

**"AS TOUCHING THOSE WHO WERE  
ONCE ENLIGHTENED"**

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Being  
A REVIEW OF THE REASONS  
Given by  
TWO FORMER FRIENDS  
and  
COLABORERS  
When  
"THEY WENT BACK, AND WALKED  
NO MORE WITH HIM"

By  
G. C. BREWER



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"Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes,  
Your defences are defences of clay."—(Job. 13:12.)

GOSPEL ADVOCATE COMPANY  
Nashville, Tennessee



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## CHAPTER I

### "GIVING ALL DILIGENCE TO WRITE"

"Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

This is a review of the reasons given by Brother William Reedy and Brother Carl Etter for giving up "those things which are most surely believed among us" and joining the Congregational Church. It has not been easy to decide to undertake this task and the author has indeed given diligence to write this review. If these dissenting and departing brethren had gone out from us silently there would have been only one sentiment expressed by their friends and former brethren—a sincere sentiment of regret and grief. But their statements and arguments call for a reply if we are to continue to *believe* and if we expect future generations to believe what we believe.

#### 1. *No Censure for these friends.*

Certainly there can be no just censuring of these men and their wives for refusing longer to hold to things which they had ceased to believe; or for seeking the fellowship of people with whose views and practices they are congenial. It is the conviction of some of us who have known these brethren and their wives for many years that they would all have been happier if they had taken this step twenty years ago. At least the Etters have been at cross purposes with their brethren for about that long, and have complained and criticized constantly. In return they have themselves been criticized and castigated by at least some among us. Theirs has not been a happy situation. Many of us have sympathized with them and would have helped them if we could have done so. Brother Etter confessed

to some of us years ago that he had ceased to believe some of the most fundamental facts of Christianity and he told us *how* his faith had been shaken. He at that time, however, seemed anxious to recapture the faith he had lost and to enjoy again the confidence and the fellowship of the people he loved. Even then, though, he was troubled by faults and errors which he had discovered among the saints. Those of us who talked with him readily admitted the existence of these faults among us and we still admit this. It is not the purpose of this review to deny all the charges that these brethren allege against us. Many of them are at least founded on facts and it is to be hoped that facing these facts frankly will help us to make some corrections and to bring about better conditions. No, it is not the purpose of this review either to *denounce* these men or to *deny* all their charges. Personalities shall as far as possible be kept out of these considerations. It is apparent to some of us that some personal resentment and bitterness crept into the statement that these brethren had published—especially in the enumerated stipulations given by Brother Etter. It is also evident that they endeavored to keep such a spirit out of their asseverations and we shall not, therefore, give notice to any acrimony that may be lurking in their verbiage. Only when a charge includes that which is *personal, present*—not existing in the past and not necessarily continuing into the future—and *local* shall we expose a fallacy that may reflect a bad spirit.

## 2. *The Purpose of the Review.*

If the reasons given by these supposedly able and respected men justify them in taking the step they have announced then they will justify others—all of us—in taking a like step. Nay, they make it imperative that we do just that. If we constitute a narrow, bigotted, bitter, bickering sect the sooner we can disband, dissolve and cease to exist the better it will be for the cause of pure Christianity and for the world. Brother Etter foresees our approaching dissolution and if he is right in his allegations it is to be devoutly hoped that he is not wrong in



his prophecy. But the fallacy in this reasoning lies in the fact that it does not take into account the obvious truth that factions will die and that faults, sins and apostasies among the people of God will continue to appear, will now increase and then diminish, but the people of God will continue to live and to "Keep the faith." Truth does not change and cannot perish. The church cannot be overthrown. The gates of hades cannot prevail against her. The powers of evil may assault her, sins may hinder her and weaklings may desert her but she will not fall or fail. The church is not a mechanical thing—it is a spiritual entity. It is not a political or ecclesiastical organization—it is the incarnation of principles, the manifestation of an ideal. The Kingdom of God is within you. The Kingdom is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

But since the fallacies in their reasoning seem to be hidden to the men who have offered it to us it is reasonable to suppose that they will be hidden to many others. It is the purpose, therefore, of this review to expose these fallacies. If the reasons given seem an ample justification to Reedy and Etter for their renunciation of the faith it is certain that these reasons will lead some others to do the same thing in this age of atheism, modernism and of changing ideals, customs and beliefs. Even future generations will use these same specious arguments to cover the stark nakedness of their unbelief. "Their word will eat as doth a gangrene . . . and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:17-18). This is why the author after giving all diligence "*was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.*"



## CHAPTER II

"WHAT SAYEST THOU OF THYSELF"—(John 1:22)

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee." (Luke 19:22)

"Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth." (Prov. 6:2)

"Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I;

Yea, thine own lips testify against thee." (Job 15:6)

Here we give the exact words of the men who are the subjects of this review. These statements were published in the *West Coast Christian*, May-June 1945 issue. Let those who wish to follow this review read carefully what they say and try to understand and to feel the full force of their reasoning:

### "WHY WE HAVE CHANGED FELLOWSHIPS"

*William P. and Jessie T. Reedy*

614 S. St. Andrews Pl., Los Angeles

In the November, 1944, issue of "West Coast Christian" appears a statement from the pen of Brother James L. Lovell, the editor. The statement to which I refer concerns Carl and Grayce Etter, Mrs. Reedy and me. Brother Lovell deploras the fact that we "have cast our lots with the Congregational Church." He urges brethren everywhere to write to us. He says, "If you and I do what Jesus teaches we will leave the ones who are safe and seek to bring these who are lost back home. The least I can do is ask you to write them. . . . It might be that with thousands of letters from those of us who feel safe (?) in the fold, they might repent."

I deeply appreciate the interest expressed by Brother Lovell in our behalf. However, so far as I am concerned, I feel that "Jimmie" has missed the mark entirely; has

based his statement upon assumptions; has omitted facts which should have been told if he were going to "write us up"; and has misled his readers as to the real cause of our change. I am constrained, therefore, to write this word and make an explanation which you should have and in justice to myself. My wife feels the same as I do about this matter and concurs with me in this statement.

A number of letters have been received. The writers, every one of them thus far, have shown a spirit and a sincerity which are commendable. I appreciate and honor those writers for that. Some have expressed sorrow and regret because of our "changed attitude," not knowing the circumstances involved and without knowledge of the situation which brought the change about. Others whose knowledge and insight go deeper, expressed a sympathetic understanding, as one humbly wrote, "I'm so concerned that we've allowed a condition to develop in the church where good people are driven away." Still others have written and expressed satisfaction that we have had the courage of our convictions.

I feel kindly toward all the brethren. I have no bitterness in my heart for I love you all. I humbly submit to you some of my reasons for changing fellowships. My statement which follows is an effort to answer some of the questions which have been asked in the letters received.

My "changed attitude toward the church" has not come about suddenly nor without due consideration of all that is involved in such a change. It is not the result of any one thing which has happened at Southwest church or any other church. It is not due to any real or fancied slight or wrong done to me. Moreover, I was not motivated by an ambition for place or prestige or distinction to make such a change. I was not moved by "preacher pride," nor the loss of "professional" status. No! It is far deeper than that. I will confess that I have struggled for years within myself trying to reconcile certain practices and attitudes of the Church of Christ, as I know it, with the Spirit and teaching of our Lord and His apostles. When it finally came to the point that I had to say and

teach what I sincerely believed in order to be true to myself and to my God, I found that I could not do that, without being not only criticized but ostracized and regarded as "not loyal," "off color," "unsound," and the like. The church has devised a formal pattern, to which one must conform even to stereotyped phraseology, if one is to retain favor with "those who seemed to be somewhat." (Galatians 2:6.) A deep conviction which told me that I must be true to what I believed was right and what God wanted me to do, moved me to rebel against such intolerance. I could not be true to myself and to God, and remain in the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

Yes, I have changed. I am glad I have changed. But to many, this is an unpardonable sin. There are those who speak with pride of their "unchanged and unchanging position." I do not think it is smart to be smug. But there are some who consider changelessness a mark of "loyalty" of religious superiority. Those who are entirely filled with the spirit of conservation have no spirit of exploration or advance.

I offer no apology for having changed my mind on many subjects. I am not ashamed to admit that my mind is not yet made up on many other matters. I do not feel that my present judgment represents the last word. No one has heard the last word—it has not been spoken. I hope to outgrow tomorrow what I think and preach today.

Ultimate truth is, of course, fixed, but my conception of truth is not fixed nor should it be. If it were, all possibility of growth would be ended. Within the Bible itself there are great growths—great developments in the basic concepts of truth. The attitude of the Church of Christ assumed at this point constitutes her greatest sin. She has crystalized her conceptions of God, Christ, the Bible, the Plan of Salvation and all the rest into a closed, completed pattern, and by so doing identifies these conceptions with the total truth on these subjects. This is wrong. It is not right to identify truth with our conceptions of truth. This attitude on the part of the Church of Christ makes her intolerant and causes the good that is in her to defeat the best which she might have. This attitude closes

the door against all progress, and forbids the voicing of any newly discovered truths or the expression of honest convictions. This is exactly what the Pharisees did in our Saviour's day. This was the cause of His break with them.

All churches (fellowships) are human in many respects, including the Church of Christ. And in so far as they are human they are imperfect and sinful. It is therefore obvious that all have truth—all have error. I have, frankly, not found it very satisfying nor fruitful to compare and try to determine which was the nearest to the "divine pattern," seeing that one is "nearer" in some things, while others are "nearer" in other things. One will never find a body, a church, a fellowship which is right in every thing and at every point, and I do not think that one can ever belong to any church and believe or accept everything it teaches and practices. I did not when I was in the Church of Christ fellowship and of course there are certain things held in Congregationalism to which I personally do not subscribe as a matter of teaching. But in the Congregational Church there exists an attitude which tolerates—yes, appreciates points of view which are different. So, if I want to believe in immersion and preach it, I may, without being disfellowshipped. Could I follow that principle in the Church of Christ as we know it? One does not have to subscribe to any creed or dogma or to any certain belief other than that of belief in Jesus Christ our Lord.

All the while that I was identified with the Church of Christ I was preaching unity and practicing division. The unity of Spirit, or unity in diversity, which is in my judgment, the unity taught in the Bible, is all but unknown among those who are with the Church of Christ. I feel very definitely that the Congregational Church comes "nearer" demonstrating what the unity of the Spirit is, as taught in the New Testament, than any other fellowship I know.

Now let me hasten to say that I do not consider that I have left the Church of Christ, neither have I "departed from the faith." As a matter of fact, all I have done is

to shift my fellowship from one group to another. I have not believed for a long time that the Church of Christ, as we knew it, could boast or claim that it was or is the one and only true Church of Christ. As a matter of fact it is not. No group can boast that it is the one and only Body of Christ. Yet it does not follow that Christ does not have a Body. He does indeed have a Body. The Body of Christ is better and bigger than any one group or all of them together. I would not say that all of the churches, as such, constitute the Body of Christ. The church consists of God's people everywhere. I do not know who all of God's people are,—in this world, in the U.S.A., or in any local fellowship. I imagine the names on any one "church book" are not the same or identical with those which God has enrolled in heaven for that church. But we are not the judges.

I admire the words of a dear brother in Christ written a few years ago. They are apropos and I here make use of them. Here is what he said: "Some one may say that the church consists of the 'faithful,' or 'loyal.' But who are they? We must remember, no one is absolutely 'faithful' or 'loyal.' We can only be so 'relatively,' not 'absolutely.' Some are very faithful in some respects and very unfaithful in other respects. All are unfaithful some where. When we try to answer the question: Who is 'faithful' or 'loyal,' we are faced with the fact that every one will raise or lower the standard according to his measure of understanding as to what is important in a basis of fellowship and a formula of salvation. In the Church of Christ alone, as we know it, we can get twenty-two or more different answers. In calling a divided church to unity, it would depend on who was doing the calling,—as to what the basis of unity would be!

"When we have undertaken to point out definitely just who are the 'faithful' or 'loyal' in our church fellowship, local or general,—when we have done all of this, how can we be sure the names we have on 'our book' are the same ones God has on His? If we cannot be sure, why not leave it all to the Judge? Will He not do right?"

“What modern, model church reaches up to the brotherly love, benevolence, unity, missionary zeal, personal purity of life, discipline, radiance and joy of the true, divine church of God? Why isn't it just as fatal to lack apostolicity in one respect as to lack it in another? Why is it more important to restore the 'form of doctrine'—outward, objective forms,—of the true church than to restore its spirit?”

So we find some of God's people everywhere—in all of the different fellowships—and the Spirit of Christ which prevails in them will finally find expression. This Family of God, this Church of Christ is the all-glorious Body of Christ which takes cognizance of great issues and does not parley over matters of second rate importance.

As to the name, just this one statement: If you think of the church in terms of that heavenly, spiritual, vital Body made up of all of the redeemed, past and present, everywhere, in heaven and in earth; and not think in terms of some little group or sect or denomination, objectively conceived, then you will have no difficulty. It is the Church of Christ, and to this all Christians agree.

I must say quite frankly that while it is most likely that the first church did not use instruments of music in their worship, I am not convinced on that account that it is wrong. I shall never again make an issue of it. I feel now it should never have been made an issue. The slogan has been, “where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent.” As a matter of fact, the Church of Christ has often spoken where the Bible is silent; and has been silent where the Bible has spoken.

One good brother whom I esteem very highly, wrote and “wondered if I could say with Paul, ‘I have kept the faith.’” All I may say is that I still love the Church and the Bible and my reverence for God is deeper and more meaningful and my peace of soul is far more satisfying now than it ever was. I would have you remember, however, that Paul left the Jewish Church but not until after he had consented to Stephen's death at which time he joined with those who were accusing that righteous man of “ceasing not to speak blasphemous words against this



holy place, and the law." Acts 17:13. Yes, Paul changed and was himself accused, because he had changed, of "persuading men to worship God contrary to the law." Acts 18:13. Yes, Paul broke with the traditions of the Jewish Church but retained all the good in the law and the prophets as he sought to go on unto perfection. In principle, that is what I have done.

I could have continued in the Church of Christ fellowship. I turned down many invitations from brethren and churches in various places. Why did I not accept these invitations? Why did I not continue to preach and teach within the limits of the "brotherhood"? One good and influential brother told me frankly: "You will be accepted if you will go back and preach the sermons you preached twenty-five years ago and hold protracted meetings as you did twenty-five years ago." That of course I cannot do. This ought to be obvious. The gospel of Christ means so much more to me now than it did twenty-five years ago. How can one "go back" when the whole genius of the gospel says, "go forward?"

I want to be tolerant toward sincere Christians whose convictions differ from my own. This does not mean that such tolerance dissolves convictions. On the contrary, Christians must have positive convictions about the truth. We all need to grow in our comprehension of truth but this is not possible without tolerance, without the spirit of respect for a clear, personal faith on the part of the other.

I share the feeling and spirit of an honored contemporary who writes, "I have come into the Congregational-Christian Churches seeking for a more flexible and adequate instrument with which to work for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth. I have come hoping for that combination of honesty and freedom, breadth and tolerance, and spiritual earnestness and passion which is by no means always wrapped up in the same bundle. Thus far I have not been disappointed in my search. I am grateful beyond words for a communion which is as wide in its welcome and outreach as the Spirit of the Living God. May I say in conclusion that no one should be com-

pelled to depart from his inherited church home base in order to find freedom, tolerance and spiritual vitality at one time.”

