
 1. Sin entered into the world in the Garden of Eden.
 2. Man cannot, by his own works of merit, obtain salvation.

- B. Way of salvation is exclusive.
 1. While it is not good to be closed minded, it is right to be narrowminded.
 2. God made a promise in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:15).
 3. Isaiah spoke of a Away@ (Isa. 35:8).
 4. Jesus identified Himself as the Away@ (John 14:6).
 - a. John 10:1
 - b. Acts 4:12

II. AN EXAMINATION (V. 15-20)

- A. If one desires to know if another is true to Christ or not, he must be a fruit inspector.
 1. Two types of fruit can be produced, depending upon the tree - good fruit and evil fruit.
 2. One who teaches contrary to the will of Christ is teaching a corrupted doctrine and, therefore, cannot produce good fruit.

- B. It will be obvious that some teach contrary to Christ, others are more subtle.
 1. Matt. 24:24
 2. 1 Tim. 4:1-3

- C. If the seed of the Word of God is sown in the hearts of men, the same fruit will be produced.
 1. Lk. 8:11
 2. 1 Pet. 4:11

- D. So while some claim allegiance to Christ, the fruit they produce denies such a claim (Gal. 1:6-9).

III. AN EXPLANATION (V. 21-23)

- A. Will anyone argue with the Lord on the day of Judgement? Absolutely
 1. Those who Aacknowledged@ Him as Lord.
 2. Those who did many things Ain His name.@

- B. How could these be lost?
 1. They refused to do the will of the Father.
 2. Those who refuse to do the will of the Father, he does not know.

- C. Consider Jesus and the will of the father:
 1. Spoken in prophecy (Psalm 40:7,8; Heb. 10:7).
 2. Jesus came to do the will of the Father (John 4:34).

3. Jesus= prayer in Gethsemane (Matt. 26:39).
 4. Sealed with His blood (Heb. 9:15).
- D. Consider denominational (those who Abelieve@ in Jesus) attitudes toward the doctrine or will of Christ.

IV. AN ILLUSTRATION (V. 24:27).

- A. The wise man hears and does the will of Christ and builds on a solid foundation (1 Cor. 3:11).
- B. The foolish man hears, but refuses to do the will of Christ and, therefore, not building on a solid foundation, his collapses.
- C. Notice the builders:
1. Both were sincere.
 2. Both were building houses.
 3. The house of one stood, the other fell.
 4. One did what the Lord told him to do, according to the way he told him to do it. The foolish man did otherwise.
- D. So, likewise, the one who claims to follow Christ, yet rejects His message (James 2:24).

CONCLUSION:

1. Fellowship cannot be extended to all religious people who Abelieve@ in Jesus because:
 - a. All who Abelieve@ in Jesus are not in Christ (2 Tim. 2:10; Gal. 3:27).
 - b. All who Abelieve@ in Jesus do not produce good fruit
 - c. All who Abelieve@ in Jesus do not his will.
2. Genuine belief in Jesus is expressed through obedience (John 3:36 ASV).
 - a. God forbids extending fellowship to those who will not abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11).
 - b. Fellowship is extended to those who
 - (1) are Aof like precious faith@ (2 Pet. 1:1).
 - (2) Awalk in the light@ (1 John 1:7).
 - (3) Awalk by the same rule@ (Phil. 3:16).
 - (4) Amind the same thing@ (Phil. 3:16).
 - (5) Aspeak as the oracles of God@ (1 Pet. 4:11).
3. Our plea is that all men will be united in Christ by submitting to His will.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES TEACHING
WHILE THEY HAVE OPPORTUNITY BY FOLLOWING THE
EXAMPLE OF AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

Irene C. Taylor

INTRODUCTION

- 1 The old saying states, "Opportunity knocks but once." Therefore, an opportunity not used is an opportunity forever lost .
- 2 There are many reasons that a husband and wife must work together as a team~ This is true of all walks of life but it is never more vital than in the work of the Lord. In today's society with its lax and loose standards, couples work as a team if they are to avoid many pitfalls. One-on-one
- 3 Teaching and/or counseling can easily open the door to fatal temptations which threaten the sanctity of the marriage.
- 4 To be united as a team in teaching the Lord's truth is to exemplify the beauty that such unity of purpose can add to the marriage. No finer example can be found of a husband/ wife team united in service to God than that of Aquila and Priscilla.

I. THEY WERE A TEAM IN EVERY SENSE.

- A. They worked together in their profession.
 1. "...for by their occupation they were tentmaker" (Acts 18 :3 Emphasis supplied).
- B. They were united in their standard of living.
 1. Though they lived in Corinth, in Ephesus and in Rome they did not "join the crowd."
 - a. They did not believe a thing became right simply because "everyone is doing it."
 - b. How different from the preacher who said he could not condemn social drinking where he lived because it was a "local custom."
- C. They worked as a team for the Lord.
 1. More will be said on this further in the Lesson.

II. THEY WERE A TEAM IN PROMOTING THE LORD'S WAY.

- A. They went as a couple to the synagogue service (Acts 1. A couple (family) united in worship to God is a beautiful thing.

- B. They recognized the deficient teaching of Apollos (Acts 18:25).
 - 1. Before one can recognize error he must know truth.
 - a. Wives must study for themselves; they must allow themselves opportunity to be fed at the feet of sound teachers.
 - 2. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:..." (Hosea 4:6).

3. Our lack of knowledge, as a people, has opened the door for false teachers to promote their wares.
 4. Husbands and wives today need to prepare themselves to promote truth (2 Tim. 2:15).
 - a. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7)
- C. They opened their home as place for the church to meet (Rom. 16:5).
1. This takes team work the wife willing to co-operate!
 2. Many a congregation was begun in this manner.
 3. This refutes the idea that it is wrong to eat in the church building (where the church meets).
 - a. To so claim is a misuse 1 Corinthians 11: 20-22.
- D. They respected God=s orders.
1. Priscilla did not publicly reprove Aquila.
 2. Aquila did not encourage her to overstep her bounds.
 3. They took him unto them, i.e. privately (vs. 26).
 - a. They taught him the way more perfectly.
 - b. They worked within the framework of 1 Tim. 2: 12.
 - (1). They recognized the importance of correcting error before it spread.

III. THEY WILLINGLY SACRIFICED FOR THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

- A. They risked their lives for God's messenger -- Paul (Rom. 16:4).
- B. They traveled for truth (Acts 18:18).
1. Think of how difficult this must have been for Priscilla to keep clothes clean and ready to wear and how tiring it was for them.
 2. This likely demanded they forfeit the comforts established location for home.
- C. They were one in aim.
1. The1r goal was spreading God=s Way.
 2. A divided "team" loses its effectiveness.
 3. The effectiveness of their teamwork is recorded.
 - a. Their work was appreciated by the Gentile churches (Rom. 16:4).
 - b. Their aim was to do good -- not for earthly recognition (Matt. 6:1-4).

IV. THEY SUPPORTED THE WORK OF OTHERS.

- A. They worked with Paul.
1. They worked with him as tentmakers (Acts 18:3).
 - a. They were willing to work with their hands.
 2. They worked with him in the Lord's work (Rom. 16:3-4).

- a. They did not have to be "in charge" to work for the Lord.
- B. Wherever they are named, they are named together.
 - 1. Sometimes Aquila is listed first; sometimes Priscilla is first.
 - a. Why this is so is not known but they worked together, not in competition.

V. HOW CAN HUSBANDS/WIVES FUNCTION AS A TEAM TODAY?

- A. By sharing the same goals in life.
 - 1. Determine early that God is the head of your home.
 - 2. Determine to work together for the Lord and support each other's talents.
 - a. Do not resent your husband's talents being utilized.
 - b. Your talent may be keeping the home fires burning and his clothes ready to go!!
 - c. Be willing to use your talents as opportunity arises.

- B. Determine to act as a unit in the home.
 - 1. Be a team in upholding the standards in the home (1 Pet. 3:7).
 - 2. Be united in training the children of the home. a. Parents are to do that training (prov. 22:6: Eph. 6:1: Gen. 18:19).
 - b. If we neglect the training of our own children we pay too high a price!

- C. Determine to live the Christian life.
 - 1. Live right before family.
 - 2. Live right before friends.
 - 3. Live right before the community.

- D. Be ready to teach where you are!
 - 1. We do not have to go to foreign fields to be a worker for the Lord, though this is not to be discounted in any way.
 - 2. Open the home with hospitality to reach prospects, to encourage newcomers and the downtrodden.
 - 3. Be willing to do whatever task will promote the Lord's work in honorable fashion.

CONCLUSION

- 1. We travel through this life but once. Our goal must be to do all the good we can to ,all the people we can at every opportunity we can.

- 2. We must live what we teach. We must teach only God's truth. We must use our talents and blessings to His glory. We must be willing to work in the background when necessary to promote His Cause.

- 3. We can double our influence by working as a Christian team in promoting God's way within the guidelines He has prescribed. Love the Lord, love your husband and love working by his side in doing the Lord's will. The pay may not always be great but the rewards are!!

DEBORAH VS. DELILAH B GOOD VS. EVIL

Nicci Leonard

INTRODUCTION:

1. Good vs. Evil A battle older than time itself and one that will wage on until Christ=s return.
2. In any war there are two sides and those fighting must choose with whom they wish to be allied. There are some today (whether they realize it or not) that believe this battlefield has a neutral territory in the midst of these two entities. They believe that they can happily dwell there and still emerge victorious with God after the battle.
3. Jesus taught to the contrary as recorded in Matthew 6:24 and we can clearly see as shown in I Samuel 15 that there is no such thing.
4. Another example to which we can look is the contrast of the two women whom we will be studying this hour. We will look to the lives of Deborah and Delilah and they will show us the true picture of the battle between good and evil.
5. They are in such contrast to one another that there is no room left to fathom the existence of a middle ground.

I. *DEBORAH, A GODLY WARRIOR (Judges 4-5).*

A. Her Person (4:4-5).

- 1 She was a person of outstanding character. She was wise, courageous, devoted to God, a faithful follower, a righteous leaderY
- 2 Her character is also seen in the order of priorities in her life.
 - a Prophetess B courageous because she was willing to proclaim God=s Word in a time when Israel was not wanting or willing to heed His message.
 - b Wife B shows her complete devotion to God. In today=s world, women tend to put family above all else, but the fact that she puts this second shows her faithfulness.
 - c Judge B wise in that she maintained justice and settled disputes among the children of Israel.

B. Her Position (4:4).

- 1 Because of her person, she was chosen by God as a judge (leader, deliverer, savior).
- 2 She rose to the occasion, trusted God completely, asked no questions; she encouraged Barak with her willingness to go into battle.

C. Her Praise (5).

- 1 When all was said and done, she gave God the glory because she knew that the victory was not obtained through her own strength or power.
- 2 She did exactly as God commanded her, and, therefore, we can be sure of her reward.

II **DELILAH, A WORLDLY WARRIOR (Judges 16:4-20).**

A Her Person (16:4-20).

- 1 She was a person of despicable character. She was self-seeking, immoral, Y a thoroughly worldly person
- 2 Her character is shown in the pure selfishness manifested in her life. All that she had and was revolved only around her desires.

B Her Position (16:5).

- 1 Because of her person, she was chosen by the lords of the Philistines to deceive, betray, and deliver Samson into their hands.
- 2 She sunk to the occasion, was true to her character, and did exactly what her character was prepared to do.

C Her Payoff (16:5, 23-30).

- 1 She was paid 1,100 pieces of silver from each of the lords of the Philistines.
- 2 We are not told that she was in the house, but it is very likely; so she could have received her own physical death because of her actions.
- 3 Even if her physical life was not ended in this way, we are sure that her spiritual life only brought her to eternal punishment.

III **WHOSE CHAMPION AM I?**

A My Person.

- 1 What is my character? What does my character reveal about me? What character traits do others see in me?
- 2 Do I organize my priorities in faithfulness the way that Deborah did, or do I live only for self as Delilah did?
- 3 My character is an ever important issue, because my character determines the position that I am ready and able to fill.

B My Position.

- 1 When I consider my person, what am I prepared to do/be?
- 2 I Timothy 1:18; 6:12; II Timothy 4:7; Ephesians 6:10-18 B warriors for righteousness.
- 3 Romans 1:18-32; Galatians 5:19-21; I Corinthians 6:9-10; Colossians 3:5-6; Ephesians 5:5 B warriors for worldliness, wickedness B all it takes to make one a warrior for wrong is to do nothing. Any kind of wickedness in our lives (commission or omission) causes us to join forces with Satan and his followers.