614 S. St. Andrews Place,  
Los Angeles 5, California.

March 1st, 1945.

## WHY WE LEFT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

*Carl and Grayce Etter*

110 S. Norton Ave., Los Angeles

Since the *West Coast Christian* carried an announcement of our affiliation with the Congregational Church, a number of friends have written to us expressing regrets. These kind letters have been appreciated and we are preparing a brief statement for the information of these interested friends.

The shock which these good people have received from our move is quite understandable. We are members of Church of Christ families which have been identified with the church for several generations. We are former students of Christian Colleges, and I served as head of the Religion Department in one of them. In days gone by I have had opportunities to serve those schools as dean and also as president, and have occupied Church of Christ pulpits from Detroit to Los Angeles. For four years we were in Japan where I taught in the Hokkaido Imperial University and assisted in establishing the first Church of Christ mission in the northern islands of Japan.

Therefore, our religious change has not been made in ignorance of the Church of Christ and its teachings. Neither has it been made in haste, not in anger, but out of deep conviction—a conviction that has grown over a period of many years of university training, prayer and thoughtful consideration. Our reasons for this change are legion, but we shall list only a few of them in this statement.

First, we do not subscribe to the belief that the Church of Christ, as it so labeled, includes all true Christians. To become identified with another religious group of peo-

ple is no evidence that one is not a member of the Church of Christ in its true and universal sense.

Second, the teaching of the church of Christ is based upon a superficial interpretation of the Bible and is fundamentally in error. This is true with reference to the nature of God, Christ, the Bible, the Church, man's mission in the world, and many other issues, having both theological and social implications.

Third, the teaching of the Church of Christ is inconsistent and contradicts the announced slogans of the so-called Restoration Movement. The Church of Christ proposes to speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where it is silent. It does neither.

Fourth, the Church of Christ claims to have no creed except Christ, but it has over twenty unwritten creeds to one of which one must subscribe in order to have fellowship of the particular wing of the church with which one chooses to become identified. Some of the letters which we have received, including letters from ministers known to be "sound in the faith," point out that the Church of Christ is becoming increasingly interested in heresy hunting. How do these heresy hunters determine when they have found a victim? They hear his speech or read his writings and weigh what they hear or read against the teaching in the unwritten creed or creeds of the church which they have adopted as their standard. Christ was wise enough to stay out of the writing field, but He was finally apprehended by the heresy hunters of His day and condemned on the basis of hearsay. The hearsay was inaccurate, as it always is, but His devotion to truth was strong enough to lead Him to His cross rather than recant and subscribe to the unwritten creed of those He knew to be in error. Had He done otherwise He would have died in oblivion, and probably would have lost His own soul as did the heresy hunters who nailed Him to His cross.

Fifth, the Church of Christ claims to have all the truth, but, in fact, is groping in darkness. It absolutely forbids new light to enter and perpetuates its own inadequate insights by refusing to hear those who have persisted in

their quest for truth. The founder of the Christian religion met the same type of religionists in His day and told them that it was a case of the blind leading the blind.

Sixth, The Church of Christ makes great capital of its ability properly to divide the word of God, but the system used is without scriptural sanction and has the net result of rejecting large portions of the Bible on the grounds that it was written to another people or a different age. The historical approach to Bible study restores every verse of the Scriptures and makes the entire Bible throb with intense interest to the modern student.

Seventh, the educational program of the Church of Christ is unwilling to trust the youth of the church with the facts of life and religion. It exposes its youth to a smattering of superficialities and when they go on for more advanced learning they are often left in a state of frenetic confusion. Some of them drop by the wayside, a few go on to new convictions while others apathetically fall in line with public opinion within the church, ratify and perpetuate the existing order. Our souls are stirred by mixed emotions when intelligent, highly educated ministers say, "We know these to be the facts, but our people are not yet ready to receive them. We must go slowly and lead them gradually." We would be the last to betray these ministers. We fully recognize their desire to remain with the people whom they love better than their own souls, but we feel that a deeper loyalty to Christ should inspire them to take up their crosses and follow Him who said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Eighth, the leaders of the Church of Christ have placed it in an embarrassing position by continual warfare upon science and the scientific attitude. This fight against science is based upon fear that it will destroy faith in the pet shibboleths of the church. It does. Some of the most cherished doctrines of the Church of Christ burst as iridescent bubbles when exposed to the searchlight of the scientific approach in religion. The Apostle Paul was using scientific terminology when he said, "Prove all

things; hold fast that which is good." It is true that real science does not drive one away from true religion. Dr. Millikan is an ardent Congregationalist, and other scientists are also devout Christians. The scientific approach to religion should have a salutary effect in driving out much of the superstition and fear which has haunted religion through the centuries, and will help the Church to retain in its leadership the many good men who otherwise would be lost.

Ninth, the message of the Church of Christ is negative in much of its teaching, and offers no constructive program to take the place of that which it condemns. With reference to many of its "thou shalt nots," it could well afford to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive."

Tenth, the Church of Christ has such great faith in the correctness of its position that it has developed a smugness that borders on a holier-than-thou attitude so well illustrated by certain religious sects who received the most scathing rebukes of Christ in His day.

Eleventh, The Church of Christ preaches undenominational christianity, but, in reality, is the most denominational of all denominations. It is neither Protestant nor Catholic, but a group of small, warring sects which are little denominations within a denomination.

Twelfth, The Church of Christ preaches unity and practices division more viciously than any church with which we are familiar. The greatest need in this war-torn world is united effort on the part of Christian peoples around the earth. In our opinion, the Church of Christ will not espouse such a cause, but will continue to tear itself to pieces over minor issues while Rome burns.

Thirteenth, the Church of Christ refuses to cooperate with its religious neighbors in movements that are designed to make the world a better place in which to live, but compasses land and sea in quest of proselytes on the basis of having a more certain pattern for reaching heaven. Jesus told the proselyters of His day that their converts became two-fold more the children of hell, and

we might well ask ourselves if we are not helping history to repeat itself as this point.

Fourteenth, the Church of Christ, in many places, is trying to carry water on both shoulders by appearing to be liberal to the world and strictly orthodox to its own brotherhood. In one case the church's position on undenominational Christianity was deliberately made to appear as a broad gauged liberal Christianity which was wide open to peoples of all religious faiths. Certain of our Christian colleges have found this to be a good way to gain prestige with the educational leaders of the community.

Fifteenth, the Church of Christ claims to be allied with with the religious fundamentalists, but its position is more accurately described by the term incidentalist. The merest incidental in the daily experience of New Testament characters is magnified into a matter of great importance and around it is built an article of faith for the unwritten creed. Even a matter which was so incidental that neither Christ nor the Apostles referred to it in any way is included in the creed on the basis that the New Testament is not only inclusive but exclusive in its teaching. Instrumental music is an incidental which falls in this category. The modern hymnal and many other things might well be condemned on the same basis. The incidentalists in Christ's day placed religious significance on the incidental of washing hands; and it is strange that the Church of Christ has not done the same for the washing of feet, because they have a New Testament example for that custom. The Jews and Samaritans considered the place of worship an incidental of great importance but Jesus pointed out to them that the place of worship is a mere incidental and focused their attention upon the more important fact that God is a spiritual being and "seeketh such to worship him." Those same religionists crucified Christ because He discredited other incidentals in their religion and pointed them to the "weightier matters of the law." From the viewpoint of His adversaries He was a modernist in His day, but, in reality, He emphasized

fundamentals and they magnified incidentals. Incidental-ism should not be mistaken for fundamentalism.

Sixteenth, the Church of Christ has its eyes on the past and is more concerned with "old paths" than it is in directing people to paths they can follow successfully in our modern age. Although we wear the habiliments of civilization some of us have not advanced far from the primitive tribal faith in the witch doctor. Our gullibility and non-scientific approach to the concepts of our forebears have prevented us from getting a true perspective of the world in which we live. In order to preserve preconceived and inherited theories of Biblical inspiration and interpretation we villify God before our youth by identifying Him with the wars of the Jews and the slaughter of ancient races while we do and say little to outlaw war and relieve race tensions in our own day. We pay great tribute to the inspired prophets of old and attribute marvelous things to the New Testament period of inspiration, but oppose as unscriptural innovations everything that might add beauty and inspiration in the religious experiences of our own children. These are only a few products of the backward look in religion as practiced in the Churches of Christ.

Seventeenth, the Church of Christ does not encourage growth and has a set policy which opposes change. No institution, including the church, can hope to survive in this changing world unless it encourages constant reappraisal of things as they are and stimulates hope that leads to action for their betterment. This does not mean that eternal verities are to be kept in constant flux, but it does suggest that these lasting values must constantly be reoriented in a changing world, as Jesus did for religion in His day. Any other policy leads to an enduring social stratification based on birth, race, religion or wealth, inherited or otherwise acquired.

Eighteenth, the Church of Christ has no place in its fellowship for those who do not conform fully to the status quo. Even though we cast him out of our ecclesiastical circle, we expect him to remain with us and expose his

children to our unfair and vicious attacks. Every man, woman and child must have a feeling of security and a sense of belonging. It has been my observation for many years that the Church of Christ withdraws these essential requirements of the human spirit from those who manifest a tendency to do independent thinking. This is a subtle type of force. A more democratic institution appeals to reason rather than force to secure its end.

Nineteenth, the Church of Christ has a double standard for judging persons who are accused of violating what the church considers to be New Testament teaching. Those who transgress the moral code are dealt with on one basis and those who depart from the Church's theological position are dealt with on a different basis. Here is an illustration of how two leaders were handled: One man was reported to be liberal in his point of view; the other was convicted of immoral conduct. The liberal was cast out and forced to seek another fellowship, even though he loved the church with every fibre of his being. The man who had violated the moral law was exalted to the most honored positions in the church. This illustration could be multiplied ten fold.

Twentieth, there are many indications that the Church of Christ is showing signs of decadence and that it is running a marathon race with catastrophe. It is true that certain shifts in our population are causing increased membership in some sections of the country, but there is little manifest interest by those from without. Of greater significance is the fact that many members of the church are discontented, discouraged, and starving for spiritual uplifts which do not, and cannot radiate from a church whose message is fundamentally negative, argumentative, belligerent, and antagonistic.

Having been denied in the Church of Christ a whole-hearted fellowship in which we could raise our family, we have sought the fellowship of the Congregationalists, not because they are perfect, nor because they have all the truth. However, they encourage scholarship, are in harmony with modern religious thought, practice tolerance



within and without their fellowship, earnestly seek and accept new truth, have a rare faculty for discerning fundamentals, do not disproportionately emphasize incidentals, weigh all related facts in their interpretation of the Bible and religion, have neither a written or unwritten creed, have a constructive, modern educational program for youth, encourage intellectual honesty, take cognizance of the present and look toward the future, cooperate fully with every good cause, encourage growth, are not opposed to change, allow for individual differences in spiritual growth, and fellowship those who have attained different levels of religious thinking in their development.

If we ever come to feel differently we shall be frank to say so, and shall be as sincere then as we are in the stand we are now taking. In the meantime, we are still your friends and shall continue to love you as we always have.



### CHAPTER III

## THEY "SERVED WITH ME IN THE FURTHERANCE OF THE GOSPEL"

This is not a life-story of the men who have gone out from us, and personalities are to be played down as much as possible, but we cannot escape the fact that it is the personal decision and action of individuals who were highly esteemed among us that occasioned this review and discussion. A few points about the men themselves should, therefore, add interest to this story. Brother Etter has given a fairly full summary of his work as a preacher, teacher and missionary. He wants it to be known that he had the confidence, esteem and support of his brethren and that he could have held positions of honor in the work done by the disciples if he had chosen to conform to their ideas. This claim is not boastful. It is a true statement of fact. No two young people in our times have been held in higher esteem than Carl and Grayce Etter. Their fine personalities, their zeal and their faith gave them ready access to the hearts of the brethren everywhere. They could have had anything they wanted that simple Christians can give if they had remained faithful. Even if some individual or some local group did fail them—a point that has always been disputed—when they were in a foreign country they were not cast off by the brethren generally and what they suffered at the hands of a few have been made up and repaid many times over by the sympathy, the love and the kindness of the many. What gospel preacher or missionary has not suffered at the hands of "false brethren"? Paul himself had that experience.

But Carl and Grayce shook the confidence of their brethren by criticizing and denouncing certain things that some brethren believe and do. If these criticisms had

been directed only at errors and faults and if the critics had at the same time shown the better way and stood fast for "the faith," there would have been no trouble. This was not the case.

They made "shipwreck of the faith" and, just as they have done in the paper in Chapter II of this work, they played up the faults and weaknesses of their brethren to justify their own default. Then when they wanted to get back into the good graces of the brethren they could not make a full and forthright *confession of faith*. This author had personal interviews with Carl Etter on these points and *he knows whereof he speaks*. It was a heart-rending case but the real condition of the man could not be hidden. There can be no doubt that these people have now gone to the right place. They do not belong to us, but it was no doubt hard for them to break away from people they love, and it is hard for us to give them up.—We would *believe for them* if we could.—Some of us actually did try to *confess* for them.—We even now say what is here said weeping.

Brother and Sister Reedy are older than the Eppers and have spent many years in preaching the gospel and working for the Lord.—There was a time when Brother Reedy labored with his own hands in menial toil to support himself and his family while he preached the gospel. Then fortune smiled upon him and he became economically independent. He then began to try to finish his education—so that he would be a better preacher of the gospel. *That was his motive*. No man deserved more credit than he for struggling through the required studies and meeting the demands of the educational standards. A man in middle life with no credits at all and yet he toiled for years until he finally achieved entrance requirements for college. Then in four more years he had his bachelor's degree. He did not stop for a moment. He went right on and has now attained the highest degree. He is to be congratulated and praised for this.

It was but natural that those who had known and loved Brother Reedy through the years would want to see him

take a teaching position among his brethren after he attained his degrees. Some of us, however, saw a change in Brother Reedy. We feared that he had been hurt by his higher education. We saw modernistic tendencies in his life and heard expressions that belong peculiarly to those who hold modernistic ideas. Some of us may have seen this before Brother Reedy himself was fully conscious of it. Nay, he does not seem even yet to avow modernism fully, but he has now aligned himself with it and he will have to preach it and practice it. He is more conservative in his statement than is Carl Etter. He had a better grasp on the gospel and understood better what the church is, than Etter ever did. He plainly acknowledges that he has changed his view on some details of teaching, such as instrumental music, but he protests that he has not "departed from the faith" and even states that he can teach the truth on baptism in his new relationship. If he does *not know* that he is wrong about this he will soon learn it—that is he would learn it if he *wanted to teach the truth on baptism which he will not want to do*. *He has departed from the faith, his statement to the contrary notwithstanding*, as we shall see in another chapter. He cannot hide the fact that he has "denied the faith" by pointing to and enlarging upon the faults of his brethren. Brother Reedy did not attempt to do this to the extent that Brother Etter did. His statement manifests a very commendable spirit but it contains some implied charges and resorts to some very illogical reasoning. For example he and Brother Etter both treat the church as a denomination, use the expression *Church of Christ* in a denominational sense and assume—nay, they charge—that it is a small, narrow, sect. They reason upon the premise that all sects are "Christian sects" and that the real church of our Lord contains all Christians and therefore contains all sects. These are only different group of Christians. This is the claim that sectarians have always made and which Brother Reedy has met and refuted many times. He now makes it himself to justify his act in joining a

sect. The same motive that all other sectarians have always had.