C My Prize.

- 1 Hebrews 2:1-4 B AYjust recompense of rewardY@
- 2 I Corinthians 5:10 B AYwhether it be good or badY@
- 3 Romans 11:22 B AYthe goodness and severity of GodY@

AWHY DON=T YOU BELIEVE THAT WE ARE ALL TAKING DIFFERENT ROADS TO THE SAME PLACE?@

Dave Leonard

INTRODUCTION:

1. The very foundation of Christianity is the fact that Jesus Christ is the Aonly begotten Son of God@ (**Jn. 3:16**).
 - a. But, what assurance exists that He is Deity, except that the Holy Scriptures are proven to be the infallible, inspired message from God?
 - b. Since the Bible was written **BY** men **FOR** men, man=s very hope rests upon the question, ACould the Scriptures be the very Word of God, though penned by men?@ The answer is a very resounding, AYES!@
 - c. God urges men to investigate, for faith is based upon evidence, the Word of od (**Rom. 10:17**). He challenges mankind, ACome now and let us reason togetherY@ (**Isa. 1:18**), and AProduce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasonsY@ (**Isa. 41:21**). Paul describes Christianity as a life A belonging to reason@ (**Rom. 12:1**), from *logikos*. Thus, one is to A give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in youY@ (**I Ptr. 3:15**). The Lord would have us make a reasoned, logical defense from the evidence.
2. The fundamental, foundational belief of every denomination is that any church will do B Awe=re all going to heaven, only in different ways, and doctrine doesn=t matter.
 - a. If that is true, then a man may pick and choose **any** of the 300 or so groups found in this country alone and have God=s approval.
 - b. In fact, he could alternate during his lifetime.
 - 1) He could practice Catholicism for a few years, then change to Southern Baptist
 - 2) During his forties he could switch to the Episcopalians, then later to the Methodists; all the while fully bound for heaven.
 - c. The fact that different churches taught different things about what a person must do to go to heaven wouldn=t matter.
 - d. The fact that these churches teach contrary to Jesus Christ wouldn=t matter.
 - e. His loyalty to one or the other would need to be based only on his own personal preferences and not on the authority of the Bible.
3. But even though the truth is easily seen if one will only open the Bible and their mind, the church has been plagued so strongly today with political correctness that our denominational family members, friends, neighbors, et al., can=t get a straight answer about anything.
 - a. We are not dealing with gray areas, but, black and white.

- b. We are not dealing with political correctness and peoples= feelings, but, with right and wrong, saved and lost, heaven and hell.
4. The Bible demands that we understand and obey **truth** in order to be saved:
- a. **Jn. 8:31-32** B A...shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.@
 - b. **Tit. 2:11-12** B AYgrace of GodYhath appearedYteaching/instructing usY@
 - c. **II Jn. 9-11** B must abide in the doctrine of Christ.
 - d. **Jn. 12:48** B AYrejecteth me, and receiveth not my wordsY@
5. The question at hand, of many paths or only one path to heaven, is a question that strikes at the heart of denominationalism, ecumenicalism, and even the liberalism that we find so often among our own brethren.
6. This question is very pertinent and must be answered truthfully and boldly because:

I. AMANY PATHS@ CONTRADICTS THE ONE AUTHORITY.

- A. Denominationalism holds the belief that one group can have a Amanual,@ as another has a Acatechism,@ while yet another has a Adiscipline,@ or Aconfession of faith.@
- 1. Such an attitude makes the Bible incomplete and faulty.
 - 2. God does not need today, nor has He ever needed man to supplement His Word or authority.
 - 3. Every denomination teaches or practices something which contradicts what the Bible teaches. For example:
 - a. Baptism not necessary for salvation.
 - b. Instrumental music acceptable in worship to God.
 - c. Faith alone will save; Grace alone will save.
 - d. Accepting Jesus as personal Savior will save. Cf. sinner=s prayer.
 - e. Babies should be baptized/christened.
 - f. Women taking a leadership role in public assemblies. Cf. Women elders, deacons, et al.
- B. All authority abides in Jesus, the Christ (**Mt. 28:18-20**).
- 1. **Mt. 21:23-27** B Jesus had the authority of God (cf. **Mt. 7:28-29**).
 - 2. **Col. 3:17** B all that we do as Christians must have the authority of Christ.
- C. The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God (**II Tim. 3:16-17**), which means that **IT** contains the authority of God:
- 1. Jesus taught with authority (**Matt. 7:29; Mk. 1:22, 27**).
 - 2. Jesus gave disciples authority (**Mk. 13:34; Lk. 9:1**).
 - 3. God gave Christ authority (**Mt. 17:5; 28:18**).
 - 4. The Holy Spirit spoke by authority of God (**Jn. 16:13**).
 - 5. The Holy Spirit inspired the apostles and writers; they spoke and wrote with God=s authority (**II Cor. 10:8; Gal. 1:11; Tit. 2:15; II Ptr. 1:20-21; 3:2, 15-16**).
- D. As Christians, every facet of our lives must be bound up in Christianity, and every aspect of Christianity must be authorized by Christ in His Word (**Col. 3:17; II Tim. 3:14 B 4:4**).

II. AMANY PATHS@ CONTRADICTS THE ONE CHURCH.

- A. Misconceptions about the one church of the New Testament.

1. In the first century, some falsely called the church a sect (Acts 28:22) and Paul a false teacher.
 - a. The church was not a splinter or faction of Judaism.
 - b. Jews were converted to become members of the church.
 - c. Christ would not build a denomination (sect) while praying for oneness (Jn. 17:20-22).
 - d. Christ is not divided (I Cor. 1:10-13) nor are His faithful servants.
2. Some mistakenly refer to the vine and the branches claiming that the branches are differing churches.
 - a. But, a branch in context is a man or individual believer (John 15:1-8), not the different denominations.
 - b. The seed of the kingdom is the Word of God (Lk. 8:11), and the same seed will not produce different kinds of branches or fruits.
 - c. God's Word will produce Christians every time, not denominational followers. It didn't in the first century and will not today.

B. The church of the New Testament is not a denomination (Mt. 16:13-18).

1. It is the whole body of Christ (I Cor. 12:12-20).
 - a. It is not a part or party.
 - b. It is not a class, group, or unit of the whole.
 - c. The church for which our Lord died contains all the children of God (Acts 2:41-47).
2. Some time ago, Alan E. Highers wrote: If the church were a denomination, it would mean that *some* of the saved were in the church and *some* out of it. To be a denomination, it would have to be a *part* of the whole; but *all* who are in Christ are in His body. Consequently, the church is not, and cannot be a denomination. The precious bride of Christ is not a sect.
3. The Biblical terms Christian and Churches of Christ state the obvious, belonging to Christ.
 - a. Their allegiance was to Christ and Him alone.
 - b. They were followers of Christ & Christians (Acts 11:26).
 - c. They were saved, added to the church (Acts 2:47) & they did not join a church.
 - d. The obedient, saved ones constitute the church or Churches of Christ (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Rom. 16:16).

C. There is only one body of Christ, the church of the New Testament.

1. Eph. 4:4 & There is one body
2. I Cor. 12:20 & yet but one body.
3. I Cor 12:25 & should be no schism in the body
4. Col. 3:15 & ye are called in one body
5. Eph. 2:16 & reconcile both unto God in one body
6. Eph. 5:23-25 & Savior of the body gave himself for it
7. I Cor. 12:13 & baptized into one body
8. Acts 2:47 & the Lord added to the church

III. AMANY PATHS@ CONTRADICTS THE ONE PATH.

- A. We cannot choose any way we want, it is very specific.

1. **Mt. 7:13-14** B narrow way and strait gate; broad way and wide gate.
 2. **Prov. 14:12** B AThere is a way which seemeth right unto a manY@
 3. **Jer. 10:23** B man requires divine teaching, discipline and correction.
- B. There is no approach unto God, but by Christ.
1. **Jn. 14:1-6** B AYI am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.@
 2. **I Tim. 2:5** B AYone mediator between God and menY@
 3. **Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24** B mediator of the new covenant.
- C. Obedience is absolutely necessary.
1. **Mt. 7:21-27; Lk. 6:46** B lip service is not enough; we must obey!
 2. **Heb. 5:8-9** B AYauthor of eternal salvation to all them that obey himY@
 3. **Jn. 14:15; I Jn. 4:3** B we obey Him out of love.

CONCLUSION:

1. When one truly understands the authority which is contained in the Word of God, there can be no question as to the absolute truth of the message within.
2. The authoritative Word of God teaches us that there is one body, one church for which Jesus died (**Eph. 5:23-25**).
3. The same authority, the Word of God, states explicitly that there is only one approach to God, only one way to be saved B through obedience to the commands of the gospel.

AWHY DO YOU NOT USE A PIANO IN WORSHIP?@

Bobby Liddell

TEXT: ASpeaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord@ (Eph. 5:19).

THESIS: To show from the New Testament that the only music authorized by God; thus, accepted by God, in worship offered to God by the church of Christ is singing.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Some wonder why we do not use a piano (or other mechanical instrument of music) in the worship we offer to God.
 - a. They may assume the use of a piano in worship would be alright because, AThere is no Scripture which declares: AThou shalt not use a piano in worship.=@
 - b. They affirm: AI don=t see any harm in it,@ AI t seems okay to me,@ or, AMusic is music; God does not care what we do as long as we honestly, sincerely offer worship to Him.@
 - c. Thus they wonder why we so strongly differ in this matter which they see as no more than a difference of opinion; however, the answer to this Adifference in opinion@ is not based upon man=s opinion, but upon the revealed, written Word of God.
2. All must respect what God, through the Bible, teaches, knowing by His Word (specifically, in this age, the New Testament of Christ), we shall be judged (John 12:48).
 - a. If the Bible; thus, the New Testament under which we live (Gal. 6:2; Mat. 5:17-18; Col. 2:14; John 6:63), is not the Word of God, then it does not matter what we do in worshipBwe could settle this question by majority vote, or by determining what is most acceptable to most people; that is, by what they like, or by Aagreeing to disagree,@ or we could just throw away the Bible and do nothing at all with impunityBif it is not the inspired Word of God (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:9-13).
 - b. Since the Bible is God=s inspired Word, we must study to know what God said, believe what God said, do what God said, and refrain from doing either what God has said not to do or what God has not said to do; that is, what God has not authorized.
 - c. If we believe the use of a piano in worship is acceptable to God, either we have not studied enough to know what God=s Word teaches, or we have failed to see the principle of authority which makes the use of mechanical instrumental music in Christian worship as wrong as if God had commanded: AThou shalt not use a piano in worship!@
3. In view of this question, let us consider these points of discussion in answer.
 - a. We do not use a piano in worship because it is not acceptable to God.
 - b. We sing, and do not use a piano, in worship because God has authorized singing, not playing.
 - c. We do not use a piano in worship because God, in His Word, plainly commands what we are to do; that is, sing.

I. WE DO NOT USE A PIANO IN WORSHIP BECAUSE IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

- A. Acceptable worship demands approval from God.

1. God does not approve what He does not authorize (John 4:23-24; Mat. 15:9).
 - a. Ask Cain (Gen. 4), or Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2).
 - b. In both cases, God declared their worship to be wrong, and they were condemned as a result.
 - c. God did not accept their worship because God did not authorize worship as they offered it.
 - d. Yet, God did not say, "Thou shalt not offer the fruit of the ground," nor, "Thou shalt not use strange fire."
 2. How does God authorize today?
 - a. Jesus Christ has all authority (Mat. 28:18).
 - b. All men are to hear Him (Mat. 17:5; Heb. 1:1-3).
 - c. All men must hear what He says concerning worship (John 4:23-24; cf. 8:31-32; 17:17).
 - d. All (at least all accountable) men can understand what He authorizes (Eph. 3:3-4; 5:17, 19).
- B. Acceptable worship demands actions which are authorized by God (John 4:24).
1. What shall we do in worship to God?
 - a. What is authorized by God?
 - b. What is approved by God?
 - c. Note Exodus 32 and Jeremiah 41-44.
 - d. To please God, we do, in worship, only what He authorizes for only this is what God accepts.
 2. Why not?
 - a. Burn incense in worship today?
 - b. Offer an animal sacrifice in worship today?
 - c. Have a piano in Christian worship?
 - d. Because none of these are authorized by God (Col. 2:14; Eph. 5:19).
- C. Acceptable worship demands an attitude which is right.
1. Christian worship requires a right attitude of gladness (cf. Psalms 122:1).
 - a. An attitude of happy appreciation manifested by worship (cf. Mal. 1:13).
 - b. An attitude of glad anticipation of worship (cf. Acts 20:6-7).
 - c. An attitude of joyfully approaching God acceptably in worship (not to be entertained, nor to observe others, but to worship the Father).
 2. Christian worship requires a right attitude in gathering (Heb. 10:25).
 - a. An attitude manifested in assembling to worship God acceptably.
 - b. An attitude manifested in appropriate attire as a priest (1 Peter 2:5, 9--in spiritual robes washed and clean).
 - c. An attitude manifested in attention focused upon God and obedience to His Word.

II. WE SING, AND DO NOT USE A PIANO, IN WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD HAS AUTHORIZED SINGING, NOT PLAYING.

- A. God has commanded singing, not playing.
1. The Holy Spirit, in inspiring Paul to pen Ephesians 5:18-21, incorporated verbs and participles which are (among other things) imperative (indicating command or prohibition) and second person plural.
 2. This simply means that the actions commanded or prohibited in this passage are such that ALL persons under consideration in the context are directed (either by command or prohibition) by God in these actions.

3. Coupled with this is the force of the reciprocal/reflexive pronoun found in *to yourselves@* which further emphasizes the idea of corporate unity; that is, that all are to join in that which God has declared as approved action in singing one to another.
- B. The meaning is this: God has commanded ALL (thus, all in Christian worship) to sing in corporate unity (as one body), or, to put it more plainly, God has commanded all to sing in worship.
1. Reasoning from the far reaches of imagined possibility, there are only four possible actions in which we might engage by singing and/or playing.
 2. We could, individually participating in corporate worship,
 - a. ALL Sing as God has authorized in Christian worship;
 - b. ALL PlayBbut God has nowhere given such authority for New Testament worship, neither do churches practice such;
 - c. ALL Sing OR playBbut, under this imagined possibility, if one chose to play, he could not sing as God has commanded, and, again, churches do not practice such;
 - d. Or, ALL sing AND play which, as stated above, incorporates what God has not authorized, and is contrary to the practice of churches, even the churches of men.
- C. Someone counters by stating the word, *psallo*, found as *psallontes* in Ephesians 5:18-21, authorizes playing a mechanical instrument of music.
1. Thayer declares the word, in the New Testament, means to sing.
 2. Likewise, the use of an instrument is authorized, but the instrument upon which we *Apsallo@* is the heartBnot the piano (Eph. 5:19).
 3. According to our text, we are to sing and make melody in our hearts; thus, there is no piano authorized here, nor has there ever been in Christian worship.

III. WE DO NOT USE A PIANO IN WORSHIP BECAUSE GOD, IN HIS WORD, PLAINLY COMMANDS WHAT WE ARE TO DO; THAT IS, SING.

- A. What have we learned from Ephesians 5?
1. ALL are commanded by God to sing in worship to Him.
 2. Thus, solos (where only one sings) and choirs (where only some sing) are prohibited in Christian worship.
 3. Likewise, if one does not sing, he does not worship; thus, he is in disobedience to God=s command for ALL to sing.
- B. There is no authority for anything else in the music offered to God in acceptable worship.
1. One could not worship acceptably by whistling, yodeling, humming, or barking although these are sounds made with the mouthBGod said sing.
 2. God did not say, *AJust make music,@* for if He did, we could do whatever we pleased as long as it fell within the realm of *Amusic.@*
 3. Further, since God commanded ALL to sing in worship to Him, there is no authority for a piano or other mechanical instrumental music.
- C. Should this really be a matter of concern?
1. It should be if we want to worship God *Ain spirit and in truth@* (John 4:24).
 2. It should be if we want to do only that which God accepts.

3. It should be unless we determine we will seek to change God's will, meddle in that which God has authorized, or disobey Him in order to do what we please!

CONCLUSION:

1. Worship that is acceptable to God is:
 - a. The same as that offered in the first century church. Band all agree they sang and did not play a piano.
 - b. The same everywhere, in every culture, for all men.
 - c. Not that which man authorizes or accepts, but which God authorizes and accepts.
 - d. We are not ready to worship God unless we are ready to worship Him acceptably, and worship that is not authorized by God is not accepted by God.

2. We do not use a piano in worship because:
 - a. It is not acceptable to God.
 - b. God has authorized singing, and has not authorized the use of a piano in worship.
 - c. God said sing.

3. We must worship God acceptably and we can (Mat. 4:10; John 4:24).
 - a. God will not accept worship from one who will not hear His Word, believe, and obey (Heb. 5:9; Luke 6:46; 2 The. 1:7-9).
 - b. God will not accept worship from one who does not love Him (1 John 5:3; cf. John 14:15), and know Him (1 John 2:3-4).
 - c. Will you by faith (Rom. 10:17), repent of sin, and be baptized into Christ to obtain remission of sins (Acts 2:38), addition to His church (Acts 2:47), and begin to worship acceptably as God has authorized (Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19)?

Do You Folks Believe You Are the Only Ones Going to Heaven?

Gary McDade

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Often this question is asked in order to prejudice the minds of people against the churches of Christ and make them appear arrogant and self-serving. Those asking this question with this motive usually want a quick yes or no answer. The ones pressing for the short answer are like the person who asks the question, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" Yes or no? Then again, sometimes people have friends or even family who are members of the church evoking the exploration of this question. They ask it not so much from the standpoint of prejudice as from curiosity and are willing to listen beyond a short answer. Still further, some have heard this question mentioned in connection with the churches of Christ and really would like to know more about why it is circulated. By design, the luxury of a forty-minute presentation will allow for an involved investigation and explanation of this commonly heard question.

- 2 In the exchange in Mark 12:18-27 an unnamed scribe is impressed with the way Jesus answered the Sadducees. In turn his response to Jesus is offered in a discreet or prudent manner that is complimented by the Lord (Mark 12:28-34). Paul advised, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). Marshall Keeble urged the appropriate use of tact by likening it to a butcher; he does not just hand you the cut of meat you selected right out of the display case. He sees you point it out. Then he picks it up and lays it onto a large piece of white butcher's paper and wraps it all up and secures it with a piece of tape. Then when he hands you something like that anyone would take it. Few would reach and grab a limp, raw piece of meat with his bare hand, but everyone wants that same piece of meat once the butcher has properly presented it to you. Please, allow the proper presentation of the answer to this very important question, "Do you folks believe you are the only ones going to heaven?"

I. THE EXCLUSIVE BODY OF THE SAVED.

- A. All the saved are in the body of Christ, Eph. 5:23.

- B. All the saved are in the one body of Christ, Eph. 4:4; I Cor. 11:20, 27.
 1. The body of Christ is the church of Christ, Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24; Rom. 16:16.
 2. The body is of Christ and must hold to its head (to hold means to not be separated from), Col. 2:17-19; Heb. 5:8-9; Luke 6:46; Rom. 10:16.
 - a. Religious bodies not holding to the head on the music of the church have been willfully decapitated, Eph. 5:19.
 - b. Religious bodies not holding to the head on the names for the church have been willfully decapitated, Acts 4:12.
 - c. Religious bodies not holding to the head on the organization of the church have been willfully decapitated, Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23.

- d. Religious bodies not holding to the head on the mission of the church have been willfully decapitated, Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.
 - e. Religious bodies not holding to the head on the militancy of the church have been willfully decapitated, I Tim. 6:12; Eph. 6:10-20; II Tim. 4:1-8.
- C. All the saved are called into the one body of Christ, Col. 3:15; Ezek. 37:22-27; Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 6:16; Zech. 14:9.
- D. All the saved are called by the one gospel of Christ, II Thess. 2:13-14; Gal. 1:6-9.
- 1 All men must hear the gospel, Rom. 10:17; Rev. 2:7; Matt 13:16.
 - 2 All men must believe the gospel, John 3:16; 8:24; Heb. 11:1, 6.
 - 3. All men must repent of sins, Luke 13:3, 5.
 - 4. All men must confess Christ, Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10.
 - 5. All men must be baptized into Christ for the remission of their sins, Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-6.
- E. All the saved are added to the one body of Christ, Acts 2:47.

II. THE EXCLUSIVE BASIS OF BELIEF.

- A. All authority rests with Jesus Christ, Matt. 28:18; Rom. 14:9.
- 1 He has authority over hell and death, Rev. 1:18; Matt. 25:41.
 - 2. He has authority over heaven and earth, Matt. 28:18; Matt. 25:34.
- B. All authority of Jesus Christ is represented in his word, Titus 2:15; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:19-21.
- 1. The scriptures cannot be broken, John 10:35.
 - 2. The scriptures cannot be bent, Acts 5:1-11.
 - 3. The scriptures cannot be burnt, Matt. 24:35; II Pet. 3:10.
- C. All authority of Jesus Christ required to engender saving faith and yield a godly life is contained in his word, Heb. 11:1, 6; Rom. 10:17; II Pet. 1:3-4.
- D. All authority of Jesus Christ will be acknowledged by everyone, Isa. 45:21-24; Rom. 14:10-12.

III. THE EXCLUSIVE BENEVOLENCE OF THE ALMIGHTY.

- A. All men have sinned, Rom. 3:10-12, 23.
- B. All the world lies in wickedness, I John 5:19.
- 1 The guilty will not receive clearing (Aclearing@ is to free from accusation or blame), Exod. 34:6-7.
 - 2. The guilty will not receive clemency (Aclemency@ is to receive leniency), Matt. 25:40-41.
- C. All men are powerless to gain their own release from sin and its consequences, Micah 6:6-8; Jer. 8:19-20; Isa. 64:6-7.
- D. All men are loved by God and are invited to obey the gospel, John 3:16; Matt. 11:28-30; Rom. 2:1-4; Rev. 22:11-17.

CONCLUSION:

- 1 The only ones going to heaven are the recipients of the exclusive benevolence of the Almighty who have built a life of faithfulness upon the solid rock of the exclusive basis of belief, the Bible, and have been added to the exclusive body of the saved, the church of Christ, by the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church. If a person cannot understand this, he should not worry about it because he can get into heaven on a baby=s ticket.

- 2 The church of Christ is the kingdom of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19). When he returns, AThe Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity@ (Matt. 13:41). ADo you folks believe you are the only ones going to heaven?@ Actually, no. We believe we are the only ones who have a chance. Some of us are not going to make it.

WHY DO YOU TEACH THAT MIRACLES DO NOT HAPPEN TODAY?

Keith A. Mosher, Sr.

I am always delighted to participate at the Nesbit church of Christ during their annual lectureship. This year's effort, entitled Answering Common Questions Asked Members of the Church of Christ is fascinating and much needed. May God bless the Nesbit elders for desiring to conduct such a discussion.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Any casual reader of the New Testament will note that miracles played a large part in the public ministry of Jesus (cf. John 20:30-31).
2. However, many modernists make every effort to deny that there were any supernatural events that ever occurred in Jesus' time or any other age. (See W. W. Otey, Christ or Modernism? [Austin, TX: Firm Foundation, 1953] for a discussion of the objections to miracles by modernists.)
 - a. Modernists argue that miracles cannot stand scientific investigation.
 - b. However, miracles are not believed based solely on scientific investigation. Miracles are believed to have occurred based on logic and metaphysical reasoning that God's Word means what it says.
3. Members of churches of Christ do believe that miracles did occur during Old Testament times and again in New Testament times until near the end of the first century when such supernatural activity ceased.
4. What is the proof that miracles did cease and why would they stop are the questions that give impetus to this study. To answer the foregoing a definition of the miraculous will be given; and the biblical proof of the cessation of the miraculous will be presented.

I. THE MIRACULOUS: A DEFINITION AND STUDY.

- A. One dictionary defines a miracle as "An effect in nature not attributable to any of the recognizable operations of nature, nor to the act of man, but indicative of superhuman power, and serving as a sign or witness thereof; a wonderful work manifesting a power superior to the ordinary forces of nature" (Century Dictionary).
 1. Fisher defines a miracle as "An event which the forces of nature are incompetent to produce."
 2. One other definition is that a miracle must be brought about by the agency of intelligent volition and cannot be affected by ordinary action of the known material forces.
 3. A miracle, then, is beyond the natural and may even be contrary to the natural (e.g. Joshua's sun stood still; Joshua 10:12). Man can not duplicate such an event.