Lest we seem here to deny a truth we hasten to say that *the Church does indeed contain all Christians*. It could not be otherwise when we know what the church is. Now how this can be true and the church still not include and be composed of all sectarian groups we shall attempt to show in another chapter.

Brother Reedy says if we think of the Church as containing all Christians and that some of these Christians are in denominations (we do admit both these points) then we can not charge that he has left the Church simply because he has joined a denomination. In this reasoning our brother thought he would put us in a dilemma. We must either deny that there are any Christians in the denominations (which would be a pronounced departure from the restoration premise and a radical denial of the restoration contention) or we must concede that he may be a Christian in a denomination. Thus he assumes and wants us to concede that the restoration principle would justify him in joining a denomination. Anyone who *knows* the restoration principle will see the fallacy here. That principle implies that denominationalism — sectism — *is wrong and sinful*. It conceded that Christians were in Babylon because they knew no better; they had not been called out and knew not how to serve the Lord as simple Christians. Certainly this excuse cannot be offered in behalf of Brother Reedy. (This will be shown to be the restoration principle in the treatment of sectarianism in another chapter.) The call of the restoration is and always has been, "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." Since Brother Reedy has reversed the order and "*gone in among them*," how can he say he has not betrayed the cause?

As to whether or not Brother Reedy has gone out of the church may be determined by considering the following points.

The church is the house or household or family of God (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6; 1 Pet. 2:5). It is

a household of faith (Gal. 6:10). This is because its members—children—become members or children by faith. “For ye are the sons of God through faith in, Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:26). Now we become sons of God by faith and we continue to be—to live as—sons of God by faith (Heb. 10:38). We lose the reward and go out of the household through *unbelief* (Heb. 10:39; Col. 1:21-23; Heb. 3:12, 18; 4:1).

All the laws, ceremonies, votes and initiatory processes on earth could not join a soul to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17) without faith in the soul of the individual—Nor could all the bulls of excommunication of all the sects and all the denunciations of sincere but mistaken Christians disconnect the soul of the *believer* from the Lord—Only *unbelief* will do that—No one takes you into the church and no one can put you out of the church. *It is a spiritual relationship*: the spirit (of man) is born of the Spirit (Holy Spirit) (John 3:6)—(To be sure there is a physical act and a material element—baptism—in the process, but it is nevertheless a spiritual birth and a spiritual relationship). Faith puts one into the church and unbelief takes one out—If Brother Reedy has *denied the faith* he is out—and no mistake. His announced act in the light of his own former teaching will help us to know whether or not he has denied his Lord. If he has not he can yet repent and be saved—So also can all others who have not denied the Lord.

“Arise, O God, plead thine own cause; Remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee all the day.” (Ps. 74: 22.)

“But to the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes,

And that thou hast taken my covenant into thy mouth,  
Seeing that thou hatest instruction,

And castest my words behind thee?” (Ps. 50:16-17.)





## CHAPTER IV

### "IS THERE NOT A LIE IN MY RIGHT HAND?"

"He feedeth on ashes; and a deceived heart hath turned him aside; and he cannot deliver his soul, nor say: Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:20.)

As was mentioned in the preceding chapter, Brother Reedy and Brother Etter both contend that they are only "Changing fellowships"; simply ceasing to work with one group of Christians—Albeit a very ignorant, narrow, partisan bunch—and beginning to work with another group of Christians—a very liberal group, the Congregational Church. They have not ceased to be Christians; they have not departed from the faith and they have not given up serving the Lord. Nay, they are entering into a larger service; they will no longer look backward or search for the "old paths," but they must look forward, survey a wider horizon, attain a higher culture and make entirely new paths through the mental morass of a modernistic, socialistic, communistic, atheistic age! No dictum of prophet or apostle must hinder them in their forward sweep and spiritual growth! The people with whom they are now affiliated allow the utmost in freedom—they had no freedom at all in the New Testament church! They can now have higher and more scholarly views of God—they will no longer be compelled (?) to worship a cruel, anthropomorphic God:—they can worship the *Divine immanence* now! They will no longer have to contemplate such a crude and barbarous thing as the *cross*! They can now *believe* whatever they please or *believe nothing at all*, if they please.

Brother Etter stoutly avers that the Congregationalists have no creed at all—either written or unwritten. If that be true then they *believe nothing at all*—as a group. And that is a fact! The only agreement they have is that they

*shall not believe anything* in particular and, therefore, of course, preach nothing! But Reedy says he will be free to *preach baptism* if he wants to do this. It is true that he will be allowed to *believe* whatever he pleases about baptism but he will not be permitted to insist *that anyone else believe it*. *Any definite preachment* would be inconsistent with their principles—they are what they are because they do not have to subscribe to any doctrine.

The Congregationalists are right and scriptural in their polity—the autonomy of the local church, congregational independence. Originally they protested against any authority except the word of God. They would not be governed by any ecclesiastical authority—pope, bishop, conference or convention. In this they were and are right. But then they were Calvinistic in doctrine; now they are extremely modernistic.

But lest we misrepresent them, and in order that we may see the contrast between their views and the views formerly held by Brethren Reedy and Etter (to be given in the next chapter), let us here give a statement from one of their own men concerning the Congregational Church. This is taken from the article, "Congregationalism," by Dr. Williston Walker in Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics:

## 2. Fundamental Principles. P. 19.

Early Congregationalism was a product of the devotion of the Reformation epoch to the Bible. That period exalted the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice. If the Scriptures teach fully all that is requisite for men to know or believe, and all duties of the Christian life, it was but logical to raise the question whether they did not also contain a complete and authoritative guide as to the nature, organization, officering and administration of the Christian Church. It was the conviction that the Bible contained such a pattern that gave rise to congregationalism. . . .

## 7. Beliefs. P. 23.

Congregationalism has been a system of Church polity rather than a peculiar form of faith. In its

early history it stood, in common with Puritanism in general, on the basis of Calvinism. The Cambridge Synod in New England, in 1648, approved the doctrinal portions of the Westminster Confession; and the Savoy Synod in London, ten years later, expressed a like concurrence, except for slight modifications. The 'New England Theology' of the 18th and 19th Cents., whatever its departures from earlier Calvinism, belonged to the Calvinistic school. It regarded itself as an improved or 'consistent' Calvinism. The Declaration adopted by the Union of Congregational Churches of England and Wales in 1833 is distinctly, though mildly, Calvinistic. The National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States, held in Boston in 1865, was with difficulty prevented from adopting a declaration that the faith of the Churches was 'that is commonly known among us as Calvinism.' The Declaration was frustrated by the determined efforts of those who deprecated any party shibboleths. But the later years of the 19th cent. witnessed a rapid decline of interest in the older doctrinal discussions. The 'Declaration' adopted by the National Council of Oberlin, in 1871, was designed by its omissions to make the way easy for those of Arminian sympathies. The 'creed,' prepared in 1883 by a commission appointed by the National Council, maintains the same neutrality between Calvinism and Arminianism. It will be remembered that these various expressions of belief have the value only of testimonies, each local church being free to declare its faith in its own way. *Since the last of them was set forth, however, the Congregational Churches, in common with Protestantism generally, have been passing through a period of theological restatement—the result of Biblical criticism, of the wide prevalence of an evolutionary view of history, of the new emphasis on Divine immanence, and of a quickened conception of social service as a main aim of the Christian life, whether of individuals or of Churches. No body of*

*Christians has on the whole been more willing to welcome these newer views than the Congregationalists, but the degree in which they have been accepted varies widely in different Churches. It is not sufficient, however, to disturb their sense of fellowship and of continuity with their historic past, or of the broad fundamental outlines of their conception of the meaning of the Gospel.*

10 Problems. P. 24.

“There is also the peril, in city communities, where congregations are gathered largely by elective affinity, that the church may become essentially a religious club. As in all democratic bodies, union for strategic advance is often accomplished at the cost of undue effort, or not achieved at all. In order to make itself more efficient in these respects, without forfeiting the essential autonomy of the local church, Congregationalism, both in Great Britain and in America, is at present displaying a centralizing tendency.”—Dr. Williston Walker, Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Yale University. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*. Jas. Hastings, Vol. 4. 1912 Edition.

From this we see that while the Congregationalists preached the autonomy of each church they did during most of their history have a Synod or a national Council to make a ‘Declaration’ of their principles. They seem to have abandoned that practice now since they have no “agreed upon” principles. At first they accepted the Bible and the Bible alone as authority. But they stood for Calvinism and Puritanism. Now, however, they and Protestantism generally have passed “*through a period of theological restatement.*” This is a true statement of what has been happening. This was written more than thirty years ago and this radical change has become much more general now than it was then. It simply means that the Congregationalists and “Protestants generally” have become Modernists. Just a little attention to what Dr. Walker says will convince anyone of that fact. Note: This “*restatement*” not only caused them to give up Cal-

vinism and Puritanism but it also led them to give up:—

1. The Bible as authority—the “result of Biblical criticism.”

2. The idea of the *fall* and *redemption*. Man did not fall from a perfect state and must now be redeemed by a divine interposition—the “evolutionary view of history” makes this obsolete. That view holds that man started from nothing and has evolved through the brute stage up to where he is now and he will keep on developing until he becomes a demigod—provided Modernism does not produce a few more Hitlers, and Mussolinis who may upset this marvelous evolutionary process by exterminating the human race.

3. The concept of God as a personal being—the “Divine immanence” replaces that. This is a sort of Pantheism. God is not in heaven ruling the universe; He is in you and in everything.

4. The idea that it is the main purpose of the Christian life to be saved from sin and death and to enjoy heaven hereafter, and that it is the work of the Church to save souls—evangelize the world. This old doctrine is now replaced with the “Conception of social service as the main aim of the Christian life”—

5. The problem now is to keep churches from becoming mere social clubs.

6. With the loss of doctrine in Congregational Churches has gone also to a degree the autonomy of the local Church—a “strong Centralizing tendency” was seen as far back as 1912—Modernism and Dictatorships seem to go hand in hand. And why not? The value and dignity of the individual was lost when the “Evolutionary view of history” was adopted.

This is a fine statement of what Modernism is and as to what has brought it about. This quotation is given not to arraign the Congregationalists but to show that Brother Reedy and Brother Etter are hardly so naive as to think they are transferring membership from one group of orthodox Christians to another group of orthodox Christians—a claim they endeavored to palm off on their readers.

In order to make this claim seem plausible they first turned the church of our Lord into a capital C *Church of Christ* denomination and then next turned the Congregational Church into a "Christian Sect"—a band of superior Christians. If it was only instrumental music in the worship and a few other such details on which these brethren changed their minds why did they not go to the conservative branch of the Christian Church or why did they not join the Baptists? Both these groups contend for fundamentals. They emphasize the glorious doctrine of redemption through Jesus Christ our Lord, however much they may fail to follow him in details of doctrine.

But that no one should assume that Brother Etter and Brother Reedy do not know about modernists and what they deny and disbelieve it seems wise to adduce here a quotation from this same Brother William Reedy on this point. He tells us in his own words about the booklet from which this quotation is taken. Here are the first words of his preface:

"In sending out this booklet I feel a word of explanation is necessary. In February, this year (1931), the Southwest Church of Christ, Normandie Ave., at 64th St., Los Angeles, Calif., arranged with the writer that he should deliver a series of six lectures on the general theme, 'What Is The Church of Christ'? Accordingly, the lectures were delivered and a stenographic report was made of them. They were revised and shortened somewhat, and then printed in the People's Bible Advocate. With a few minor changes they now appear in this form."

Beginning on page seven of that booklet Brother Reedy tells us about modernists. Here are his words:

"Let us study with reference to these questions, What use are people making of the Bible now? What are the attitudes that are assumed toward it? To sum it all up there are two general classes of people illustrating two general attitudes toward the use of the Bible. These attitudes or these classes of people are designated by two terms—Modernists and Fundamen-

talists. Now the question arises—am I a Modernist or a Fundamentalism? I cannot well avoid taking a stand here. But what is a Modernist, what is a Fundamentalist? What do these terms mean? As a result of much reading and careful study of the writings of Modernists, I have reached the conclusion that Modernism represents the attitude of the heart and trend of mind which rejects the Bible as authority, relegates it to the background, reduces it to a common plane of uninspired writings, and exalts the intellect of man as the sole standard by which he is to be governed. Let me say just here that those classified as Modernists are recognized generally as believing in the Bible, are recognized generally as Christians. In brief, the ultimate idea of Modernism, is that it rejects the element of the miraculous, seeks to rationalize on the wonders of the Bible, seeks to explain everything that is in the Bible on a rational basis. The human intellect is exalted as the standard of life. Nothing is accepted merely on the principle of faith. They must rationally see through the thing.

Not long since I was sitting in a class of religious education in a certain university. The question was raised, "When and under what circumstances should we teach the element of the supernatural to children?" The professor immediately said, "The element of the supernatural has no place in the religious education of children." I asked that instructor after class, "If that is true, what do we do with the resurrection?" and the answer was, "Even the resurrection is susceptible of an explanation."

Since then the Modernists seek to explain the supernatural element of the Bible from a rational point of view, it follows, that if it does not yield to such explanation, those portions are rejected and discarded, and the Bible is reduced to a book full of holes rather than remaining a Holy Book. Such procedure reduces the Bible to a common plane with uninspired writings; makes human wisdom the sole standard by

which one is to be governed, and the ultimate end will be chaos and confusion such as has never been dreamed of. Even now you may trace many of the ills of life, the social, religious, economic, moral and political unrest to this common source, to this modernistic attitude toward the Bible.

Let us now turn and study the other word—Fundamentalism. Whatever Modernism means, Fundamentalism signifies the reverse. Fundamentalists believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and therefore the revelation from Him. They accept all the miracles at face value including the virgin birth, the resurrection from the dead, and the atonement made by the blood of Jesus Christ. Fundamentalism exalts the Bible above the productions of men.

So Brother Reedy foresaw the "Chaos and confusion" that Modernism would produce. What a pity he did not foresee that it would wreck his own faith! That was in 1931! Behold what education of the modern type hath wrought!

And poor Brother Etter got his education in Japan. He saw the pagan Japanese kill a white bear and eat its flesh and drink its blood and proclaim that it had gone into the "vast unknown" to prepare a place for them and he concluded at once that he had found the origin of the Lord's supper and he was lead to "deny the Lord that bought" him!

But now both these men want us to believe that they have "kept the faith" but they have achieved such a degree of Christian culture that they can no longer associate with simple New Testament Christians! And they will "overthrow the faith of some," with their sophistries. That is why we are answering them.

"But Jehovah hath been my high tower, and my God the rock of my refuge." (Ps. 94:22.)

"In the multitude of my thoughts within me  
Thy comforts delight my soul." (Ps. 94:19.)