- B. It is highly significant that not a single miracle Jesus did was ever denied by any witness. Even Jesus= enemies could not explain away His miracles, but did, at least once, attribute His power to Satan (Matthew 12:24).
1. The Sadducees (ancient Amodernists@ who denied the supernatural) on at least one occasion saw a miracle and could Asay nothing against it@ (Acts 3:7-14)!
 2. The gospel accounts record only a few of Jesus= miracles, including His healings of multitudes. Not one single person ever reported that his malady had not been cured. (Compare Jesus= record with so-called Afaith-healers@ today.) And, not one enemy of the Christ ever found one person who could deny that He did miracles (c.f. John 9). If Jesus= miracles were not genuine, surely such evidence could have been brought forth at His trial!
- C. Jesus miracles were never Afoolish.@
1. The Gnostic (erroists who denied that Jesus came in the flesh) gospel according to Thomas has a supposed and ridiculous account of Jesus as a little boy making birds from clay, but Jesus= Abird@ flies away.
 2. The true gospel accounts note that Jesus never did a miracle until He was thirty-years old and then changed the water to wine at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee (John 2:11).
 3. The devil tried to get Jesus to turn stones to bread and to jump off of towers, but no such foolishness was ever part of the genuinely miraculous (Matthew 4:1-10).
- D. True miracles do not become more legendary as time passes. (The more often fiction is told, the more evident it is fiction!) If the miracles of the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke were not genuine one would surmise that later writers would have expanded the legend. But, the gospel according to John only records eight miracles excluding Christ=s resurrection.
1. The average person could recognize the genuineness of Jesus= miracles (Luke 9--the lepers; John 9--a man born blind, for example.)
 2. Not one genuine miracle has ever been documented by modern day Amiracle@ workers!
- E. The miracles of Christ cannot be duplicated today.
1. Christ could read the hearts of men (John 2:24-25).
 2. Christ healed the blind instantaneously (John 9)!
 3. Christ could walk on water and feed 5000 men (plus women and children) from two loaves and five fishes (John 6). Where is the Abread-making@ charismatic today who will feed the world=s hungry?
 4. Christ could raise the dead (John 11). The challenge to any Amiracle@ worker today is at the gate of every cemetery!
- F. Jesus, nor any apostle, ever performed a miracle Afor show.@ Their miracles were confirmation that revelation from God was forthcoming (John 20:30-31). In fact, unless revelation were being delivered no miracle could occur (2 Tim. 4:20). When revelation was complete, then the miraculous age ceased for Athat which is perfect@ had come.

II. THAT WHICH IS PERFECT (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

- A. The termination point for miraculous activity depends heavily upon a correct understanding of 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, especially the phrase -- Athat which is

perfect.@

1. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).
 2. The proponents of modern miraculous claims try to make Athe perfect@ refer to the end of earthly life at the second coming of Christ.
- A. The original term, perfect, is telios meaning complete.
1. Miraculous gifts were predicted by the Christ (Mark 16:17-20) and described as fact in the New Testament (Acts 2:1-4; 2:43; 8:6; 10:44-46; Hebrews 2:3-4; et al).
 2. The apostle Paul specifies nine such miraculous gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-22, 31) and each was called a Aspiritual@ gift (Romans 1:11).
 - a. Paul singled out tongues (languages not studied but known miraculously), knowledge (miraculous), and faith (miraculous), (1 Corinthians 13:8). These three gifts are contrasted with faith, hope, and love (1 Corinthians 13:13).
 - b. The contrast was because of the duration of the gifts as compared to faith, hope, and love. The former will cease, and the latter will abide (1 Corinthians 13:8,13).
 - c. The termination of the miraculous gifts would be when the Aperfect@ came (1 Corinthians 13:10).
- A. What Aperfect@ does not mean.
1. Some insist that the term, perfect, refers to Jesus at His second coming. But perfect is a neuter term and the Greeks referred to mature adults with masculine terms. (1 John 1:1,3 is not an exception for John was referring to Athings about@ or Aconcerning@ the Christ.)
 2. Some insist that the Aperfect@ is that state of being that awaits Christians at the dawn of eternity (c.f. Adam Clark and H. C. Lenski). However, heaven is not mentioned anywhere in the context. The chapter is the record of a discussion of virtues and miraculous gifts.
 3. Some insist that the Aperfect@ is Christian maturity or love (Carrol Osbourne, Jim McGuigan). These views ignore the miraculous context and the duration contrast.
- A. Note: The gifts of prophecy and knowledge provided information (1 Corinthians 13:2; 14:3-6,19). Tongues were only for a sign to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22). The spiritual gifts of the Corinthians were contributing to spiritual immaturity not maturity (1 Corinthians 3:1; 14:20).
- A. What does Aperfect@ mean?
1. As noted above, the Greek term is telios and means Ahaving attained an end or purpose.@ (People can be telios, or full grown [James 1:4].) (A thing is telios

- when brought to its end or finished.)
2. New Testament usage: Matthew 5:48; 5:44-47; Luke 6:36; Matthew 19:21; 1 Corinthians 2:6,14; 14:20; Philippians 3:15; Colossians 1:28; 4:12; Hebrews 5:14. (Note from Philippians 3:15 that one does not have to reach heaven to be Aperfect@ in Christ.)
 3. The telios of 1 Corinthians 13:10 is contrasted with ek merous of 1 Corinthians 13:9. The English has Ain part@ but the Greek means Aout of part@ or ek (out of) merous@ (part).
 - a. What was out of part in the first-century Corinthian church was revelation. The system of miraculous gifts meant that all nine would need to be present for full revelation (Romans 1:11).
 - b. The telios (perfect) would not be out of part but a complete system for revelation -- that is, written revelation. When that written revelation was finished, there was no more need for miraculous gifts. (Note: Miraculous gifts had to be imparted by an apostle=s hands, Acts 8:17; 2 Corinthians 12:12. When the last apostle died and anyone on whom an apostle had laid hands died no such gifts would be possible in any case.)

CONCLUSION:

1. That miracles did occur is an established biblical fact.
2. That miracles ceased when revelation was complete is also an established biblical fact (2 Peter 1:3).

"Why Do You Care So Much About What Name One Wears In Religion?"

Lennie Reagan

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is always an honor and a joy to be at Nesbit and to be with the good brethren here. I am so appreciative of the invitation extended to me by the elders and brother David Jones as he serves as lectureship director. We are grateful for the faithful stand of the brethren at Nesbit and their wonderful example and love for the truth.
2. The material presented in this lectureship will make a powerful and practical tool to any library. This material should be studied, studied, and studied by every member of the Lord's church; for, these questions have been asked and as long as men stand against truth, they will continue to be asked.
3. The task at hand in this assignment is to answer the question, "Why do you care so much about what name one wears in religion? So we may hopefully respond to this good question, we will answer a question with three questions as we focus our attention on three pivotal and particular probes of investigation.
 - a. What is this Name?
 - b. Why this Name?
 - c. By Whom was this Name given?
4. The name, Christian, is a translation of three languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.
 - a. "Christos" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word, Messiah.
 - b. The suffix which is added to produce the designation, Christian, is a Latin term.
 - c. The Latin suffix means a "follower" and the root word, "Christos" identifies the Christ; hence, a Christian is a "follower of Christ".

I. *WHAT IS THIS NAME?*

- A. The designation, Christian, was applied to the Lord's people.
 1. Luke records the first application of the name, Christian, with the work of Barnabas and Paul in Antioch (Acts 11:25-26).
 2. Agrippa employed this precious name as he answered Paul's power presentation (Acts 26:28).
 3. The final use of this word is offered by the apostle Peter (1 Peter 4:15-16).
- B. James alluded to those who "...blaspheme that worthy name..." by which the apostles were called (James 2:7).

II. *WHY THIS NAME?*

- A. Names are used as identifiers; thus, they are essential.
 1. To enjoin the unity the Savior demanded there had to be one Name equally suited and applicable to all who obeyed the gospel.
 2. It should be obvious that as long as people persist in placing denominational

designations harmony will never exist.

- B. It is suggested that there are terms in the New Testament other than Christian to identify the followers of Christ; disciples, saints, brethren, children of God.
1. These designations are not proper names; rather, they are terms of relationship, character, and activity.
 2. We are termed disciples because of the Teacher/pupil relationship.
 3. We are saints because of our consecration to Christ.
 4. We are identified as brethren because we are of the same family.
 5. Christians are children of God because we are His offspring.
 6. However, these terms do not identify the movement to which we belong.
 - a. Disciples of Whom?
 - b. Whose brethren?
 7. No other name could so effectively accomplish this task as the name, "Christian" and it was by divine edict it was given to the Lord's people.

III. BY WHOM WAS THIS NAME GIVEN?

- A. Men have always had their perspective about religious matters and what may impress men may not necessarily impress God (Revelation 3:1).
1. The Jews were guilty of using names to divide brethren of their day (Acts 23).
 2. The brethren at Corinth followed the same practice (1 Corinthians 1:10-13).
 3. We have their spiritual kinfolk with us today as men hold to unscriptural designations.
 - a. All men are obligated to honor God in all that we do (Philippians 2:9-10).
 - b. Denominational designations honor man, his methods, and his mannerisms (Lutherans honor Luther; Methodists honor their method of religion; Pentecostals honor a feeling).
 - c. Charles Spurgeon wrote: "I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but, let Christ's name last forever" (Spurgeon Memorial Library, Vol. 1, page 168).
 - d. Martin Luther, founder of the Lutheran denomination and religious reformer, said: "I pray you to leave my name alone, and call not yourselves Lutherans; but, Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I have not been crucified for any one....cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and distinctions; away with them all; and let us call ourselves only Christians..." (Stork, Life of Luther, page 289).
 - e. John Wesley, founder of the Methodist faith said: "Would to God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgot, that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples at the feet of the common Master, to hear His word, to imbibe His spirit, and to transcribe His life into our own" (C. C. Crawford, Sermon Outlines on the Restoration Plea (Murfreesboro, TN:DeHoff Publications, 1956), p. 103).
 4. Some have suggested that the name Christian was assigned by the enemies of Christ and was to be held in derision.
 - a. Yet, the early Christians were not embarrassed to wear the precious name of Christ.
 - b. To the contrary, they were willing to die for the name of Christ rather than to renounce it.
- B. The designation, "Christian" was divinely authored without any human intervention.
1. The Old Testament prophet records this divine promise of a new name (Isaiah

- 62:2).
2. Isaiah rehearses that the new Name would be given at the end of the Jewish system (Isaiah 65:15).
 3. We also learn that the new Name was to be given in God's house which can only refer to the Lord's church (Isaiah 56:5).
 4. These verses combine to help us to identify that new Name:
 - a. It would not be given until after the Jewish system ended; thus, it could not be given prior to the death of Christ.
 - b. It would be given only after the Lord's church was established.
 - c. It would be given only after the Gentiles had become heirs of the blessings of the kingdom along with the Jews (Acts 10 and 11).
 - d. It was to be a new name; therefore, it could not have been prior to the events recorded in Acts 10 at the home of Cornelius.
 - e. It is significant that in the chapter in Acts following the conversion of the Gentiles, the new Name, "Christian" was first used in Antioch (Acts 11:26).
 5. This precious Name is the sum of all others used to identify the followers of Christ and to wear it properly is to be accorded by the Lord as the highest honor and the most exalted privilege.
- C. Denominational patrons and even some among the Lord's church say there is nothing in a name.
1. However, they really do not believe that; for, their name, the names of their family members are important and valuable to them.
 2. No one would like to be called, Judas, Hitler, or Osama bin Laden.
 3. What is in a Name?
 - a. Our salvation, our hope of glory, the glory of the Lord and the honor of His cause.
 - b. We are reminded of the sufferings of our Lord on the cross.
 - c. When we think of the Name, Christian, we remember the struggles of all the faithful of all ages.

CONCLUSION:

1. Why do we care so much about the name one wears in religion?
 - a. We care so much about the name one wears in religion because of what that Name is.
 - b. We care so much about the name one wears in religion because of why that Name was given.
 - c. We care so much about the name one wears in religion because of Who gave that Name.
2. The apostle Peter declares without dispute as to why we care so much about the name one wears in religion: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

WHY DO YOU PEOPLE AKICK PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH?@

Ronnie Scherffius

INTRODUCTION:

1. The ideas that many in the religious world have today concerning the church are due to a lack of knowledge of God=s Word (Hosea 4:6).
2. Yet when presented with the truth of God=s Word, many of these same individuals reject outright sound doctrine because of dogmatic positions, a love for traditions, or simply a desire to honor family heritage more than God.
3. As Christians, we often are asked questions as to why we live our lives the way we do (I Peter 3:15).
4. One of the questions so often asked by those in the denominational world is, Why do you people Akick people out of the church?@
5. Let us consider this question noting three particulars:
 - a. The misconceptions/misunderstandings found in this question.
 - b. The command and pattern for church discipline.
 - c. The purpose of church discipline.

I. MISCONCEPTIONS FOUND IN THE QUESTION, WHY DO YOU PEOPLE AKICK PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH.@

- A. Misconception of the church.
 1. The church is, Athe called out body of baptized believers over which Christ is head and in which His Spirit dwells.@
 - a. We have been called out of the world by the gospel (II Thess. 2:14) because we are subjects of a kingdom that is not of this world (John 16:36).
 - b. We have been baptized into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38) because we have faith that in so doing the blood of Christ will wash away our sins (Rev. 1:5; Acts 22:16).
 - c. Jesus is the builder of the church (Matt. 16:18) and therefore head of the church (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18).
 - d. The Spirit of God dwells in the church (I Cor. 3:16, 17).
 2. The church is the saved (Acts 2:47).
 3. The church is the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18) and that there is only one body (I Cor. 12:20; Eph. 4:4) and therefore only one church.
 4. The church is not a social club which one may join on a whim in order increase social standing or to better position themselves in the community.

- a. The New Testament record declares that when one became a Christian his social standing began to decline.
 - b. At first Christians had Afavor with all the people@ (Acts 2:47), soon thereafter, they were stoned to death (Acts 7), scattered because of persecution (Acts 8:4), hunted and cast into prison (Acts 9:1, 2).
 - c. The church is not for improving social status but spiritual well being.
5. So there is implied in this question a misconception of the church.

B. Misconception of fellowship.

1. Fellowship simply stated is, Ajoint participation between two or more parties.@
2. Webster defines fellowship as, Amutual association of persons on equal and friendly terms@ (Webster=s New Twentieth Century Dictionary Of The English Language; 1951, p. 645).
3. It should be understood that there are two-types of fellowship.
 - a. Vertical fellowship (fellowship between God and man) and horizontal fellowship (fellowship men have with one another).
 - b. Man can have fellowship with God only as he walks in the light (I John 1:6, 7).
 - c. Men have fellowship one with another as they labor together as equal partners in the endeavor which they seek to accomplish.
4. Under consideration here is Aspiritual fellowship@ between men that is **scriptural**.
 - a. As Christians our fellowship is in the light (I John 1:7).
 - b. As I walk in the light I can fellowship all others who walk in the light.
 - c. In order for me to keep walking in the light (thereby having fellowship with God) I must withhold my fellowship from everyone who (1) has never been in the light, (2) or has ceased to walk in the light.
5. What does it mean to walk in the light?
 - a. Christians of the first century were in fellowship with the apostles by continuing Asteadfastly in the apostles doctrine@ (Acts 2:42).
 - b. John (who was an apostles) declared we have fellowship with the apostles by walking in the light (I John 1:3-7).
 - c. Therefore we Awalk in the light@ only as we Acontinue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine.@
 - d. AND - if we have fellowship with anyone who does not Acontinue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine@ we cease to Awalk in the light@ thereby losing our fellowship with God (I John 1:6).
 - e. **NOTE:** Just as an individual can have fellowship only with those who walk in the light, a local congregation can only have fellowship with sister congregations which walk in the light (to fellowship a congregation of God=s people teaching or practicing error is to fellowship the error thereby becoming partaker of their Aevil deeds@ [II John 10, 11] and walking in darkness)!!!
6. Scriptural fellowship then is Ajoint participation between two or more parties that are on equal and friendly terms because they walk in the light.
7. So implied in this question is a great misconception many have concerning scriptural fellowship.

- C. Misconception of church discipline or withdrawal of fellowship.
1. There is the Catholic doctrine of excommunication.
 - a. Excommunication is the , Aexpulsion from the communion of a church, and deprivation of its rights, privileges, and advantages@ (Webster=s New Twentieth Century Dictionary Of The English Language; 1951, p. 610).
 - b. Excommunication then is expulsion, banishment, or the ousting of a person from the church and taking from him the privileges he has as one of God=s children.
 - c. This amounts to nothing less than to what is exactly stated in the question, Akicking one out of the church.@
 2. The Akicking people out of the church@ concept stems from man=s desire to have more authority than God has given.
 - a. If a man is Akicked out@ of the church and his privileges and advantages are stripped from him by other men, then that man loses one of the greatest blessings God=s children have - access to God through prayer (Eph. 2:18).
 - b. For the erring child of God, it is through repentance, confession, and prayer that he is restored back to the body and good favor with God (Acts 8:18-24).
 - c. However, if he cannot access God through Christ in prayer (because that privilege has been taken from him when he was Akicked out@ of the church), he must be restored to God through those men who Akicked him out of the church.@
 - d. This puts more authority in the hands of men than God gave them - AND- it is for this reason (men assuming authority God had not given) that the church fell into apostasy.
 3. Withdrawal of fellowship **is not** Akicking people out of the church.@
 - a. Since it is the Lord who Aadded to the church@ those who are saved, it is only the Lord who can sever from the church (kingdom) those who are unfaithful and strip from them their privileges as members of the church.
 - b. This He will do at the judgment (Matt. 13:47-50).
 - c. As Christians, we simply enter into fellowship with others as they enter into fellowship with God.
 - d. As the unfaithful cease to remain in fellowship with God, the faithful **must** withhold their fellowship from the unfaithful in order to remain in fellowship with God.
 4. So, from this question there is implied a misunderstanding of the Bible teaching of church discipline.

II. *THE COMMAND AND PATTERN FOR CHURCH DISCIPLINE.*

- A. The question before us correctly stated, AWhy do Christians practice church discipline (withdrawal of fellowship) from erring brethren (those who do not continue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine)?@
- B. Why do Christians practice church discipline?

1. There are two reasons why the Christians practice church discipline/withdrawal of fellowship.
 - a. Because we have been commanded by God to do so.
 - b. Because we have the responsibility to do so.
2. The commandment for church discipline.
 - a. I Corinthians 5:1-13 (specifically 9-11).
 - (1) company - Ato mix up together; to be intimate with one@
 - (2) spiritual Acompany@ is under discussion here and therefore it is the Amixing up together spiritually@ or Aspiritual intimacy@ with one who is called a brother yet is walking as the world which is forbidden.
 - b. II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15.
 - (1) a command is given by the authority of Christ to Awithdraw@ from brethren who walk disorderly **and** not after the tradition of inspired men.
 - (2) Awithdraw@ - to remove one=s self; to abstain from familiar intercourse
 - (3) Adisorderly@ - military term meaning Aout of step@
 - (4) Atradition@ - literally, Ainstruction that was >given over= by word of mouth or written letter@
3. The responsibility for church discipline.
 - a. All that we do as Christians must be done by the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17).
 - b. All that a Christian is commanded to do (either by direct statement, implication, or example), he has the responsibility to do.
 - c. Example: I have the authority to teach that baptism is necessary for man=s salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
 - d. Yet, not only do I have the authority to teach that, I also have the responsibility to teach that.
4. Since practicing church discipline (withdrawing of fellowship from those who walk out of step) is a command thereby giving me the authority to practice it (word or **deed** C Col. 3:17), I also have the responsibility to practice it!!!

C. What is the pattern for practicing church discipline?

1. There is a pattern in all of God=s laws.
 - a. Pattern to the law given to Noah (Gen. 6:14-16).
 - b. Pattern to the laws given to Moses (Heb. 8:5).
 - c. Pattern to the law (law of Christ - Gal. 6:2) under which we live today (Rom. 6:16-17).
 - d. Since the practicing of church of church discipline is a command of God there must be a pattern to follow that it may be carried out.
2. The pattern to follow in handling those guilty of offenses in the church is clearly and concisely set forth in Matthew 18 where we find four particular steps or measures which are to be taken.
3. The first step is that the offended is to go to the offender (Matt. 18:15).
 - a. The offense is not to be kept in that it may fester causing hateful and resentful feelings on the part of the offended toward the offender (this would be sin on the part of the offended brother - Lev. 19:17).

- b. The offense is not to be broadcast among other brethren so that the offender hears of his actions against another brother from a third party.
- c. The offender is privately to go to the one who has offended him Aalone@ and Atell him his fault.@

- d. The offended should, after much consideration and with a calm, meek, and loving heart, go privately to his brother for the purpose of saving his soul not vengeance, or a desire to prove himself right and his brother wrong.
 - e. To this the wise man agrees, *AGo not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another@* (Prov. 25:8, 9).
4. The second step to be taken is to carry Aone or two more@ that truth concerning the matter may be established (Matt. 18:16).
- a. It is not affirmed here that these going with the offended are going informed of the situation nor should it be assumed, for if the witnesses have been informed they surely will have developed a biased opinion toward the matter at hand.
 - b. These are going but to hear the matter discussed between the two under consideration that in the presence of Awitnesses every word may be established@ (it should be noted just here that only when Aevery word has been established@ is the truth established - Psa. 119:160).
 - c. Furthermore, the Aone or two more,@ as outside parties to the situation in question, may be able to encourage and exhort the brother to repent of his offense.
 - d. Nevertheless, if the offender refuses to repent of his offense and the matter is to be taken further, truth may be established by Athe mouth of two or three witnesses@ lest the offender declare dishonesty on the part of the offended (Deut. 19:15; John 8:17; II Cor. 13:2).
5. The third step to be taken toward the offender is to take the matter before the church (Matt. 18:17).
- a. If it is the case that the offender has set himself hard against his brother and refuses to repent, even at the encouragement of other good brethren, the matter must then be brought before the church.
 - b. At this point, sound brethren and mature in the faith, either collectively or individually, should go to the offender encouraging him to repent of his wrong.
 - c. Yet if he refuses to repent after this one final measure is to be taken.
6. The fourth and final step is withdrawing of fellowship from the offender (Matt. 18:17).
- a. To the faithful, this man is to be as a Aheathen man and a publican.@
 - b. That is to say, the faithful are to have no fellowship with him.
 - c. He is to be delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved (I Cor. 5:5).
 - d. He is to be withdrawn from as one Athat walketh disorderly@ (II Thess. 3:6).
 - e. He is not to be ostracized and avoided at all cost but rather to be admonished Aas a brother (II Thess. 3:15).
7. This is the pattern set forth in the Scriptures to be followed in practicing church discipline so that erring brethren might be Agained@ back into the fold.

III. THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

A. Correctly stated there are two types of discipline.

1. There is **instructive discipline** which includes all we do in teaching, admonishing, exhorting and being examples to others which instructs them to live the Christian life.
2. There is also **corrective discipline** wherein steps are taken by the church (not only particular members, but the local congregation as a whole) according to the pattern of the scriptures.
3. Under consideration here is corrective discipline and the purposes of it which include restoring the erring and preserving the faithful.

B. Restore the erring.

1. One of the purposes for the withdrawal of fellowship is to save the one who has committed the offense.
2. *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us . . . And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be **ashamed*** (II Thess. 3:6, 14).
 - a. Notice here that the withdrawing of fellowship brings about shame.
 - b. Shame stems from guilt which is brought about from the realization of one's sin and ultimately brings one to repentance and restoration to the body.
3. *A . . . concerning him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together . . . To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus* (I Cor. 5:3-5).
 - a. Consider here that the faithful were, (by the authority of Christ), to deliver the offender unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, i.e., they were to withdraw their fellowship from him.
 - b. Yet notice the purpose of this action, That the spirit may be saved . . .
4. So, one of the purposes for church discipline is to shine a light on the offense that the horribleness of sin might be made known to the offender so that the shame brought about because of his sin might bring him to repentance.