## CHAPTER V

### “THE GOOD DOCTRINE WHICH THOU HAST FOLLOWED UNTIL NOW”

“If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now.” (1 Tim. 4:6.)

“Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye were digged.” (Isa. 51:1.)

“What great nation is there that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?” (Deut. 4:7-8.)

“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68.)

In this chapter we shall consider the teaching—the truth—which Brother Reedy and Brother Etter once held and for which Brother Reedy, if not Brother Etter, once and for many years strongly contended, but which they have both now repudiated. The clear statement of the claim and the aim of the *restoration movement*—the claim and the aim of the humble, simple children of God now as in the past—is a complete and a devastating answer to all the sophistry that these brethren resorted to in their defense statements or their explanations for their apostasy. This chapter consists almost entirely in quotations from men who have “contended earnestly for the faith” in this generation and in the two generations that have preceded us. This author quotes himself in a lecture that

was delivered before a Christian college and has now been in print for more than a decade just in order to show that the position taken in this review has been held all through the years. Since Brethren Reedy and Etter charge that the church has become a *sect* and that we now make our claim in a *sectarian spirit* it seems proper to refute the charge by giving a few examples of our preaching and pleading.

First, however, let us here reproduce from Chapter 2 some statements from each of these disaffected and departing brethren:

“The Church of Christ does not contain all Christians.”  
—*Carl Etter.*

He here uses *Church of Christ* in a sectarian sense, and in the very nature of things a part of a thing cannot be the whole of a thing—a sect cannot be the church of Christ. Neither does the Congregational Church contain all Christians—as they readily admit. Why be a member of a sect?

Again:

“Some of the most cherished doctrines of the Church of Christ burst as iridescent bubbles when exposed to the searchlight of the scientific approach in religion.”—*Carl Etter.*

Now what are these cherished doctrines? Why did not Brother Etter name them? Could they be

1. The virgin birth?
2. The vicarious death of Christ?
3. The resurrection from the dead?
4. The doctrine of personal immortality?
5. The sanctity of marriage, sobriety, purity, reverence?

What are these doctrines that can't stand the light? Let the reader examine carefully, candidly, and prayerfully all the “good doctrine” set forth in this chapter and see if he can determine what are the “iridescent bubbles.”

Now Bro. Reedy speaks:

Now let me hasten to say that I do not consider that I have left the church of Christ, neither have I departed from the faith.” As a matter of fact, all I

have done is to shift my fellowship from one group to another. I have not believed for a long time that the Church of Christ, as we know it, could boast or claim that it was or is the one and only true Church of Christ. As a matter of fact it is not. No group can boast that it is the one and only Body of Christ. Yet it does not follow that Christ does not have a Body. He does indeed have a Body. The true Body of Christ is better and bigger than any one group or all of them together. I would not say that all of the churches, as such, constitute the Body of Christ. The church consists of God's people everywhere. I do not know who all of God's people are—in this world, in the U. S. A., or in any local fellowship. I imagine the names on any one "church book" are not the same or identical with those which God has enrolled in heaven for that church. But we are not the judges.

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So we find some of God's people everywhere—in all of the different fellowships—and the Spirit of Christ which prevails in them will finally find expression. This Family of God, this Church of Christ is the all-glorious Body of Christ which takes cognizance of great issues and does not parley over matters of second rate importance.

As to the name, just this one statement: If you think of the church in terms of that heavenly, spiritual, vital Body made up of all of the redeemed, past and present, everywhere, in heaven and in earth; and not think in terms of some little group or sect or denomination, objectively conceived, then you will have no difficulty. It is the Church of Christ, and to this all Christians agree.—*William Reedy.*

Here Brother Reedy states a great truth—always held by informed brethren, as later quotations given in this chapter will show—to justify a palpable error. He has not left the church, he says. He has only left one group—sect—and has become a member of another sect. Thus

he admits that he has all the time been a member of a faction, sect, in the church. If this is true, then he has done exactly right in leaving that "group," but pray, why did he join another sect? The one great principle of the *restoration* has been that *sectism* is wrong, as this chapter will show.

The quotations that set forth the "good doctrine" are here introduced by selections from this same Brother William Reedy.

(In reference to looking back.)

To go back to the Bible is not to stultify progress. It does not contribute anything against the spirit of advancement—not at all, but on the other hand, he who will be governed by the divine wisdom is living far in advance of his age. Everything that God has done has carried with it the stamp of perfection; in all of his arrangements they have been perfectly adapted to each other, and when we are dealing with the things that are written in the New Testament we are dealing with things of God. We are not going backward in reality when we call upon people to believe and practice exactly what the Bible teaches, but we are advancing, because the divine wisdom is perfect, and that divine wisdom is revealed to us in the Scriptures.

We cannot improve upon anything that God has done, but we can improve upon our own works. With all the inventions, all the discoveries that men have made, they have never been able to produce a better light than the sun which shines down on us by day; and man will never be able to produce anything that will begin to compete with the works of God. We might go through the catalog of all of God's works in nature and as God has made them, we cannot improve upon them. It is a far different thing when we take our own works and improve upon them—that is perfectly possible. Men reason this way—inasmuch as we are living in an advanced age where we are improving things all the time, that it would neces-

sarily follow that we must change the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a fallacy. No man or set of men can ever make a better book than the Bible; no man or set of men will be able to suggest anything like the plan of salvation that is revealed to us in the Bible. No man or set of men will ever be able to make a better church than the one described to us in the New Testament. The Bible will go out of date only when it is proved to be totally untrue, which, as you know, will never be the case.

Now with these solemn reflections upon our hearts let us go into the study of our lesson. Let me bring before your minds some ideas concerning that institution.

(“What Is The Church of Christ? pp. 33-34.)

Again—

(In reference to the *restoration* and the Church.)

*Church—*

Thus in the New Testament we have the word “church” used in the limited sense; as church in their house; church at Corinth; and in the universal sense. But generally speaking the church of the New Testament is composed of the children of God everywhere, the universal community of the redeemed. We should know another thing, that when we are reading about the church in the New Testament we are not reading about some denomination. I want to make that clear. How many of us get the idea when we read what the Savior said, “Upon this rock I will build my church,” that he was speaking about some denomination? If he was, which one was it? Now, as a matter of fact, denominations did not come into existence for approximately sixteen centuries after the church was established, that is, denominations as we know them. People today can hardly speak in religious terms without speaking in terms of denominations, or read the Bible without thinking of the words in terms of denominationalism. This is wrong. The church of the New Testament is not a denomination; it was

simply that community of the redeemed that God himself had contemplated and that Jesus Christ and the apostles builded. It was a living, moving, active organization, an association that was composed of individuals who had obeyed the Gospel, children of God blended together under the authority of Jesus Christ. No thought of modern denominationalism ever entered into the minds of those who lived in the Apostolic days.—(Ibid, pp. 58-59.)

#### *Restoration—*

Let me now sum up, in a few words, the aims of this movement. They were:

1. To abolish every human creed for the Bible and the Bible alone.
2. To abandon every party name for the name of Christ.
3. To require of sinners the same acts of obedience as conditions of their salvation as were required by Jesus Christ and His apostles.
4. To practice in the worship only those things for which we have scriptural precept, command, or approved example.

These aims were sought by the first leaders in the Restoration movement as the only sane, sound, logical and scriptural basis for Christian unity and the favor of God. They are being sought now by those who constitute the Church of Christ. There can be no higher, grander, or more glorious plea made by any people on earth. It is a plea that will carry us back to the original simplicity of the Gospel and to the Church of the New Testament. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11.)—(Ibid. 23-24.)

#### *Worship—*

We should remember that if we would truly worship God we must worship the right object—God: it must be done in the right spirit, with the right motive; and it must be "in truth"—according to God's Word. It is a dangerous thing for us to substitute in

the place of what God has commanded, something we have devised out of our own heart. Cain did that when he offered the fruit of the soil instead of sacrificing an animal as the Lord commanded. He and his offering were rejected, but Abel and his offering were accepted. And that is a lesson for us.—(Ibid. pp. 43-44.)

#### *Instrumental Music—*

This leads me, in the face of these plain statements of Holy Writ, to make this statement: No man on earth can use instruments of music in the worship of God as an act of faith. Dear friends, will you think of that statement? The things we do in our relations to God must be by faith.—(Ibid. p. 52.)

Now, just what sort of “*restatement*” would Brother Reedy make of these principles? He admits that he *has changed* but he says he has not left the Church nor departed from the faith. It would take some extraordinary arguing to show how one could change on these points without repudiating these principles. If the Bible is still the standard how is one to change from the announced policy of following accurately the teaching of the Bible? Would not such a change mean either the repudiation of the standard or else a decision that it is no longer necessary to follow the teaching of the standard? And that within itself is repudiation.

If Brother Reedy sincerely thinks that he has not departed from the faith it proves over again that the title of Chapter IV and the Scripture that introduces it (Isa. 44:20) are appropriate.

But let us read selections from other men.

G. C. Brewer: (On the church and on sects.)

1. What is the church? This question can be quickly answered in the exact language of the scriptures. The most indifferent reader of the Pauline epistles could not overlook such expressions as “And he is the head of the body, the church”; “for his body’s sake, which is the church”; “the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all”; “the

house of God which is the church of the living God" (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22; 1 Tim. 3:15). And then with only a modicum of mental effort he would see that "we are members of his body" (Eph. 5:30); and that "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27); that "All the members of the body, being many, are one body: So also is Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one spirit." (1 Cor. 12:12, 13.) That Christ is "high priest over the house of God." (Heb. 10:19.) And that he is not a servant in the house but that he is "A Son over his house whose house are we." (Heb. 3:6.)

With these quotations before us we are forced to see that the church is the body of Christ, the house of God and that individual Christians are the members of that body and that collectively they compose that house. And these Christians are elsewhere referred to as the household of God and as being builded together as a Temple and a habitation for God. (Eph. 2:19-23.)

Therefore the followers of Christ, Christians, regenerated or saved persons compose the church. We read that God added to the church day by day those that were being saved. (Acts 2:47.) Since this was done each day as they were saved—the same day they were saved—it follows that no saved person ever remained out of the church overnight. The idea therefore of being a saved person, a Christian, and not being in the church is not only unscriptural, it is absurd. One could no more be saved and not be added to the church than one could be born and not thereby be added to the family into which one is born.

2. *Whom does the church include?* This question has just been plainly and completely answered and you are no doubt wondering why it should be repeated and used as a sub-heading in this discussion. But your perplexity will soon pass and the reason for this



will immediately become apparent. This question has ramifications that must be fully run out and removed.

Since the church is the body of Christ and Christians are severally members thereof it is inevitable that the body includes all of its members, therefore includes all Christians, of course. Since the church is the household of God it must of course include all of the children of God. God has no children who are not allowed to live in his house, associate with and enjoy the fellowship of the family and to inherit the blessings to which all his children are heirs. Any institution that does not include all of God's children cannot be the church of God. Even if such an institution is composed entirely of Christians, contains only Christians, and yet does not contain all Christians it cannot be the church of God. The best that it could claim to be is a faction of the church of God, therefore a sect, as we shall see. To apply the terms *the church*, or the church of God, of the church of Christ to any limited number of Christians is to *sectarianize these Scriptural phrases* of which we shall soon speak more particularly.

The church of the New Testament includes all Christians of every race, color and clime. It not only includes all Christians who now live but it includes all Christians who have ever lived since the day of Pentecost. Paul speaks of the whole family both in heaven and on earth. (Eph. 3:15.) God does not have two families—one in heaven and the other on earth. He has one family and a part of it is in heaven while the other part is still sojourning and suffering on the earth and our Father speaks to the blessed dead beneath the altar and bids them rest until their *fellow-servants, their brethren* upon the earth should finish their course. (Rev. 6:9.) They are still our brothers and we are theirs. Paul tells us that whether we live or die we are the Lord's. (Rom. 14:7-9.) Death does not change our relationship to Jehovah. We are his children while we live

and we are none the less his children after we are dead for all live unto him. (Luke 20:35.) Therefore God's family, God's church, is composed of all God's redeemed children in heaven and on earth.

We become children of God and therefore members of the church of God by the spiritual birth—the birth of water and the spirit—or by conversion or by obeying the gospel. Nothing less than this can make any one a Christian—a member of the church in the true sense. People are in a general way recognized as Christians if they possess some outstanding Christian characteristic—if they are charitable and truthful and kind. This however is not enough. “Ye must be born again.”

Again (same author)—

2. *The word sect as used in the Scriptures.* The word *sect* is found five times in the King James translation and six times in the Revised Version. It is from the Greek word *hairesis* and this word occurs nine times in the Greek New Testament. The Authorized Version translates it *heresy* four times and *sect* five times. The Revisers rendered it *sect* six times, *factions* twice, and *heresies* once. While in three places it is applied to Christians, it was so applied by their enemies and was not accepted by them. Paul did not admit that he was the leader of a sect but he confessed that after the manner which his enemies called *heresy* or a *sect*, he worshipped the God of his fathers. The word does not have a favorable meaning at all. We have seen that our translators used the words *sect*, *faction* and *heresy* interchangeably and no one understands either *faction* or *heresy* to connote something that is good and praiseworthy. Paul numbers sects among the works of the flesh. He says: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wrath *factions*, (*hairesis*, *sects*), divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revealings, and such

like." (Gal. 5:19, 20.) Thus the apostle classes *sects or factions* among the blackest sins ever committed by a fallen race and even goes so far as to say "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Surely a more positive and severe condemnation of *sects* could not be asked for.

The apostle Peter speaks of damnable heresies or sects, or according to the margin of the Revised version, of *sects of perdition*. (2 Peter 2:1.) Paul says there must be "factions (or sects) among you, that they that are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Cor. 11:20.) In other words, there must be sects or sectarians among you in order that those who are not factious—not sectarian in spirit—may be known as the approved ones. The others, of course, are not approved.

Certainly sects and sectarianism are condemned in the Scriptures, not only in the strong admonitions for all saints to be perfectly joined together in one mind and one judgment and in the severe denunciations of divisions but also in the very use of the term *sect* and in its reprobation.

That the author of this review has consistently preached these principles of undenominationalism and *anti-sectism* is proved by his writings. In "*Murfreesboro Addresses*" he has a lecture on this theme. Then in the lectures delivered at Abilene Christian College (quoted above), and in the address delivered to the graduating class of David Lipscomb College at the Golden Anniversary of that College (which address was also published by the College). Then his articles in the Gospel Advocate have always manifested the same freedom from factionalism and the same opposition to sectism. The 1932 Volume of that journal will show an exchange of articles with Brother John B. Cowden in which that brother accused this writer and those who stand with him of making an opinion on the instrumental music issue a test of fellowship and therefore being a narrow sect. The answer on this point as it

was then given will be made more in detail when Brother Etter's charges are considered specifically. But in Brother Cowden's argument he made use of the following quadrant:

He drew a circle and left me out,  
Heretic, rebel, and thing to flout.  
But love and I had the wit to win,  
We drew a circle and took him in.

In answer to this misrepresentation made in rhyme the writer composed these lines:

We draw no circles or religious rings  
To *exclude* men and *include* things,  
But earnestly try with hearts that are pure  
To make our calling and election sure,  
By doing the things our Lord commands  
And leave circle-drawing to other hands.