C. To preserve the faithful.

1. A second purpose for the withdrawal of fellowship is to keep the church pure.
2. Some disparage of church discipline because they feel it is ineffective.
 - a. Church discipline should not be practiced because it does not work!
 - b. Of all the times we have withdrawn from someone, only one person has ever been restored!
 - c. Statements such as these are made by brethren who are spiritually near-sided.
3. There is an old adage which states, One rotten apple spoils the whole barrel.
 - a. A man who would contend that if a person was not restored after fellowship had withdrawn from him would never make such a statement as, If the rotten apple does not improve over night, then it

- was a waste of time to remove it from the barrel.@
- b. The purpose for removing the apple was to save the lot from rotteness and corruption because of Afellowship@ with the rotten apple.
4. Paul declared, *AKnow ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump . . .*@ (I Cor. 5:6, 7).
 - a. Just as one bad apple will corrupt the whole barrel, sin that is left unopposed in the church will corrupt the whole body.
 - b. Would a man allow a disease that would destroy him dwell freely in his body -or- would he not rather take every measure available to him to eradicate his body from the danger?
 5. If the case may be that the one from whom fellowship has been withdrawn refuses to repent of his offense, the disciplinary actions have not been in vain.
 - a. It the offender is allowed to continue unopposed then more will be emboldened to commit the sin.
 - b. Yet, if fellowship is withdrawn from the erring brother, others will see the horribleness of the sin and refrain from it.
 6. So the purposes of corrective discipline are two-fold: restore the erring and preserve the faithful.

CONCLUSION:

1. Why do you people Akick people out of the church?@
2. The misconceptions of the church are varied and many simply because the majority of the world refuses to educate themselves of Biblical truths.
3. Christians do not Akick people out of the church@ for they have no authority to do so, yet they do have the authority and responsibility to withdraw from those who walk out of step with teachings of inspired men.
4. If the church follows the pattern set forth in God=s Word, corrective discipline will work either in restoring erring brethren, preserving the faithful or both.
5. May the God=s people stand always on the truth of his word walking in fellowship only with those who walk in the light as they continue steadfastly in the apostles doctrine.

Choice, Consequence, and Conscience

Kirk Talley

MY APPRECIATION: *I deeply am thankful to be coming back to a home which gave my family and me a part of their heart. My memories of this congregation here at Nesbit extend back into June of 2000, when after they took my family in, they trained us to be better people for the Lord. What I lacked receiving at the Memphis School of Preaching, Nesbit made up and then some. It was hard to keep up with all of the working members, but they tagged me along anyway. I will never forget the guidance brought by David and Kathy, and will always cherish the example set forth and standard established by this fine group of brethren. Whatever success I may have in the kingdom will be reflecting from the stars found in their crown once given them in heaven.*

INTRODUCTION:

1. If I had a nickel.
2. A nickel for every time I had heard or dealt with these question, whether in highschool, college, or even in the church, I would have; well, a pile of nickels.
3. I am a simple thinker, and due to that fact, I deal with people in a manner with which I like to be dealt - simply
4. One thing I will not do today is leave you all with I Thess 5:22 which states, AAbstain from all appearance of evil.@
 - a. Can be used in each of these questions.
 - b. Worn out by many preachers and teachers to non-effect on the brethren.
5. In life, God=s love is shown in how He deals with man.
 - a. He gives all men the choice to do good. (Gen 2:17; 3:6,7)
 - b. He also shows man what the spiritual consequence of choosing to disobey will be. (Is 59:1,2)
6. God also, as does any preacher who wants to reach people, shows us how we are to abstain from the appearance and the act of evil - we train our conscience to be violated at the first sign of evil.
7. Let us take *choice, consequence, and conscience* and answer the question before us.

I WHERE DOES THE BIBLE SAY THAT WE CANNOT DRINK A BEER?

- A. Choice
 1. Because of God=s amazing love for mankind, we have choices; and in this life whether we like it or not, we have the choice to drink alcohol or not.
 - a. Anytime options are available, it would behoove us to seek out the best choice for our lives.
 - (1) Would it better my life to drink alcohol?
 - (2) Would it worsen my life to drink alcohol?
 - b. In making the best decision for our lives, we should ask a series of question relating to the Bible and our current situation, which in this case

is drinking alcohol, (i.e. beer).

- (1) What does the Bible say about drinking alcohol?
- (2) Would God have me to drink alcohol?
- (3) How would the knowledge of my drinking alcohol affect those who look up to me?
- (4) Will my drinking alcohol affect my eternity in heaven?

B. Consequence

1. In discussing the consequence of our drinking alcohol, we need to explore both the physical and the spiritual consequences. Let's look at the spiritual consequences.
 - a. What does the Bible say about drinking alcohol?
 - (1) Simply put, the Bible repeats over and over, the message of abstaining from this drug.
 - (a) Solomon warned against alcohol and its power over man.
 - i) Proverbs 20:1
 - ii) Proverbs 23:29-32
 - (b) Paul cautioned against drinking and living its life.
 - i) Romans 13:13,14
 - ii) He would later list drunkenness as a work of the flesh. (Galatians 5:19-21)
 - (c) Peter described one who drinks alcohol as one who not a Christian. (I Peter 4:3)
 - (d) Paul also included drinking alcohol as one of the sins that would keep one from entering heaven. (I Corinthians 6:9,10)
 - (2) Spiritually speaking, since the Lord forbids our partaking of such drink, we would be in violation of His law, therefore in sin. (I John 3:4)
 - (a) If in sin, separated from God, (Isaiah 59:1,2; Ezekiel 18:18-20) and if separated from God, from His blessings as well. (Ephesians 1:3)
 - (b) Blessings of God lost as a result of living in sin include such as: being near to God (Ephesians 2:13); hope (I Peter 1:3-5); crown of life (Revelation 2:10); etc.
 - b. Would God then have me to drink alcohol?
 - (1) Proverbs 23:30-35
 - c. How would the knowledge of my drinking affect those who look up to me? (Would drinking hurt my positive influence?)
 - (1) Matthew 5:13-16 - We are to be a shining light to the world.
 - (2) I Peter 2:9 - We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation...God's own special people.
 - (3) Would I promote drinking alcohol to my children? I do if I drink alcohol!
 - d. Will my drinking affect my eternity in Heaven?
 - (1) I Corinthians 6:9,10 answers this clearly.
 - (a) AWell, I do not drink a lot of alcohol, I am just a social drinker.
 - i) I am just a social father/husband/employee/friend/preacher/Christian.

- ii) I am a father or I am not a father - I am a drinker of alcohol or I am not a drinker of alcohol.
 - (2) The Bible is clear about the one who *goes* to the wine (Proverbs 23), in that he is a fool, and one who lacks wisdom!
 - 2. In reference to the physical consequence of sin, I would like to inform us all on some statistics related to drinking alcohol:
 - (1) Alcohol consumption, its abuse and its consequences, have been estimated to cost our society 86 billion dollars each year - 26 billion dollars more than the cost of Desert Storm!ⁱ
 - (2) In 2001 drinking and driving contributed to 104 fatal crashes, 341 serious injury crashes, and 769 minor injury crashes.ⁱⁱ
 - (3) Drinking and driving contributed to 118 deaths, 502 serious injuries, and 1272 minor injuries - 25% of all road deaths were in drink-related crashes.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - (4) But what if one drinks and does not drive? Are there any negative physical consequences of drinking alcohol?
 - (a) Drinking alcohol can cause Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), which is one of the leading causes of birth defects and developmental disabilities
 - i) Consider having to care for a child that you caused to be deformed or retarded?
 - (b) Drinking destroys our self-image.
 - i) vomiting in public and passing out is not Acool@
 - ii) stumbling and mumbling is not attractive
 - (c) Drinking destroys families, names, and reputations.
 - i) Alcoholism is one of the leading causes of depression, violence, and divorce.^{iv}
 - ii) Jobs are lost and the family name our parents/grandparents worked so hard to make, is lost in the bottle. (Proverbs 22:1)
 - iii) Being known as the one who can hold the most liquor is not how we want to be known.
 - a) Try applying for the job and putting your ability to hold liquor as an attribute worthy of hiring.
 - b) When looking for a mate, advertise your ability to drink alcohol and tell me what kind of person crawls out to meet you!

C. Conscience

1. The question for us today might not be whether drinking alcohol it is right or wrong, but how do I keep from it?
2. Training our conscience to be violated when the subject of drinking is brought to our minds and hearts is key to keeping from the sin of alcoholism.
 - a. Training a conscience is easier done while one is young and impressionable.
 - b. A child is soft clay so to speak - can be molded by evil or good.
3. We might try some of the following ideas to train our consciences not to accept the thought of drinking alcohol:
 - a. Refuse to listen to radio, T.V., and written promotions of drinking alcohol. (use the remote)
 - b. Avoid jokes and stories that contain information about drinking alcohol.

- c. Whenever faced with the temptation to drink, quote passages which deal with the foolishness of drinking alcohol.
 - d. TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF BEER AND OTHER INTOXICATING BEVERAGES. *****
 - (1) First use of alcohol usually begins around the age of 13.^v
 - (2) Junior and Senior high school students drink 35 % of all wine coolers sold in the U.S.; they also consume 1.1 billion cans of beer.^{vi}
 - (3) Approximately 2/3 of teenagers who drink can buy their own alcohol.^{vii}
 - (4) The use of alcohol is associated with the leading causes of death and injury among teenagers and young adults.^{viii}
4. How could I live with myself if I, by my example of drinking alcohol, encouraged my children to drink, and they died of cirrhosis of the liver?
- a. AIf those who sold and made alcoholic drinks would tell the truth when advertising their wares, the ads might read about as follows:
>WantedB100 new customers as most of our old ones have dropped out. Five committed suicide; five were killed on the highways; twenty are in jail; fifteen are in the poor house; one has been executed for murder; three are in the mental hospital and the rest are broke. We must have new customers now! Young, fresh, and strong, for they will not live to stay long with us! Come disgrace your family, paralyze your mind, warp your body, and lose self-respect, and most of your friends.@^{ix}
 - b. If I were a pharmacist, I would tell you that alcohol is an addictive drug, a depressant; that it is used only with caution in medicines; and that because of its abuse, it is America=s number one drug problem. If I were a doctor, I would tell you that beverage alcohol goes directly into the blood stream when it is consumed: that it damages the liver, kidneys, the heart and the brain; that it is the third leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer; and that it often contributes to these other two. If I were an obstetrician, I would tell you that one out of every thousand babies born have fetal alcohol syndrome which causes deformation and retardation. If I were a chemist, I would tell you that 1/12th-ounce can of beer contains as much alcohol as a wine of glass filled with wine, an average cocktail, or a shot of one hundred proof whiskey. If I were a law enforcement officer, I would tell you that 55% of deaths due to traffic accidents are alcohol related, and that 62% of all major crimes (rape, murder, aggravated assault, etc.) Are alcohol related. If I were a judge, I would tell you that 40-60% of the problems in the divorce courts are related to alcohol, not to mention such things as child abuse and wife beating. If I were an economist, I would tell you that there is an annual 28 billion dollars lost in goods and services resulting from employees absent due to alcohol related problems, and that in addition to that there is an annual 20 billion dollar medical bill related to alcohol abuse. If I were an accountant, I would tell you that for every \$1.00 of revenue the public raises due to an alcohol tax, society pays \$1.33-5.76 in social taxes.^x

II WHERE DOES THE BIBLE SAY THAT WE CANNOT GO TO A DANCE?

A. Choice

1. As before, we must begin by exploring our options.
2. Also as noted before, we have the freedom of choice, and therefore we must weigh all options so as to make the best decision.
3. As we read in Ephesians 6:11, there are different *wiles* that come forth from the devil.
 - a. It might be that given the choice to attend a dance has no affect on your decision because dancing has no appeal to you.
 - b. For others, it might be very difficult to refuse the opportunity to go.
 - (1) For this reason alone, we need sermons on the prom and other outings which promote sexually mixed dancing.
 - (2) For this reason alone, we need to pay close attention to our young people as they too come become overtaken in temptation and fault. (Gal 6:1)
4. The same questions as before can be used to determine what our decision should be:
 - a. What does the Bible say about dancing?
 - b. Would God have me to dance?
 - c. How would the knowledge of my dancing affect those who look up to me?
 - d. Will my dancing affect my eternity in heaven?

B. Consequence

1. In exploring the ramifications of dancing, let us answer the previous questions in light of dancing.
 - a. What does the Bible say about dancing?
 - (1) The New Testament translates the word *dance* or *dancing* with two different meanings:
 - (a) a group of dancers or singers
 - (b) to lift up the feet, to leap with regularity of motion
 - (2) The Old Testament speaks of dancing in many different contexts:
 - (a) Ex 15:20 - Miriam and the women danced but their purpose was to celebrate victory and besides, there is no proof that they danced with men.
 - (b) Ex 32:19 - The children of Israel danced after Aaron fashioned the golden calf but God did not approve of their idol, and the Bible gives no proof that God approved of their dancing either.
 - (c) Judges 11:34 - Jephthah=s daughter danced in celebration when her father came home, but there again is no proof that she danced with any man.
 - (d) Judges 21:19-23 - The daughters of Shiloh came out to dance, but the Bible does not prove that they danced with men, and , in fact, the men of Benjamin caught the and forced them to be their wives.
 - (e) I Samuel 18:7 - Women danced after David defeated Goliath, but the Bible does not prove that women danced with men.
 - (f) II Samuel 6:16 - David danced when the Ark of the Covenant came into Jerusalem, but he did not dance with any women. His purpose was one of joy, however, when

- his wife saw him, she despised what he was doing.
- (g) Psalm 149:3 - Dancing is referred to as worship, but this was not for social purposes and the Bible does not prove that men danced with women. Hebrew customs tells us that men and women separated during worship.
 - (h) Ecc 3:4 - Solomon said that there is a time to dance, but he placed it in contrast with a time to mourn therefore he speaks of a time to be joyous.
- (3) Notice also in the New Testament when the daughter of Herodias danced before Herod. (Matthew 14:1-12)
- (a) What was her intention? Was it innocent? Of course not, she was enticing Herod
 - (b) Is there any proof that God condoned this dancing
 - i) Christ said that if a man look upon a woman to lust after her, he commits adultery in his heart. (Matthew 5:28)
 - ii) I believe that condemned it!
- b. Would God have me to dance?
- (1) If it cannot be proven that God ever condoned males dancing with females, but in fact condemns the very thing promoted by the modern dance, it is safe to say that God would not have me to dance.
- c. How would the knowledge of my dancing or the attendance of a dance affect those who look up to me?
- (1) I included the attending of a dance in this question because I have heard good friends say that they do not go to the prom to dance, they go to socialize.
 - (a) I might respond in this manner, AThat is great, because I do not go to the clubs/bars to drink, I just go to see my friends.@
 - (b) AI just go to the set up Bible studies with those who are interested.@
 - (2) Brethren, the last thing on a person=s mind at a club/bar/or dance is the Bible.
 - (a) Do we not see the same people at school or work.
 - (b) Is there no better time to teach of our faith and convictions than when the dance is before us.
 - i) The following article was written in the San Benito Bulletin of North Sacramento,CA: AWe of this congregation were proud to see the news that sister Gwen Sims was elected Homecoming Queen of Rio Linda High School. That which makes us please with Gwen was not so much that her high school elected her, but the way she conducted herself while reigning as queen. For example, consider the speech she made before the assembly of some 1000 faculty and students. As Homecoming Queen, she was supposed to reign over the >Camelot Ball,= but she said, >I think the majority of the seniors know about my religious convictions. I do not know about the faculty or

underclassmen, but the religion I personally embrace does not permit dancing, and therefore, I am not planning to attend the dance. I hope that none of you will feel badly toward me, but I hope you will understand my holding up for my belief.= They gave tremendous applause when Gwen was crowned queen; they gave even much more after she made her speech. This was written to all the young people and to us parents - that we should stand up for what is right.@

ii) Amen sister Sims!

d. Will my dancing affect my eternity in heaven?

(1) It seems as though there could be no doubt about it; promoting any activity which associates with lustful thought, invites sinful temptations, and encourages unrighteous actions would affect my eternal state.

2. As before, let us notice some physical and spiritual consequences of dancing.

a. Spiritual consequence -

(1) Promotes sin therefore promotes separation from God.

(a) Galatians 5:19-21 speaks of *lasciviousness* which means indecent bodily movements and unchaste handling of males and females@

(b) Matthew 5:28 stills speaks of adultery in the heart when looks upon another to lust after them.

(c) With these two scriptures at hand, why would I want to place myself in the position where I might look upon another in such a way as to commit adultery?

(2) Prevents Christianity from shining forth.

(a) Matthew 5:13-16 records for us that Christians are examples of purity - shining examples.

(b) How can my Christ-like attitude shine forth in a sin-promoted atmosphere and with my hands on a woman who is not my wife? It cannot

(3) Destroys my influence.

(a) There would be no way that I could ever convert anyone at a dance in which I attended and participated.

i) Could I help you stop smoking with a cigarette in my mouth?

ii) Could I help you stick to your diet if I always spoke to you with food in my mouth?

iii) Can I keep you from groping another in dance if I am wrapped up with another myself?

(b) My influence would be destroyed and my unrighteous example would be long remembered.

b. Physical consequence -

(1) Drinking alcohol is promoted because of the type of people who are attracted to such behavior.

(2) Teen pregnancy can surely be thought of as a consequence because sex is greatly promoted where emotions are running high, skirts are definitely not low, and hands are running wild!

(3) Consider other consequences such as: vandalism, boastfulness,

segregation, wasted money, etc.

C. Conscience

1. So we should obviously train our conscience to recognize this sin of dance - but how?
2. TRAIN OUR CHILDREN ON WHAT SIN IS AND ITS RELATION TO THE MODERN DANCE!
 - a. When prom arrives, our children should know that they cannot go, not only because mommy and daddy said they could not, but because the Lord said they could not.
 - b. Reading to our children about dancing and what it promotes will only aide us in the fight against such behavior.
 - c. We as adults must first learn what God=s view of dancing is so that we can train our children and others - Study the Bible

III **WHAT CONSTITUTES IMMODESTY?**

A. Immodesty is defined in different ways:

1. I Timothy 2:9 defines modesty as orderly, well-arranged, and decent.
2. Webster defines modesty as AObserving conventional standards of proper dress and behavior: free from coarseness or indecency, chaste in thought and conduct...@
 - a. A regard for propriety in dress, speech, or in conduct
 - b. Modesty Astresses avoidance of anything brazen, bold, wanton, or suggestive in behavior, speech, or appearance,@ also according to Webster.
3. Clearly defined in Amodesty@ is the definition of Aimmodesty.@
 - a. Immodesty could be a reference tot he attire, attitude, and action of an individual when presenting themselves and thinking in such a way as to promote misconduct, indecency, and unseemliness.

B. Choice

1. Again, the world is given a choice to be immodesty in these areas or to be modest.
2. We should continue with the same guidelines as we have so far in dealing with this issue.
3. The subject of modesty is certainly a subject which should be given much thought and study in the scriptures so that the best decision can be made; therefore we look ahead at the consequence of being immodest to see what the outcome of it would be.

C. Consequence

1. Spiritual consequence
 - a. What does the Bible say about immodesty? Does it give a clear meaning?
 - (1) The Bible says not to be immodest, and by definition, I believe the Bible is clear as saying that one who is immodest in their attire is one who draws attention to oneself.
 - (a) Noah drew his son=s attention when he was drunken and naked. (Gen 9:20,21)
 - (b) Remember also in I Timothy 2:9 how that the women were instructed to be modest by dressing down!

- (2) The idea of modesty is not drawing attention to one's self, but keeping the attention to where it should be - God.
- b. Would God have me to be immodest in any area of my life, but especially in my attire?
 - (1) The answer quite simply is no, God would not have anyone to be indecent in any area of their lives, especially in attire.
 - (2) A man once said that Aa woman's dress is the mirror of her mind.@
 - (a) Immodesty is certainly applied to both men and women, and if our dress is a mirror of our minds, there is certainly some repenting that needs to be done in the church.
 - (b) If what we feel comes through in our dress, some might be lacking in scriptural knowledge and certainly need prayers.
- c. How would the knowledge of my being immodest affect those who look up to me?
 - (1) How would it have affected you if some of the speakers today were wearing t-shirts and jeans while they were speaking?
 - (2) What about if some of the ladies were in their undergarments while attending services?
 - (3) You see, you can be in a 3-piece suit on the beach and be immodest, or you can wear a bathing suit to the assembling of the saints and be immodest as well.
 - (4) The fact the everyone but the preacher and his family does something does not mean that the preacher and his family has taken a different vow than any other Christian.
- d. Will my being immodest affect my eternity in heaven?
 - (1) Our immodesty will affect our eternity - for the worse!
 - (2) Our immodesty becomes a stumbling block for others, which if our example causes another to sin, it would be better to have a millstone tied to our neck and for us to be cast into the sea. (Luke 17:1,2)
 - (a) Some will say, AI cannot help it if someone looks at me and lusts.@
 - (b) This statement is true and false - we can do all we can do to help others from lusting, and beyond that, it will be their problem because many people's Aeyes are full of adultery.@
 - (3) Our immodesty will truly affect our eternity in heaven - we will not have one if immodest!

D. Conscience

- 1. So how do I get past the desire to wear clothing that shows the curves of my body or that more body than necessary?
 - a. **WE BEGIN BY TRAINING OR CHILDREN TO BE OFFENDED WHEN THEY SEE NUDITY!**
 - b. We must try and be more content with the way we look and the way our spouse looks.
 - (1) If not married, think of who you are attracting when you show more of your body than you do Christianity!
- 2. Stop endorsing movies with sexual content and nudity.

- a. Every time we pay for or rent a movie with such in it, we say, AKeep >em on the shelf!@
- b. Again, use the remote!
3. Dress more appropriately for services.
 - a. When you go out to play, you wear your play clothes, and when you go to worship, you wear your Aworship@ clothes. If you get them mixed up, you=ll end up playing worship.
 - b. If children are given the option of wearing dress clothes or play clothes, which one will they choose. For worship services, do not give them options - train them up!
4. Do not tell or listen to the filthy jokes which contain immodesty language.
5. Read and study your Bible.

CONCLUSION:

1. Where does the Bible say we cannot drink a beer or go to a dance? To me as a Christian, Bible student, and father - it is written all throughout the scriptures.
 - a. God gives us the choice to obey or disobey - what will you do?
 - b. God has given a glimpse into the future with providing us a list of the consequences of sin.
 - c. What does your conscience say about drinking alcohol and dancing?
2. What constitutes immodest dress?
 - a. The Bible is the constitution on immodest apparel, and it tells us that drawing attention to oneself is a sin, whether in attitude, apparel, or action.
 - b. God has given us the choice though, whether to obey or disobey.
 - c. God has given us the consequences of sin as well.
 - d. What does your conscience say about dancing? If different from God=s law, we need to train our conscience.

i. www.mudpc.org/stats.html

ii. www.ltsa.govt.nz/research/drink.html

iii. Ibid

iv. Straddling The Fence, Anita Whitaker, Huntsville ,AL, Publishing Designs, Inc, 2002

v. www.mudpc.org/stats.html

vi. Ibid

vii. Ibid

viii. Ibid

ix. This was an article taken from a bulletin published in the 50's, whose name and author are unknown. The title of the article was *To Tell The Truth*.

x. This is a portion of an article written by Carl B. Garner, which was featured in the *Forest Hill News on November 19, 2002*. Volume 29 #47 - editor, Barry Grider.

DO YOU BELIEVE IN "WATER SALVATION"?

WHAT IF ONE IS ON HIS DEATHBED?

INTRODUCTION

- 1 It is always a joy supreme to come to this good and great lectureship in late January each year.
- 2 Deep gratitude is expressed to David Jones, his fellow elders and all the precious people here at Nesbit.
- 3 Questions touching salvation, as my two do, are always vastly important.
- 4 Much of the information today touching salvation is based almost entirely on false teaching and very little on divine revelation and this is a massive mistake and one with eternal consequences.

I AS TOUCHING WATER SALVATION

- A People who accuse us of this leave the impression that due to our emphasis upon immersion *in water in the plan* of pardon that we believe the power to save inheres the water and not the blood of Christ. We know the blood of Christ saves but baptism in water is linked very closely with the blood of Jesus Christ as I shall set forth clearly in this lecture.
- B Some observations from Noah in the Old Testament.
- 1 We read of the flood in Genesis 6-8.
 - 2 Noah and his family were saved by water as per 1 Peter 3:20.
 - 3 They were also saved by the ark, by God's grace and by careful obedience to divine commands.
 - 4 Yet when Noah and his family emerged from the ark they did not build a shrine or altar and dedicate it to the waters of the great flood. They built an altar to the Lord as per Genesis 8:20.
- C Some observations from Naaman, the Syrian military leader
- 1 We read of his being cured of leprosy by dipping seven times in the Jordan River (2 Kings 5).
 - 2 Yet when he was cleansed of his leprosy he did not erect a shrine or altar on Jordan's banks and attribute healing powers to its muddy waters.
 - 3 He knew and knew well that Elisha's God had made *him* whole.
- D Some observations from the blind man in John 9.
- 1 The blind man in this chapter was made to see for the very first time by washing in Siloam's waters there in Jerusalem.
 - 2 Yet he knew that Jesus, not the waters of Siloam, had opened his formerly

blind eyes (John 9:30).