But the author of this review does not claim to be alone or peculiar in this preaching and practice. Thousands have not yet bowed to any Baal. Moreover this has been the basic plea and contention of all the men worthy to be called leaders in *restoration history*. The following quotations will abundantly sustain this point:

Moses E. Lard:

(In his Classic Review of Dr. J. B. Jeter's "Campbellism Examined"):

But Mr. Campbell never proposed a reformation of *Christian sects* as such. He proposed that all sincere and pious Christians should abandon these *sects*, and, uniting upon the great foundation upon which, as a rock, Christ said he would build his church, form themselves into a *church of Christ*, and not into a *sect*. A *Christian sect* we pronounce simply an impossible thing. Sects there may be, innumerable; but *Christians*, as a *sect*, they can never be. A church of Christ is not a sect, in any legitimate sense of the term. As soon as a body of believers, claiming to be a church of Christ, becomes a sect, it ceases to be a church of Christ. Sect and Christian are terms denoting incompatible ideas. Christians there may be

in all the sects, as we believe they are; but, in them though they may be, yet of them, if Christians, clearly they are not. Mr. Campbell's proposition never looked to the reformation of sects as such. A sect reformed would still be a sect; and sect and Christians are not convertible terms. Sectarianism originates, and necessarily, *in* the church, but has its consummation out of it. Hence Paul, in addressing the church at Corinth, says, "There must be also heresies (*sectarianism*) among you, that they who are approved may be made manifest." But here is something which seems never to have struck the mind of Mr. Jeter. With the apostle, sectarianism originated with the bad, and the good were excluded; but with Mr. Jeter it includes the good, and the bad, excluded. How shall we account for the difference? As soon, however, as the *heretic* (the *sectarian*) is discovered in the church, he is, by the apostle's direction, to be admonished a first and second time, and then, if he repent not, to be rejected. Now we request to be informed by Mr. Jeter how, according to this rule, a *Christian sect* can exclude here *sectarians* and still remain a *sect*? Heresy and sectarianism are identical, being both represented by the same term in the same sense in the original; and that which they represent has its origin in the flesh. Hence the same apostle, in enumerating the works of the flesh, mentions, among other things, strife, sedition, *heresy* (sectarianism). Heresy or sectarianism, we are taught by the Apostle Peter, is introduced into the church by *false teachers*, and is *damnable*; and yet Mr. Jeter, with true foster-father tenderness, can talk of *Christian sects*.

J. Z. Tyler: The following extracts are taken from a sermon preached by this brother in Richmond, Virginia, in 1882:

Were you to ask of me one word which would most exactly present the central purpose of the peculiar plea presented by the Disciples, I would give you the

deeply significant and comprehensive word *restoration*. For it was their purpose, as they declared in the beginning, and, as without variation, they have continued to declare to the present, to restore to the world in faith, in spirit, and in practice, the religion of Christ and his apostles, as found on the pages of the New Testament Scriptures. The originators of this movement did not propose to themselves as their distinct work the reformation of any existing religious body, or the recasting of any religious creed. They proposed to themselves, and to all who might choose to associate themselves with them in this work, a task no less than restoration. \* \* \* \*

As we study the historic development of this movement, we find its protest against divisions, and its plea for Christian union was its first strongly marked feature. The declaration and address of 1809 was an arraignment of sectism, depicting its evil consequences and its sinful nature, and an earnest call upon ministers and churches to labor for the union of Christians as they were united in the beginning. "After considering the divisions in various lights," says Dr. Richardson, in his *Memoirs of A. Campbell*, "as hindering the dispensation of the Lord's Supper; spiritual intercourse among Christians; ministerial labors, and the effective exercise of church discipline, as well as tending to promote infidelity, an appeal is made to gospel ministers to become leaders in the endeavor to remedy these evils; and especially is this urged upon those in the United States, as a country happily exempted from the baneful influence of a civil establishment of any particular form of Christianity, and from under the influence of an anti-Christian hierarchy." This movement did not arise from controversy about any particular views of baptism, spiritual influence, or kindred questions mooted at a later date, in the progress of the work. Let this statement be considered emphatic, since the popular idea seems to be that out of such controversy we arose, and that

our plea finds its roots in these questions. *The central aim was restoration; the first feature sought to be restored was the union of Christians as in the beginning.* \* \* \* \*

The fact is, the idea of union is becoming more popular as the years pass by. Yet while this is true, the plea for union, which the disciples present, is still peculiar. They oppose division not simply as unwise and impolitic, but as positively sinful, and to be repented of and forsaken as any other sin. They plead not simply for an underlying and hidden unity, but for an open and manifest union, such a unity and union that the world may see it and believe, concerning Christ, that God sent him into the world. They do not call for a confederation of sects, but labor for the total abolition of sectism.

“But,” it is objected, “your exclusive appropriation of the name Christian implies that, in your opinion, there are not Christians in the world except yourselves.” In this objection there would be force if we really aimed at an exclusive appropriation of this name. But this exclusiveness is not our claim. We distinctly teach there are most excellent Christians who are not enrolled with us. Were this not true pray why should we plead for the union of Christians? We are united, and, if we did not believe there are Christians in the world outside of our ranks, our plea would be senseless and absurd. The point in which we are peculiar is simply this—we persistently reject all human names. We rejoice that there are so many devout Christians in the world, and we call upon them to abandon all party names, and be content to be known by those names only which we find in the New Testament.

Moses E. Lard again:

But Mr. Campbell does not claim for himself and his brethren that they, as a body, exhaust the meaning of the term the church, nor that they are the only persons who are members of the church. Hence, no

apology can be pleaded for Mr. Jeter's dishonorable insinuation to the contrary. Mr. Campbell concedes to all, no matter where found, who have been, in the true acceptance of the phrase, 'born again,' that they are members of the church or body of Christ. True, he believes many of these members to be in organizations purely sectarian, and hence unsanctioned by the Bible. And to all such members his counsel is, 'Come out of these organizations.'

Next let us read a few statements on these points from two of the greatest men who have ever lived—great in their humility and their simplicity: in their logic and in their love for the truth and for humanity. No one who ever knew these two men can ever doubt that it is possible for men to be simple Christians—and nothing else: to be members of the church and not belong to any sect or faction: to "preach the word" and never be a partisan: to live clean, pure, holy lives: to "keep the faith" and to "die the death of the righteous" loved and honored by all who knew them. The quotation from these men will make this booklet deserve to live for many generations.

T. B. Larimore and F. D. Srygley:

According to the plain teaching of the New Testament, the church is a spiritual body, Christ is head over it, every Christian is a member of it, and there is no organization in it but local congregations. All Christians are "one body in Christ"; there are "many members, yet but one body"; that one body is the church. In New Testament times the Christians in each locality formed, or constituted, a congregation for religious work and worship. Each local congregation thus formed or constituted was the church—the body of Christ—in that place, and every Christian in that locality belonged to it because he was a Christian, and worshiped in it and worked through it because there was nothing else for any Christian to be a member of or to worship in and work through. Thus they kept "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." There were no ecclesiastical organizations,



denominational institutions, or partisan brotherhoods in Christianity in New Testament times. Christ and all Christians were one, as the vine and its branches are one.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:1-5.)

The same truth is taught with equal clearness at another place by a slight change in the figure. Christ and all Christians are one, as the olive tree and its branches are one.

\* \* \* \*

At still another place the figure is changed again, but the truth which is no less plainly taught is the same. Christ and all Christians are one, as the body and its members are one.

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. . . . But now are they many members, yet one body. . . . Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” (1 Cor. 12:12-27.)

“There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” (Eph. 4:4.)

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being

many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." (Rom. 12:4, 5.)

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2:16.)

"May grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:15, 16.)

This one body is the church.

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.)

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body." (Eph. 5:23.)

"And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Col. 1:18.)

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." (Col. 1:24.)

This one body is all the church there is in the New Testament, and it is all the church any Christian has any scriptural authority to be a member of now. This church includes and consists of all Christians; it is the body of Christ, and every one who belongs to Christ is a member of it. The church in the New Testament is always spoken of as one, except when local organizations in different places are referred to, and then the church is one in each place. To be a member of it is to be a Christian, and to be a Christian is to be a member of it. Every man becomes a

member of it when he becomes a Christian, and remains a member of it as long as he continues to be a Christian, because that which makes a man a Christian constitutes him a member of it. No one can be a Christian and not be a member of the church any more than he can be a Christian and not belong to Christ, because the church is the body of Christ, and it includes and consists of all Christians by the plain meaning of the passages above quoted.

The plain duty of Christians is to abandon and abolish everything but this one body, which is the church, and keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond on peace" in this one body. The formation, operation, and propagation of ecclesiastical organizations, denominational institutions, and partisan brotherhoods in religion produce strife, contentions, animosities, alienations, envyings, and rivalries among Christians, and inevitably cause open divisions which gender an ugly, partisan spirit in the body of Christ. The logical effect and constant tendency of the truth of God is to disintegrate and dissolve everything but the "one body in Christ," which is the church, and of which every Christian is a member, whether the preacher intends to do that or not, or whether he so much as knows of the existence of anything but the one body in the way of a religious institution. The following quotation from one of his letters is in point here:

"They claim and charge that I preach against certain things, but never name them. I simply 'preach the word,' 'unlearned questions avoid,' meddle not with other men's matters, and exhort all to 'walk in the light,' to simply take God at his word—that is, believe what he says, do what he commands, become and be what he required, live as he directs, and trust him for what he promises. That's all there is in that—absolutely all. My preaching is Bible preaching. I never try to prove any point in preaching, save by

the Bible. I just simply tell them what the Bible says, and then tell them that settles that. \* \* \*

The charge that he "preaches against certain things, but never names them," is no doubt true and false both. Any man who preaches exactly what is in the Bible, and nothing else, necessarily preaches against everything that antagonizes the Bible, whether he names other things or not, or even so much as knows whether there be any such things. No man can build up things that are not in the Bible without preaching something that is not in the Bible. In this sense the charge is no doubt true; but if the charge is intended to mean that he preaches against things designedly by cowardly insinuations and innuendoes, while pretending to be in favor of them, the charge is untrue and unjust. How can any man preach and practice exactly what is in the Bible, and nothing else, without disintegrating and dissolving, to the full extent of his influence in life and sermons, everything but the "one body in Christ," which is the church and of which every Christian is a member?

"Every plant, which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." (Matt. 15:13.) The Heavenly Father hath planted no plant in the way of a religious organization or institution, save the body of Christ, which is the church. The plain duty of every one is, therefore, to be a Christian, and nothing else; be a member of the church, which is the body of Christ, and of which every Christian is a member, and nothing else; preach and practice all the New Testament teaches, and nothing else. The aim and constant effort of the life that is photographed by private letters in this volume have been to do this, as numerous letters, extending over a long period of years, abundantly show. On this point he wrote, several years ago:

"I am more and more confirmed in my irrevocable determination to never be a partisan in any sense; to look, in the light of God's eternal truth, straight-

forward to the New Jerusalem, 'preach the word' with all the power granted me, and do all I can to comfort and save souls. That is where I am, and I am there to stay. I may be rather lonely, but I propose to stand there, if, Elijahlike, I feel so lonely as to be constrained to implore the Almighty to take away my life. Standing on the rock, building on the rock, my soul shall ever be secure. The storm rages now, but the time is coming when those who have stood with 'God, and the word of his grace,' will be appreciated. Let us bide our time. You may have no fears. You may always know—absolutely know—you run no risk in saying that I am in no sense a partisan; that I simply 'preach the word,' and leave results with God. I have always tried to do this, but have sometimes been drawn aside just a little; never thus again. I propose to, as long as I live, adhere strictly to the Bible. In that way I can do a glorious work. On any other line my work could not fail to be a failure. No religious party may appreciate or demand my services, but on the Lord's side I am safe, though solitary and lone. Some will interpret this to mean I have no convictions, or, having convictions, have more policy than principle, but 'none of these things move me.' My position and determination are: 'Preach the word' wherever Providence seems to point the way and duty seems to demand; always hew to the line; have no hobbies, attack no hobbies; do always and under all circumstances exactly what duty demands. This is all I can do."

At another time, years ago, he wrote:

"All who know me know I am an extremist, so far as standing aloof from everything that causes strife and division among Christians is concerned, everything that is rending the church—the body of Christ—into factions. In this, as in many other things, I may be wrong; but I believe I am right, and I am trying to do my duty. I have never intentionally aided or encouraged divisions, but have always, both

publicly and privately, urged Christian union and Christian unity with all my feeble might. So far as I know, I belong to nothing except that to which every Christian in the wide, wide world belongs. Thus publicly, privately, and practically I preach and practice unity all the time. I was born into the family of the Lord Almighty about twenty-seven years ago, and by the grace of God I hope to be faithful as a member of that blessed family till called to my reward, and to never be a member of anything else. Let others do as they may, the church of God is good enough for me. I have solemnly resolved to try to keep my eye on the 'open, pearly portal,' and go straight forward, neither turning nor looking to the right or the left—simply 'preach the word,' and let professed Christians adjust their differences and difficulties in bitterness and blood, if they will. My earnest desire is to keep entirely out of all unpleasant wrangles among Christians. I do not censure those who are in it, but I must keep out of it, if I can. Now, if people want no preacher but a partisan preacher, they will please not call for me. I propose to finish my course without ever, even for one moment, engaging in partisan strife with anybody about anything."—"Letters and Sermons of T. B. Larimore," by F. D. Srygley, pp. 208-217.)

In what way could a man live a more beautiful life of hope and trust, of culture and kindness and of work and worship than was lived by T. B. Larimore, F. D. Srygley, James A. Harding, David Lipscomb, E. G. Sewell and a host of others whom we have known? Let Brother Reedy remember Brother A. M. Morris and think of how he is going to improve on his Christian life and hope!

In the church of the New Testament Brother Reedy and Brother Etter had all the freedom from Ecclesiastic authority that Peter and Paul and James and John had. They had all the promises that any Christian ever had. They could learn, love, believe and preach anything that God has ever revealed to mankind. There was no limit

except the limit of their own ability and faith. They could practice anything the Lord authorizes his children to do and they had the solemn promise of the risen and all powerful Saviour that he would be with them in such a life and work to the end of the world!

What more did they want?

What did they gain by joining a sect?

Answer—They gain the right to be *Modernists*: to *disbelieve* any part of God's word that men *may tell them* that scholars (?) reject. They may not yet know just how much they will have to reject but they will reject it when they learn. That is the principle upon which they have moved away from the hope of the gospel.

If as faithful members of the Lord's body and as preachers of his word unmixed with the traditions and errors of men they found themselves alone and unappreciated—if even they were persecuted by factionalists and partisans they would have been passing through an experience that every other humble and loyal servant of the Lord has known. Elijah felt that he was alone and wanted to die. Brother Larimore expressed a similar feeling in the excerpts given herein. But experiences like that give one a closer touch with one's Lord; and after all our religion is not a *professional matter*. It is not an *institutional matter*. It is not a matter like a business venture that may be abandoned if it does not prove pleasant and profitable. It is a relation of the soul to God. It is a spiritual union with Christ. It is private, personal and precious. If it disconnects us from earth and from friends it puts us in correspondence with heaven and into communion with God. We may often say with the Psalmist—

“Hear my prayer, O Jehovah, and give ear unto my cry;

Hold not thy peace at my tears,

For I am a stranger with thee,

A sojourner as all my fathers were.”





## CHAPTER VI

### "FROM WHICH SOME HAVING SWERVED HAVE TURNED ASIDE UNTO VAIN TALKING"

"But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm." (Tim. 1:6-7.)

"They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16.)

"I will come with the mighty acts of the Lord Jehovah: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of Thine only." Ps. 71:16.)

In some of the preceding chapters of this review we have seen that Brothers Reedy and Etter long ago ceased to believe the things that they had once professed and preached. When their views changed they could not, of course, preach in *good faith* the things they had come to despise; hence for some time their faith had not been the *unfeigned* kind. What faith they had was *feigned* and some of us knew it. Nor could they have a good *conscience* while they were aligned with a people with whose views they did not agree or sympathize. Naturally they could not have *love* out of a *pure heart* if their own hearts condemned them; and they could not *love* people who were suspicious of them and concerning whom they felt *themselves* very *superior*. So it is evident that Reedy and Etter definitely swerved from these things. Then when they gave their "reasons" for their disaffection and de-

parture they certainly *turned aside unto vain talking* if any man ever did. But that is the point to be made clear in this chapter.

If these men had announced that they had departed from the faith and are now atheists, they would have had recourse to all the arguments that rationalists of all the ages have used against the faith of Christians. They could have baraged us with blasphemies. *But they did not do this.* Therefore they were cut off from the arguments of unbelievers—except in the disguised style that all Modernists use.

If they did not, then, make an attack upon Christianity itself—upon the Church of the New Testament. *What method of approach did they use?*

Did they attack the plea for undenominational Christianity? Did they show that it is impossible today for people to become and be simple Christians—nothing more and nothing less? Did they even attempt to show that men may not now become and be just such as Paul was? Did they argue that faith in Christ followed by a faithful obedience to his word will *not now save a soul?* Did they try to convince us that we are wrong in following the teaching of the New Testament and in doing that which—and only that which the New Testament churches practiced?

These are the principles from which they had departed and which they now assumed themselves able to overthrow!

*Did they do it?*

No, they did not? They evaded the issue. They treated the *church of Christ* as a sect and then found fault with that sect—not for being a sect, of course, but for being too narrow a sect to accommodate the educated Reedy and the spoiled-child Etter!

*That exactly analyzes and characterizes their reasoning!*

If we should grant that everything they say against the sect they were attacking is correct, that would still leave those of us who do not belong to the sect untouched!

And if we should admit, which we do not, that we have all formed ourselves into a sect and that we are guilty as charged, that would still not prove *that men may not yet become and be Christians and not join our sect or any other*. In other words, nothing they say in any way affects the plea for the New Testament Church: for simple apostolic Christianity. They joined a sect and attempted to justify themselves by trying to prove that what they *left was a sect*. They left one sect and joined another. The logic of this is the same as that used by two little waifs in a back alley battle. One says, "You're a liar!" The other quickly retorts: "You're an nudder!"

Which of course means, "I am a liar, but you are one also."

But as further proof that these men engaged in "vain talking" let us have a look at a few examples.

1. Brother Reedy says:

I will confess that I have struggled for years within myself trying to reconcile certain practices and attitudes of the Church of Christ, as I know it, with the spirit and teaching of our Lord and His apostles. When it finally came to the point that I had to say and teach what I sincerely believed in order to be true to myself and to my God, I found that I could not do that, without being not only criticized but ostracized and regarded as "not loyal," "off color," "unsound," and the like. The church has devised a formal pattern, to which one must conform even to stereotyped phraseology, if one is to retain favor with "those who seemed to be somewhat." Galatians 2:6. A deep conviction which told me that I must be true to what I believed was right and what God wanted me to do, moved me to rebel against such intolerance. I could not be true to myself and to God, and remain in the fellowship of the Church of Christ."

Now if Brother Reedy belonged to nothing except that which the Lord founded and believed nothing except that which was taught by "our Lord and his apostles" then why did he depart from that church and from that teach-

ing? If he did belong to something else, *why did he belong to that sect?* But as a gospel preacher he encountered *criticism*, and *intolerance!* No doubt he did. *So have we all*, but will we deny the Lord because some men persecute us for our faith? Is that the *attitude and spirit of "our Lord and of his apostles"*? Or, suppose some of our brethren are ignorant and bigotted and can not see all the beauty and truth that we who have had advantages they never had, see? Should we therefore become intolerant toward them and treat them with contempt? Should we not show the *attitude and spirit of "Our Lord and his apostles"* toward them—be patient and long suffering and teach them? (Heb. 2:10-18; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; 1 Thess. 5:14.) Whom are we to teach—those who know as much as we do or those who do not know so much? Which is the worst sin, the intolerance of ignorance or the supercilious intolerance of learning? Upon whom will the greater responsibility come—the man of ignorance or the man of learning?

There may be a Diotrephes among simple Christians now as there was in the day of the Apostles and he may by some under-served influence or through some political maneuvering cause some of us who will not be controlled by him to suffer for a time, but we must not *apostatize* because he has. We cannot deny the Lord because one of his professed followers has betrayed him. And any brother who behaves in that way will soon come to the end of his road. He cannot "fool all the people all the time."

Since there is no authority in the Lord's church to which anyone is compelled to submit except the authority of Christ himself, all this talk about being fettered and restricted and suppressed is just *vain talk!* If Brother Reedy was accused of being "off-color," his own admission that he has for years been out of harmony with his brethren shows that they were not all blind in their judgment of him.

2. But Reedy says:

No one has heard the last word—it has not been

spoken. I hope to outgrow tomorrow what I think and preach today.

Ultimate truth is, of course, fixed, but my conception of truth is not fixed nor should it be. If it were, all possibility of growth would be ended. Within the Bible itself there are great growths—great developments in the basic concepts of truth. The attitude of the Church of Christ assumed at this point constitutes her greatest sin. She has crystallized her conceptions of God, Christ, the Bible, the Plan of Salvation and all the rest into a closed, completed pattern, and by so doing identifies these conceptions with the total truth on these subjects. This is wrong. It is not right to identify truth with our conceptions of truth. This attitude on the part of the Church of Christ makes her intolerant and causes the good that is in her to defeat the best which she might have. This attitude closes the door against all progress, and forbids the voicing of any newly discovered truths or the expression of honest convictions.

This is an amazing statement to come from a man who is considered a good reasoner. It shows his confusion and lack of any faith in God's word or in the Sonship of Christ. If Christ is the Son of God and if God has spoken to us through him (Heb. 1:1) then what he says on any subject is a revelation from God and must of course be "the last word" on that subject. To deny this is to deny the Sonship of Christ. If the apostles made a true claim for themselves then they spoke as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance. To deny their claim is to deny the inspiration of the New Testament. Nay, it is not only to deny that it is inspired it is to deny the *truth* of its claim and to brand it as tissue of falsehoods! To admit that it is inspired is to say that what it says is "*the last word*" on any subject. Reedy says the last word has not been spoken. Therefore he denies the finality of God's word—which of course is equal to denying *that it is God's word and that Christ is the Son of God and the Messenger from heaven!*

Yet Reedy asserts that he has not departed from the faith!

His second statement here is even more amazing. He says, "I hope to outgrow tomorrow what I think and preach today."

1. Why should he teach anything today if he hopes and expects tomorrow's developments to force him to discard it as outgrown and false? He cannot have any confidence in anything he teaches if he expects it to be worthless tomorrow. Even his reasons for leaving the church and joining the Congregationalists should not be considered of any value since Reedy himself hoped to be able to outgrow and discard them before they could even be set up in type!

2. Since he admits that he is now teaching opinions that he hopes to outgrow tomorrow, why clutter up the world with these opinions? They are worthless and Reedy hopes to cast them aside tomorrow, but some others who hear these "vain babbling" may *not* outgrow them and may hold to them to their own damnation! How foolish to teach them!

3. If he has no confidence in what he teaches for tomorrow why expect us to have any confidence in for today?

4. Since his opinions are so uncertain, so changeable, and in such a constant state of flux from day to day, surely the doctrines of the Church of Christ, even if that sect teaches all that Reedy and Etter charge against it, cannot be any worse than that. Even these false doctrines according to their allegations have had stability enough to hold a people together in an unalterable contention for a hundred years. But the ideas and opinions and preachments of Reedy are such feeble things that they cannot survive the day they are born!

5. His lack of stability, his state of flux, is such that he admits that he has no fixed moorings. Therefore he is aptly described as one who is "tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of

men, and the cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. 4:14.)

His purpose and hope to outgrow and discard his opinions day by day, to learn more each day and leave all the next day, exactly fits him into Paul's description of those who are "ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 2:7.)

Poor confused and deceived Man!

But let us consider the paragraph about the "*ultimate truth*" next:

Every time Reedy makes a point he contradicts it. He wants to argue that truth is a variable and yet he has to admit that "ultimate truth is fixed." Then what is he arguing about? Does he know any *truth* that is not "*ultimate*"? If not, then how can some truth give way for some other truth and on till we get to the ultimate? This is absurd. *Truth* is always consistent with all other *truth* and all truth is eternal. This statement from Reedy shows that he no longer believes that we are dependent upon inspiration or revelation for our faith or knowledge of truth. Truth, according to his contention is something we discover by our own research and experiments and it comes gradually until we reach *ultimate truth—which is fixed*. Non-ultimate *truth* is not fixed, therefore!

He no longer believes that "grace and truth" come by Jesus Christ (John 1:17); that "ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32); that "thy word is truth" (John 17:17); and that Jesus Christ is "*the way, the truth and the life.*" (John 14:6.)

Both Reedy and Etter think that the "Church of Christ" has wrong conceptions of God, Christ and the Bible. Would it not have been refreshing to have these brethren give us a clear definition of God and Christ and the Bible? What is their conception? It is a safe guess that had they defined and refined God the difference between them and an *atheist* would not be visible to the natural eye. That is exactly what Walter Lippman says about all Modernists.

As to different *conceptions* of truth—that is also absurd and is only another high sounding and specious plea of the modernist. They deny the faith but at the same time arrogate to themselves a *superior faith*. It is impossible to have different conceptions of *revealed truth* or of *any factual matters*. Men may *believe the truth* or *disbelieve the truth*; and that is the end of the matter. Everything else that men do with or to the truth will come under one of those two attitudes. Men may hide the truth, evade the truth, wrest the truth, pervert the truth or define and refine and explain and glamourize the truth in mystic and Modernistic phraseology but all that put together is not *another conception* of the truth. It is simply and bluntly *disbelief* of the truth. *It is nothing else*.

Suppose a jury in our civil courts after hearing the *evidence* in the case before it is now making up its verdict. One man argues for conviction, another man contends for acquittal and others just argue, each according to his *personal feeling*; some of them sympathizing with the *accused*, others objecting to the method of trial by jury, others expressing dislike for the prosecuting attorney, still others contending that the Judge is a hypocrite.

But the Foreman insists that we must decide this case *on the evidence*; none of you can deny the evidence. It shows *conclusively* that the man is guilty. What do you say, Brother Modernist juror, to the testimony of these unimpeachable witnesses who saw the crime committed?

Answer by Brother Modernist juror:

“Now, gentlemen, we must not be too dogmatic and cocksure in matters of this kind. Superior learning and research make us more tolerant and liberal, and show us that *truth* is not all held by any one man or group of men. We also come to know that there are various conceptions of truth. Of course *ultimate truth is fixed*, but we have not *yet reached ultimate truth*. Our chairman or foreman of this jury has a fixed pattern of truth in his mind and he wants all of us to conform to *his view* or conception. I must dissent. My superior and elevated soul will not allow me to submit to such intolerance!”



Foreman: "But what about the testimony of these witnesses? They say they saw the man commit this crime. Do you believe them or do you not believe?"

Brother M. J.: "O, brother foreman, you are so literalistic and exacting in your demands! We must be more liberal and tolerant toward our fellowmen, taking into account always the heredity, environment and education or lack of education of the individual who is testifying. We must know how to evaluate the testimony of a witness and that forces us to consider well his circumstances, his predilections and prejudices. Our conclusions today may not be our conclusion tomorrow. So be careful, liberal and tolerant, men!"

Foreman: "But do you believe these witnesses or do you not believe them? Did they tell the truth or did they all tell lies?"

Brother M. J.: "O, brother foreman, you are so crude and harsh! We would accuse no one of telling lies. They expressed their own view point—and of course they were honest in it. But we must also *be honest* and hold to our *own inner sense of truth*. You believe what these man say and I also believe what they say—we agree that they told the truth *but you have one conception of the truth* and I have *another conception*, and each of us must be true to his own conscience."

Foreman: "Well, are you willing to convict this man on the evidence that you admit is *true*? He did commit the crime—the witnesses saw him do it. You admit that they told the truth. Shall we therefore say, *Guilty*?"

Brother M. J.: "O, no, no. That would be reaching a final and a dogmatic decision before we have reached *ultimate truth*! I could never acquiesce in such intolerance."

And so the argument goes until the jury is dismissed in disagreement—and yet *they agreed* that the witnesses told the *truth*. *Conceptions of truth!!!*

This simple illustration will excite contempt in the cultured soul of a Modernist but the logic is the same that he uses. Did the witnesses tell the truth about the birth

of Christ? The death of Christ? The Resurrection of Christ? About the coming of the Holy Spirit and the conditions of salvation? Is what they said *ultimate truth* or was it *non-ultimate truth*? How will ultimate truth differ from what they said without contradicting what they said—thereby showing that what they said was not truth at all?

Thus we see that this talk about different *conceptions* of truth is nothing short of *repudiation* of a *standard* and of any court of appeal in religious matters. Everything must be determined by each individual in his own inner *consciousness*. He is guided by his conception which will change with the changing seasons.

This is not only "*Vain talking*" it is rank Modernism which Brother Reedy himself said only a few years ago is *Atheism*.

## CHAPTER VII

### “SHOULD NOT THE MULTITUDE OF WORDS BE ANSWERED?”

“Should not the Multitude of Words be Answered?  
And should a man full of talk be justified?  
Should thy boastings make men hold their peace?  
And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee  
ashamed?

For thou sayest, My doctrine is pure,  
And I am clean in thine eyes.  
But oh that God would speak,  
And open his lips against thee,  
And that he would show thee, the secrets of wisdom!  
For he is manifold in understanding.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than  
thine iniquity deserveth.” (Job 11:2-6.)

In this chapter we shall give attention specifically to the *twenty reasons* submitted by Brother Etter for his departure from the faith. All these reasons have already been met in the preceding chapters and the fallacy upon which they are based has been pointed out, but in order that no one may fail to see the basic fallacy running through the whole fabric of fallacies we take these enumerated reasons and dissect them severally.