- 3 He did not erect an altar or build a shrine at Siloam's edges and thus attribute eye opening powers to these waters.
- 4 No other blind man during Jesus earthly ministry was commanded to do this precise act and if one or more had done it on his own, he would have remained blind.

As touching the matter of salvation.

1.

2.

3.

We emphasize hearing but the power to save is in the One

we **hear--the Christ**

(Matt. 17:5; Rom. 10:17

We emphasize faith but the power to save is in the One

we believe--the Christ (John 8:21,24; Acts 16:31; Heb.

11:6).

We emphasize repentance but the power is in the One who.

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IN "WATER SALVATION?"--WHAT IF

ONE IS ON HIS DEATHBED?--Tayl~

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II.

4.

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6.

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8.

9.

commands repentance--the Christ

Acts **17:30**)

(Luke 13:3,5; 24:47;

We emphasize confession but the power to save is in the

One we confess--the Christ (Matt.

Rom. 10:9-10)

10:32; Acts 8:37;

We emphasize baptism but the power to save is in the

One into whom we are baptized and by whose authority

we do it--the Christ (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts

2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet.

3:21

Christ shed His blood in His death. We must contact

that blood to be saved as per Hebrews 9:22; 10:4. We

do not enter into Him until as hearing, believing

repenting and confessing people we are baptized into
Christ, into His church and into the sublime name

of Father, Son and Holy Spirit

12:13; Matt. 28:19

How do we get into His death?

(Gal. 3:27;; 1 Cor

By baptism since we are

baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3-4).

This is the way,

the only way, we can be saved from alien sins

Our sins as erring children are also blood linked as

we see **in 1 John 1:7,9~**

The religious world is not going to quench in the

least our steadfastness in preaching the necessity o,

baptism in water for the remission of sins. We know

Who saves--the Christ. We know how one is Saved--

gospel obedience.

AS TOUCHING DEATHBED SALVATION.

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IN "WATER SALVATION?"--WHAT IF ONE IS ON firS DEATHBED--Taylor

A.

B.

c.

D.

E.

F

G.

This is a ploy frequently used by people to argue against

salvation for the alien by hearing,

faith, repentance,

confession and especially baptism.

This last ordinance

the religious world hates with a passion y~t most of them practice some facet of it while denying it is essential for salvation.

They portray. people who through life refused to hear

Christ,

form faith in Him, repent of sins, confess His

Deity and be immersed into the name

of Father, Son and

Holy Spirit as per

Romans 10:17; Acts 16:31;

17:30; 8:37

Galatians 3:27; Matthew'28:19.

Then in the final moments of life,with death at the door, they

say a half dozen words or less in desperation for the Lord

to save them. They may not even believe in the Deity of

Jesus Christ or have any concept of Biblical repentance.

They are asking God to save them minus obedience t'o the

plainly stated terms of the gospel which they have hated

till this desperate moment in their life.

ut.tering

They are asking God to save them by *I* a short sinner's

prayer of which there is not a syllable of support in

Scripture nor a word of warrant in God's Word.. This whole

thing is as foreign to Scripture as anything can be.

They are asking God to save them though they have not

been born again, born anew or born of water and the Spirit.

They are asking God to save them outside of Christ and

outside His church for deathbed religion, as a rule,

does not include baptism INTO Christ which is the ONLY

way to come into Him.

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IN "WATER SALVATION?"--WHAT IF ONE IS-

H.

I

J.

K

L.

M.

N.

They are asking God to save them minus the blood of Christ

the sinner's prayer does not connect that blood at all

They are asking God to save them without doing what alien

sinner's uniformly are told to do in Sacred Scripture.

There

is no way this can be right!

A dying infidel is reported to have said on his deathbed

"O Lord,

if there be a Lord, save my soul,

if I have a soul

hell,

if there be a hell!"

How much different is the person who has disbelieved in God and rejected 'the gospel ALL his life and dies desperately *with* a prayer to be saved than the *infidel* pictured previously?

Not much at all. In judgment will

either one be able to have the Lord say,

"Well done, thou

good and faithful servant:..."

If so, at what basis?

One died *in* infidelity; the other died barely a praying man.

The deathbed is NOT the proper way for an alien sinner to come to terms with the God of heaven who respects His Word

and demands men to do the same.

People may reject the terms of pardon but they are not

going to be replaced with desperation *moves as* death hovers

so closely and then quickly takes a life--a soul not ready

to meet the Maker and

Jliog-e of all the earth.

CONCLUSION: We need to be content in doing what God said do and do

it when we can complete it all which the alien sinner on his

deathbed does not do and cannot do rationally and totally.

Why Don't You Believe AOnce You Are Saved You Are Always

Saved?@

Wayne Jones

INTRODUCTION:

1. God realized that those who lived according to His commands would have to answer questions about such obedience and commitment.
 - a. God realized that future generations of Israelites would ask why they were commanded to observe the Passover (Exo. 12:26); so He instructed that they be ready with an explanation (12:27).
 - b. God realized that future generation of Israelites would wonder about the altar of stones found in the midst of the Jordan River (Jos. 4:6); so He instructed that they be ready with an explanation (4:7).
 - c. God realized that in the Christian dispensation many would question our practices and convictions; so He instructed that we be ready with an answer (1 Pet. 3:15).

2. As Christians (whose responsibility is to teach the Gospel to the whole world), we ought to welcome questions of such a nature.
 - a. Religious questions have always been a launching pad for teaching.
 - (1) The lawyer=s question (Luke 10:25) led to Jesus being able to give the parable of the good Samaritan.
 - (2) The rich ruler=s question (Luke 18:18) led to Jesus being able to point out that not even money should stand in the way of my service to Him.
 - (3) The multitude=s question (Acts 2:37) led to Peter offering the invitation under the Gospel system for the first time.
 - b. Questions can still be used in the same way.
 - (1) When our children show interest through questions, we should be there with a Scriptural answer (because I said so will not suffice in these matters!).

- (2) When our co-workers or family members show interest through questions, we should be there with a Scriptural answer.
3. It is sad that many church members avoid situations like those mentioned above. Why would church members avoid these opportunities? Is it because they are uncomfortable?
- Or maybe it's because they do not have enough Bible knowledge to answer the questions.
 - Or maybe it's because they do not take seriously their responsibility to teach the lost.
4. Therefore, today we answer the question placed before us with three groups of people in mind.
- Those who are lost in believing this damnable doctrine.
 - Those who are seeking the answer to this question.
 - Those who are too afraid, ashamed or concerned to answer.
5. So, why do we not believe that once we are saved we are always saved? Because to believe this doctrine

I. SATAN'S LIE MUST BE BELIEVED.

- A. The doctrine of Aonce saved always saved@ has appeared throughout history with various names and designations.
- Some names given to this doctrine are Athe Impossibility of Apostasy,@ APerseverance of Saints@ and AEternal Security.@
 - This doctrine simply teaches that once a person is saved, he can no longer sin as so to lose his soul in hell.
- B. Despite its various names, the source of this doctrine is Satan himself.
- In the garden, Adam and Eve has a special relationship with God. It was there they talked with God and God talked with them (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:3, 8-19).
 - During this time God gave them a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17).

3. Yet, when Satan approach Eve and she revealed God=s restriction (Gen. 3:2-3), he lied and told her that she would not die (3:4).
 4. In essence, what Satan told Eve was that despite her sin (if she were to eat of the forbidden tree), she would not bear the consequence of her sin.
- C. Satan is divinely labeled as the father of lies (John 8:44). His first lie is still believed and taught today in the form of Aonce saved always saved.@

II. SCRIPTURE MUST BE TWISTED.

A. Proponents of this false doctrine misuse several verses of Scripture in their teaching.

1. At this point we want to openly and honestly look at what these passages are actually teaching.
 2. One thing we must remember is that we cannot use an explanation of on passage that with conflict with or contradict another passage.
- B. AAll that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out@ (John 6:37).
1. According to this verse, Christ will not cast anyone out who comes to him; this passage provides assurance for those living faithfully.
 2. Keep in mind that assurance does not equal unconditional security. This passage does not even mention the person who ceases to follow Christ.
 3. However, Jesus did deal with this situation in another passage (Matt. 18:8-9). According to these verses those who cause offences will be cast off.
 4. Further, at the end of John 6 notice the conversation between Jesus and Peter.
- C. AMy sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall

any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand@ (John 10:27-29).

1. Again these passages teach assurance to those who believe much like passages, such as Romans 8:38-39 and 1 Peter 1:3-5.
 2. Even is the passage quoted above, there are conditions on that assurance (10:27).
 3. It is true that if we faithfully to God, no power of man or Satan can remove us from the fold of God.
 4. However, it is also true that a follower of Christ can leave the fold due to his own decisions (Matt. 18:12-17) and when He leaves he must be brought back or else he will be lost.
- D. ANow unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy@ (Jude 24).
1. Again this verse provides great assurance to those faithfully following him. Don=t we all agree that God is able to keep us safe from sin?
 2. What about those who are not living faithfully? Jude 23 deals with that question and the answer is not Aonce saved always saved.@
- E. In fact, if the Scriptures are not twisted, it is easy to see that the doctrine of Aonce saved always saved@ is a false doctrine.

III. **INSPIRED EXAMPLES MUST BE REJECTED.**

- A. First, consider Simon in Acts 8:4-24.
1. Many in Samaria heard and believed the Gospel and were baptized for the remission of their sins (8:12).
 2. Simon the magician was among those who were saved (8:13). However, after he was saved he offered money for the power to work miracles (8:18-19).
 3. Notice Peter=s response (8:20-23). Here is a saved man who needed to be repent and to be forgiven. Does that sound like

Aonce saved always saved.@

- B. *Second, consider the man who had his father=s wife in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5.*
- 1. Notice according to verse one this was reported among the church (i.e., the called out, the sanctified or the saved).*
 - 2. They were commanded to withdraw Christian fellowship from this man in order that he might repent and be restored (5:5).*
 - 3. Was God requiring that fellowship with his brethren be withheld while his fellowship with God continued?*
- C. *Third, consider the Galatians in Galatians 5:1-5.*
- 1. Galatians is one of many New Testament books written to show that the law of Moses had been taken away and that the law of Christ was now in effect.*
 - 2. Many reading this book had left Judaism for Christianity, but they had been misled back into Judaism.*
 - 3. Because this had happened, Paul wrote these words: AChrist is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace@ (Gal. 5:4).*
- D. *Fourth, consider the Ephesians in Revelation 2:4-5.*
- 1. This was a congregation of people who had been saved by the grace of God (Eph. 1:7; 2:1, 8, 13).*
 - 2. Yet, these same people were told to repent or else in Christ letter to them. Were they Aonce saved always saved?@*

IV. OTHER PROBLEMS WILL ARISE.

- A. *First, believing in Aonce saved always saved@ nullifies most of the New Testament.*
- 1. For example, the book of First Corinthians was written to individuals who had been washed and saved from their sins (1 Cor. 6:9-11).*
 - 2. However, it was written to correct a number of problems in the church there. Why would they need such instruction if*

there was no possibility of their problems causing them to be lost?

3. The same logic could be used in dealing with almost every book of the New Testament after the book of Acts.

B. Second, this doctrine promotes a light, nonchalant attitude toward sin.

C. Third, this doctrine allows for reward without responsibility.

D. Fourth, this doctrine provides hope for those without hope.

CONCLUSION:

1. It is a frightening thing to live without hope; it is more frightening to die without it.
2. There is hope in Christ, if we are willing to do what he requires: Hearing, believing, repenting, confessing and being baptized.
3. Once we have done that we have hope and assurance, but that hope and assurance is dependant upon my continued faithfulness.
4. However, if I fulfill my obligation to Him, I can rest eternal assured that He will fulfill His promises to me.