That one fallacy upon which Reedy and Etter launched their attack is the *assumption that the church to which they belonged and from which they were departing is a sect whose doctrines and practices they had ceased to believe and to whose arbitrary authority they could no longer submit.*

If their assumption were correct—if there is a sect called Church of Christ and if their allegations against it are true and correct, then (1) they did right in leaving

that "fellowship" in which, according to their statements, they were not "fellowshipped" any way, and (2) those of us who belong only to the New Testament church have nothing at all to do with this discussion and disaffection. We are no more concerned about denominational disputes in the Church of Christ than we are about disputes over *doctrines* and *authorities* in any other denomination. We care no more about preachers rebelling against the *ruling authorities* in the Church of Christ than we do about such occurrences in the Methodist Church.

We all know, however, that Reedy and Etter intended to include all of us who are still pleading for the restoration of the *ancient order* in their charges. No one has ever yet been able to meet the issue on the plea for a return to the New Testament—a restoration of the New Testament church. All have to admit that there was a church in the New Testament and that men were members of it and worked through it to the glory of God without any of the organizations or institutions of men that we now have. Then why may we not be members of that body now and why may we not work and worship now just as New Testament Christians did? Why be anything more than a Christian? Why belong to any church or body that *conversion*—obedience to the gospel—does not add you to or align you with? Why recognize any Head but Christ? (Eph. 1:20-22; 5:22; Col. 1:18.) Why submit to any authority except the authority of the Lord? Why wear any denominational name or vow allegiance to any denominational authority?

We say that no one has ever answered these questions fairly or met this issue head on. Denominationalists have always evaded and misrepresented and engaged in false charges and recriminations. Dr. J. B. Jeter in his notorious "Review of Campbellism" did that; and so every other opponent that the restoration plea has ever had has made use of the same tactics. Reedy and Etter did not even show the slightest *improvement* on the old sectarian method. They parroted and echoed the same old canards and profoundly proposed the same old conundrums that

sectarians, digressives, dissenters and renegades have been howling for more than a hundred years. Even their tone of voice is typical and their phraseology true to pattern.

Let us suppose for argument sake that some Christians have formed themselves into a sect which they call the Church of Christ, then let us consider the following questions: Where does that sect have its headquarters? What polity or form of government has this sect adopted? Who are the officials of this sect and what are their official titles? Is membership in this sect compulsory? If not, how and why did Brothers Reedy and Etter come to be members of that sect? If membership is *compulsory* then may one obtain this membership or get into this sect unwittingly and unconsciously? Is the author of this review a member of that sect? If so, what proof could he give of this membership or what certificate could he display or what pass word could he whisper or what handgrip could he use to enjoy the rights and privileges and benefits and emoluments that this membership must entitle him to? If membership in this sect is not mandatory and necessary in order to be a child of God, then this author humbly entreats "whatever powers there be" to allow him to remain out of this sect, as he has always remained out of all other "fellowships!"

And here are a few other questions that any preacher who contemplates following the example of Reedy and Etter should answer: If simple Christians form themselves into a sect who is to blame, the silent and uninformed brethren or the leaders and preachers? Is not "like priest, like people" a true saying? Are not Christians what their leaders make them? Should not intellectual and scholarly preachers be able to hold their brethren back from sectarianism and other errors? How does it happen then that after such men have been preaching the gospel and teaching the Bible for forty years they suddenly find that those whom *they have been teaching and molding* have degenerated into a denomination with views so narrow and rules so arbitrary that they (the preachers) can no longer endure the tyranny of their fellowship? If

those whom a teacher has taught for a quarter of a century are still ignorant of the most fundamental truths is there no reflection on the *teacher*?

If one preaches the simple gospel of Christ today and persuades people to obey that gospel—to do simply and only what men did in Acts, will not one thus make Christians? Then may not a preacher thus make Christians and live with and labor for and fellowship with these Christians? Then why would a preacher after having preached for forty years have to join a denomination in order to find somebody to fellowship him—and support him?

Brother, these considerations should give you pause “unless indeed ye be reprobate.” (2 Cor. 13:5.)

We now take up Carl Etter’s reasons one by one, first giving his exact statement and then giving a brief answer or a longer answer according to what the reason seems to deserve:

#### Reason Number One:

First, we do not subscribe to the belief that the Church of Christ, as it is so labeled, includes all true Christians. To become identified with another religious group of people is no evidence that one is not a member of the Church of Christ in its true and universal sense.

Answer: We are not acquainted with a sect “so labeled” Church of Christ, but we are sure that it does not contain all Christians. If it did, it would not be a sect. A part of a thing cannot be the whole of a thing. But the sect to which Brother Etter transferred does not contain all Christians either. Why be a member of a sect? (See Chapter V.)

#### Reason Number Two:

Second, the teaching of the Church of Christ is based upon a superficial interpretation of the Bible and is fundamentally in error. This is true with reference to the nature of God, Christ, the Bible, the

Church, man's mission in the world, and many other issues, having both theological and social implications.

Answer: The Church of Christ must be a denomination formed and fostered by ignorant men!

How would it do to allow the people of God to learn of God, Christ, the Church, etc., from the Bible itself without being controlled by "official interpreters" or by an established "Church View"? Is not the Bible God's own revelation of himself and of his will? Can men to whom God has thus spoken understand him or will they have to have this word doled out to them by "official interpreters"?

Let the reader see how many gross errors—aside from rank infidelity—he can recognize and identify in Brother Etter's charges.

It would have been very helpful to us humble Christians if Brother Etter had told us just what is the erroneous view that the Church of Christ holds in reference to the nature of God, Christ, the Bible, the Church," etc., or if he had referred us to the Canons of said church where such erroneous and superficial views are set forth and then in contrast presented what he conceives to be the *profound* and correct view of the "*nature of God, Christ, the Bible, the Church,*" etc. Why did he not render us this *one* beneficial service before he departed? Did he ever correct any errors on these points while he was a *teacher, preacher and writer* among the saints?

Is there anyone living who can recall ever hearing Brother Etter present the true picture of the *Nature of God and Christ*? Some one may reply that Brother Etter did not want to present a view contrary to the views held by his associates. But that will not do. His records show and his students testify to the effect that that was *all he did*. He ridiculed his brethren and bemoaned their narrowness and ignorance as far back as when he taught at Cordell, Oklahoma. But no one can recall his scholarly and elevated view of the *nature of God and of Christ!* Let us hope that he will not die until he enlightens the

whole believing world on the *Nature of God* and of *Christ!* Bible believing Christians have no need of his views on these profound subjects, but the *science of theology* should no longer be deprived of this great boon!

#### Reason Number Three:

Third, the teaching of the Church of Christ is inconsistent and contradicts the announced slogans of the so-called Restoration Movement. The Church of Christ proposes to speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where it is silent. It does neither.

Answer: Why did not Brother Etter cite some proof of this grave charge? Why did he not specify some point on which the Bible is silent and the "Church of Christ" speaks and *vice versa*? There should not be any such sect as Church of Christ, but even that poor, sinful thing should not have to suffer the *false accusations* of a disgruntled and a renegade preacher.

Since this is an allegation without either specifications or citations we cannot be expected to give any answer other than a peremptory denial. We shall therefore just speak where the Bible speaks and answer in the exact words of Holy Writ:

"There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart." (Neh. 6:8.)

#### Reason Number Four:

Fourth, the Church of Christ claims to have no creed except Christ, but it has twenty unwritten creeds to one of which one must subscribe in order to have fellowship of the particular wing of the church with which one chooses to become identified. Some of the letters which we have received, including letters from ministers known to be "sound in the faith," point out that the Church of Christ is becoming increasingly interested in heresy hunting. How do these heresy hunters determine when they have found a victim? They hear his speech or read his writings and weigh what they hear or read against



the teaching in the unwritten creed or creeds of the church which they have adopted as their standard. Christ was wise enough to stay out of the writing field, but He was finally apprehended by the heresy hunters of His day and condemned on the basis of hearsay. The hearsay was inaccurate, as it always is, but His devotion to truth was strong enough to lead Him to His cross rather than recant and subscribe to the unwritten creed of those He knew to be in error. Had He done otherwise He would have died in oblivion, and probably would have lost His own soul as did the heresy hunters who nailed Him to His cross.

**Answer:** Now the Church of Christ—the most sectarian of sects—surely has not yet learned well the art of organization and legislation in the denominational field. It does not enforce its denominational rules evidently, or it would suppress and silence factions: it has not unified its communicants. It lacks solidarity apparently.

Those of us who have never subscribed to any human creed or sought to be identified with any “wing” or “fin” of any sect will hardly know how to sympathize with the poor preachers in the Church of Christ who have to cast furtive glances around and feel about before they know *what* to say and *where* and to *whom*. That Church of Christ gestapo system must be fearful!

Why will anyone belong to such a sect?

It is true that hypocrites and carping critics among the Jews found fault with Christ our Lord, but Christ did not therefore go over to the Greeks and join the Epicureans!

**Reason Number Five:**

Fifth, the Church of Christ claims to have all the truth, but, in fact, is groping in darkness. It absolutely forbids new light to enter and perpetuates its own inadequate insights by refusing to hear those who have persisted in their quest for truth. The founder of the Christian religion met the same type

of religionists in His day and told them that it was a case of the blind leading the blind.

Answer: Poor Church of Christ! Still in darkness although it had Carl Etter for one of its teachers for twenty-five years!

Again we ask why Etter did not cite some of the *decretals or encyclicals* of the Church of Christ *absolutely forbidding* new light or anything else? Or why did he at least not name the *official or officials* in that denomination who had or could *forbid absolutely* or any other manner this or that? Is the Church of Christ such an irresponsible sect or such a non entity that it cannot find redress in the civil courts against such slanderous charges as these? If it is it surely must be too non existent to have exercised such tyrannical control over such a marvelous thing as *new light!*

Those who have continued their "quest for truth"! Here again the animal's ears crop out and the voice of the donkey betrays his identity! Modernism is here but thinly disguised! The *truth* is not revealed and now available in its saving and sanctifying power to the simple and the sin sick! It is that elusive something that men search for and discover through experimentations by degree until they finally reach *ultimate truth*. God has *not* "granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3), and the exhortation not to go "beyond what is written" (2 Cor. 4:6), is out of date and the fervent appeal for us "earnestly to contend for the faith once for all delivered" (Jude 3) is intolerable narrowness in the view of all Modernists! Verily the Etters and Reedies like Judas went to their own place!

#### Reason Number Six:

Sixth, the Church of Christ makes great capital of its ability properly to divide the word of God, but the system used is without scriptural sanction and has the net result of rejecting large portions of the Bible on the grounds that it was written to another people or a different age. The historical approach to Bible

study restores every verse of the Scriptures and makes the entire Bible throb with intense interest to the modern student.

Answer: In what creed book, church manual or other official publication does the Church of Christ set forth its "system" of properly dividing the word of God? Some of us are students of denominational errors and we would be glad to get this egregious "system."

Did Etter ever see or hear a preacher or teacher in the Lord's body who rejected any part—even the smallest portion—of the Bible? He did not! Did he ever hear any recognized preacher or teacher of God's word that made any division of the Bible that the Bible itself does not make? He did not! Furthermore, does he not know that the divisions according to dispensations, covenants and Priests, altars and sacrifices that all Gospel preachers point out in the Bible are those that are recognized and taught by *all scholarly works on the Bible* regardless what denomination the author of such work belonged to? This is an indisputable fact and if Etter's information about either the Bible or his brethren had been only *one-tenth* as accurate as his pique and his prejudice are acute he would have known this.

The divisions that gospel preachers make of the word of God are universally recognized by Bible scholars. We challenge denial!

But the "Modern Student"—notice that—sees things never seen before! The earnest, scholarly student of a hundred years ago could not see what the "Modern Student" can see!! Even old John Calvin with all his theological errors had more intellect, more scholarly attainments, more Bible knowledge and more faith in the Sovereignty of God than Carl Etter and all his infidel teachers put together! Walter Lippmann quotes John Calvin as follows:

"Everything pertaining to the perfect rule of a good life the Lord has so comprehended in His law that there remains nothing for man to add to that summary."

Then Lippmann adds:

“Men fully as intelligent as the most emancipated among us once believed that, and I have no doubt that the successors of Mr. Darrow and Mr. Mencken would come to believe something very much like it if conditions permitted them to obey the instinct to retreat from the chaos of modernity into order and certainty.” (A Preface to *Morals*, pp. 13-14.)

But little minds all prefer the “Chaos of Modernity” rather than the security and certainty of faith since this security and certainty would align them with those “who are out of date and ignorant.” They do not have the strength of character to endure that kind of taunt. Very few have the intellectual independence that Walter Lippmann exhibits when he admits and proves that *Modernity* means *Chaos*. He shows the folly, the futility and the helplessness of Modernism.

Reason Number Seven:

Seventh, the educational program of the Church of Christ is unwilling to trust the youth of the church with the facts of life and religion. It exposes its youth to a smattering of superficialities and when they go on for more advanced learning they are often left in a state of frenetic confusion. Some of them drop by the wayside, a few go on to new convictions while others apathetically fall in line with public opinion within the church, ratify and perpetuate the existing order. Our souls are stirred by mixed emotions when intelligent, highly educated ministers say, “We know these to be the facts, but our people are not yet ready to receive them. We must go slowly and lead them gradually.” We would be the last to betray these ministers. We fully recognize their desire to remain with the people whom they love better than their own souls, but we feel that a deeper loyalty to Christ should inspire them to take up their crosses and follow Him who said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Answer: Not being acquainted with the sect—Church of Christ—naturally this author knows nothing of its educational program and has never even visited one of its institutions.

But New Testament Christians all should want their young people taught reverently all the *facts of life* and all the *findings of science*. Life is the greatest of all mysteries and the marvelous, not to say miraculous, facts of life demonstrate man's utter inability to account for this mystery—hence *God*. All the laws of nature are God's laws and everything the scientists discover increases our faith in God and our amazement at His power.

The author of this review is not different from his brethren in this matter, and his attitude and experience is a complete refutation of the charge that Etter here urges against the saints. This author encourages his only child to study science, to make science her major in her college course and to take the full premedical requirements, which she did. This author has lost no opportunity to take courses, read books, attend lectures, visit museums and in every other way open to him has striven to equip and qualify himself to teach young people the facts of life and the true findings of science. He has therefore often been called by the Christian colleges and by other groups to lecture to the young people on points covered in the field of genetics, especially the Mendel law, paleontology, embryology, etc. He has taught young people on such questions as social diseases, abortion and birth control (not the methods, but the principle involved), etc., and he has had the support and endorsement of his brethren (the church, if you cannot think except in such terms) in this matter.

This is not stated as a boast but it is given as a simple statement of fact in order to refute the very unjust charge which Carl Etter alleges against the brethren.

This author knows nothing and has accomplished nothing that would entitle him to boast, but he does earnestly declare that he has spent his whole life and utilized all his energies in an effort to hold his brethren, young and

old, *faithful to the word of God*. Therefore he has studied to meet and refute various "*isms*" and "*ologies*" and other errors. The record speaks for itself, *and God is witness*.

No one in the church of our Lord has ever made any effort or shown any inclination to keep back anything that is *true* in science, in philosophy, in theology, or in history from the young. Carl Etter's charge is just as false as it is foolish.

The brethren allowed Carl to teach their young people for years, did he teach these young people the "*facts of life and religion*"? No, he did not; he spent his time bemoaning the ignorance and arbitrariness of his brethren and tried to create the impression in the minds of his students that if *they* and *he* were out from under the *inhibitions* and *restrictions* of "*the church*" they could *learn, O such marvelous and glorious things! What things?* Sh—Sh—He could not dare to mention them!

Some of those who were students under Brother Etter testify that he often said to them, "Don't let the church keep you from getting an education"!!

The trouble with Carl Etter is that he never learned the difference between *science* and *syehopancy*; between *principles* and *propaganda*; between *education* and *agitation*. He doesn't know *learning* from *pedantry* and he could not tell the difference between *Christianity* and *paganism*! He doesn't know whether he believes in *Christ* or *Confuscious*!

He attributes "frenetic Confusion"—which has confessedly been his own state of mind for years—to the lack of Modernistic teaching, when we all know that his own "frenetic Confusion," and as Walter Lippmann says, the "Chaos of Modernity" came as a *result* of Modernistic teaching. This teaching sets forth the idea that young people should learn the "facts of life and religion" through *experimentation*. We should supply them with contraceptives and allow them to learn sex facts through *fornication*, trial marriages, etc. Or even if they do not have the needed preventives and *abortion* has to be resorted to they will only be learning more "ultimate truth" in the *great facts of life*! Or if they commit murder for pur-

poses of learning more of the *facts of life* who should object? The two perverts with high academic degrees who kidnaped and murdered Bobby Franks said they did it in order to study the *sex reactions* in death. Just facts of life! They said this was no worse than when we impale a beetle on a pin for purposes of study! Their study of the Nietzschean philosophy had taught them to rise above all such sentimental things as sympathy and mercy!

Yes, we poor, ignorant Christians try to keep our young people from learning the *facts of life in this fashion!*

The alarming increase in youth delinquency, in immorality, crime, war and mass murders have all come as a result of the very educational philosophy that Carl Etter is calling for. Right where he functions in the educational field and where he is using his accomplishments and spending his energies in his most Modernistic *social activities* youth delinquency has pyramided and crime is out of hand. The officers of the law are alarmed and are increasing their forces! And yet this blind, blatant Modernist has the face to belabor us because we do not adopt these crime producing ideas and methods!

His charge that there are preachers and teachers among the saints who agree in his Modernism and approve his action but will not for prudential reasons let this fact be known *is serious indeed*. If he is telling the truth on this point then all faithful Christians *should be on their guard*. It is not a happy or a wholesome condition for Christians to doubt the sincerity of their teachers or to be always suspicious. Men should be honest enough openly to express their convictions, but hypocrisy and "fifth column" methods are characteristics of modernism and all the other *isms* that stem from Modernism. But Modernism cannot be successfully disguised from the discerning eyes of Bible reading, Bible believing Christians. By their fruits you shall know them."

It may be that some men simply agreed with Brother Etter that there are some factionalists, some cranks and some extremists among Christians who cause us grief and trouble and Etter took comfort from this and interpreted

this to mean that these men were condemning the whole church. Let us hope that that is the basis of his grave charge.

Reason Number Eight:

Eighth, the leaders of the Church of Christ have placed it in an embarrassing position by continual warfare upon science and scientific attitude. This fight against science is based upon fear that it will destroy faith in the pet shibboleths of the church. It does. Some of the most cherished doctrines of the Church of Christ burst as iridescent bubbles when exposed to the searchlight of the scientific approach in religion. The Apostle Paul was using scientific terminology when he said, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." It is true that real science does not drive one away from true religion. Dr. Millikan is an ardent Congregationalist, and other scientists are also devout Christians. The scientific approach to religion should have a salutary effect in driving out much of the superstition and fear which has haunted religion through the centuries, and will help the Church to retain in its leadership the many good men who otherwise would be lost.

Answer: Here again Etter treats the Church of Christ as a sect and condemns its action or attitude as a group or body. Of course this is the only way he could condemn the Church and justify his withdrawal from it. There is no such body as the Church of Christ which *acts* as body. Churches of Christ are autonomous local groups and they cannot be combined into a corporate body and held responsible for any doctrine, act or attitude. They have no organic connection with each other and have no creed except Christ—no laws except those of the New Testament. What one congregation does or does not cannot be credited to or charged against any other congregation.

This one thing, well understood, renders everything that Etter and Reedy said against their brethren meaningless and absurd. All of their charges are lodged against the



Church of Christ as a corporate body—a responsible church government—a sect. Such a thing does not exist.

What Etter says about science in Reason Eight is answered in the preceding number. Here, however, he speaks of the “scientific approach in religion” and if he had run true to form here and left this glittering generality—this high sounding expression undefined we would all have to retreat into a baffled inferiority complex and sit in confused embarrassment under these “scientific” indictments from a Superior Intellect. But the “break” is in our favor this time! He “fumbled” and we have “recovered the ball.” He tells us what he means by the “scientific approach” by quoting Paul as advocating the scientific method when he said, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

Right there he betrayed his Modernistic friends and committed them to something they will never accept. *Modernism proves nothing! It has no standard by which to test anything.* It is as nebulous as a California fog and as pointless as the Mid-Atlantic Ocean. It is definite only in its negations, and terrifically intolerant of anything that is not Modernistic!

And the type of so-called scientists that Carl Etter fawns before have no more proof for their theories, speculations and asseverations than a Mississippi Negro has for ghosts in a grave yard. They not only prove nothing but they will not even tolerate a *discussion* of the hypothesis upon which they proceed! They will not permit the opposition to place a book upon the reading shelves of the college libraries! They can carry their point only by *silencing by force the other side.*

Dr. Robert A. Millikan to whom Etter refers and who *is a real scientist* has said in print practically the same thing that we have here said about scientific (?) propagandists. These are the kind that Etter fell before.

Dr. Will Durant shows that Science has robbed life of its meaning and left the world in confusion and in despair. He says:

“God, who was once the consolation of our brief

life, and our refuge in bereavement and suffering, has apparently vanished from the scene; no telescope, no microscope discovers him. Life has become, in that total perspective which is philosophy, a fitful pullulation of human insects on the earth, a planetary eczema that may soon be cured; nothing is certain except defeat and death—a sleep from which, it seems, there is no awakening.

We are driven to conclude that the greatest mistake in human history was the discovery of 'truth.' It has not made us free, except from delusions that comforted us and restraints that preserved us." (On The Meaning of Life, p. 5.)

This is a dark picture and a severe indictment of the "scientific approach." What comfort or what hope can a man who accepts that conclusion hold out to his poor, groping, suffering fellow men? Why should we not kill each other—murder by the millions those who are in our way and process them into fertilizer? Then why not kill ourselves when things are inconvenient or unpleasant?

It is true that Doctor Durant attempts to answer his own questions and he does offer some excellent thoughts *if one is in good health and in possession of all one's natural senses.* But he confesses his inability and the inability of all the scientists and philosophers of earth to explain the full significance of life. Here is his confession:

"Let me confess at once that I cannot answer, in any absolute or Metaphysical sense, your question as to the meaning of life. *I suspect that there is some ultimate significance to everything, though I know that our little minds will never fathom it.*" On the Meaning of Life, p. 112. Italics mine. G.C.B.)

The sum of this confession is this, although our sciences have caused us to cease to believe in God and in life after death and have even taken away the "restraints that preserve us" even to the extent that immorality and crime are soon going to destroy us: although our present phil-

osophy and science have denied all that we have ever believed in as an explanation of life and death they offer us *no explanation, no comfort and no hope*. But, now do not overlook this, Dr. Durant says he suspects that life has a meaning that we cannot fathom! In other words *we do not know as much as we think we do after all!*

That is a perfect picture of the state of things in our present age! We have let science displace *faith* and yet science offers us no benefit at all in exchange for the blessing of *faith*—it cannot take the place of faith. It does not operate at all in the same domain.

Of course no telescope and no microscope can find God! Certainly our “little minds” cannot comprehend (go around) God and things spiritual and infinite. These things are spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14). We walk by faith (2 Cor. 5:7).

“Canst thou by searching find out God?

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is high as heaven; what canst thou do?

Deeper than Sheol; What canst thou know?”

(Job 11:7-8.)

Dr. Durant says, as if in answer: We do not know anything and our little minds cannot fathom the significance of life!

That is what God told you before you started!

“For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.” (1 Cor. 1:2.)

Dr. Durant does not accept the last part of this statement but without knowing it or intending it he confirms and restates the *first part of it* and acknowledges the need of the last part!

No telescope and no microscope can find God and we are in despair!—Dr. Durant.

But God has revealed himself through inspired preaching and we sorrow not as others who have no hope!—Paul.

So much for the "attitude of the Church of Christ towards science"!

Reason Number Nine:

Ninth, the message of the Church of Christ is negative in much of its teaching, and offers no constructive program to take the place of that which it condemns. With reference to many of its "thou shalt nots," it could well afford to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive.

Answer: For one who has *denied everything that comforts and restrains and supports us in both life and death* the charge of being negative comes with poor grace! But it is just as consistent and logical as Carl Etter is capable of being!

Reason Number Ten:

Tenth, the Church of Christ has such great faith in the correctness of its position that it has developed a smugness that borders on a holier-than-thou attitude so well illustrated by certain religious sects who received the most scathing rebukes of Christ in his day.

Answer: This is not the only place where Carl calls his former brethren—those who gave him his start in life and endured his unbelief and criticisms for twenty-five years—Pharisees! Just the worst of hypocrites!

But it was the sect of the Sadducees that Crucified Christ (Acts 4:1, 8-10; 5:17) and that is exactly the sect that all who "crucify Christ afresh" lign up with.

Reason Number Eleven:

Eleventh, the Church of Christ preaches undenominational Christianity, but, in reality, is the most denominational of all denominations. It is neither Protestant nor Catholic, but a group of small, warring sects which are little denominations within a denomination.

Answer: What is said in answer to number eight and

other charges answers this. There is nothing in this charge but a bad spirit. There may be a factional spirit in the hearts of some of our brethren but there is not the semblance of the mechanics of a denomination to be found among the brethren. If there had been any such an organization or power among us Carl Etter would have been deprived of his license to preach, if not excommunicated, 25 years ago.

#### Reason Number Twelve:

Twelfth, the Church of Christ preaches unity and practices division more viciously than any church with which we are familiar. The greatest need in this war-torn world is united effort on the part of Christian peoples around the earth. In our opinion, the Church of Christ will not espouse such a cause, but will continue to tear itself to pieces over minor issues while Rome burns.

Answer: There can never be unity between believers and unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6:14-18.) And there must be factions in order that those who are approved may be manifest. (1 Cor. 11:19.) If we are joined to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:18) or united with Christ (Rom. 6:5), we will have union and fellowship with everyone else who is one with Christ. And we will have separation from and the condemnation of everyone who denies, or disobeys Christ.

That should satisfy us—as much as we may weep when men like Reedy and Etter renounce the Lord, dispute his word and abuse his servants.

#### Reason Number Thirteen:

Thirteenth, the Church of Christ refuses to cooperate with its religious neighbors in movements that are designed to make the world a better place in which to live, but compasses land and sea in quest of proselytes on the basis of having a more certain pattern for reaching heaven. Jesus told the proselyters of his day that their converts became two-fold more the children of hell, and we might well ask ourselves if

we are not helping history to repeat itself at this point.

Answer: Pharisees again! Well, our efforts have produced some bad specimens. Etter for example!

Everything that men advocate and advance is intended to make the world a better place in which to live.

Natzism, Communism, Modernism and all the others. Etter may join in with all these things if he wishes.

We will cling to Christ and his will and way.

#### Reason Number Fourteen:

Fourteenth, the Church of Christ, in many places, is trying to carry water on both shoulders by appearing to be liberal to the world and strictly orthodox to its own brotherhood. In one case the church's position on undenominational Christianity was deliberately made to appear as a broad gauged liberal Christianity which was wide open to peoples of all religious faiths. Certain of our Christian colleges have found this to be a good way to gain prestige with the educational leaders of the community.

Answer: This is local and personal. A Review that is intended for general circulation and that will be read by people yet unborn cannot deal with some case that was confined to a local enterprise—an individual effort! If some group of brethren who are operating a college did not treat Carl Etter right, that is bad, but the "Church" has no power in the matter and no responsibility.

It may be that these brethren refused to be a sect and to act as a sect and therefore refused to live up to Etter's opinion of them and by their behavior proved to the public that Etter's charge against them *was and is false!* That would irk Etter certainly, and who can't see that he is irked?

#### Reason Number Fifteen:

Fifteenth, the Church of Christ claims to be allied with the religious fundamentalists, but its position is more accurately described by the term incidentalist. The merest incidental in the daily experience of New

Testament characters is magnified into a matter of great importance and around it is built an article of faith for the unwritten creed. Even a matter which was so incidental that neither Christ nor the Apostles referred to it in any way is included in the creed on the basis that the New Testament is not only inclusive but exclusive in its teaching. Instrumental music is an incidental which falls in this category. The modern hymnal and many other things might well be condemned on the same basis. The incidentalists in Christ's day placed religious significance on the incidental of washing hands; and it is strange that the Church of Christ has not done the same for the washing of feet, because they have a New Testament example for that custom. The Jews and Samaritans considered the place of worship an incidental of great importance but Jesus pointed out to them that the place of worship is a mere incidental and focused their attention upon the more important fact that God is a spiritual being and "seeketh such to worship him." Those same religionists crucified Christ because He discredited other incidentals in their religion and pointed them to the "weightier matters of the law." From the viewpoint of His adversaries He was a modernist in His day, but, in reality, He emphasized fundamentals and they magnified incidentals. Incidentalism should not be mistaken for fundamentalism.

Answer: The Church of Christ as a sect does not exist, we must point out once again.

The New Testament church is not, nor does it claim to be "allied" with anybody or anything except the Lord himself and all those who love him and keep his commandments. Christians will cooperate with anything that promotes peace, upholds and demands good morals or relieves suffering and sorrow. Conversely Christians oppose anything that destroys faith, wrecks morals, dissolves marriages, overturns governments and produces anarchy.

That gets Modernism and that is what irks Etter!

This number fifteen with its "incidentalism" *argumentum* (?) is the acme of acrimony! Let us see:

First, it contradicts other numbered charges. He charges that we are clannish and will not cooperate with anybody in religious, social and altruistic movements. Now he charges that we claim to be "allied with Fundamentalists—a very definite religious organization with political affiliations!

Second, in other numbers he charges that while we claim to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent *we do neither!* Here he contradicts that charge and belabors us for making the New Testament both *inclusive* and *exclusive*—practicing that which it *includes* and refusing to practice that which it excludes—but which *he, Carl Irked Etter*, says is left out only because Christ and the Apostles just *incidentally neglected* or *forgot* to mention it! It was too trivial for them to mention—and they had no inspiration to tell them that it would in a few years become an issue that would divide Christians for a thousand years!

How does this sound to people who believe that Christ spoke for God and spoke only that which God authorized him to speak (Heb. 1:1; John 3:11; 8:46; 12:48-50), and that the apostles had the Holy Spirit to "bring to their remembrance" all that Christ said, to teach them all things, to guide them into all truth, to make known unto them the complete will of Christ and to enable them to teach us all things that Christ commanded, and to attest their message by miracles? (John 14:26; 16:7-16; Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:1-8; Heb. 2:1-4.)

Third, the one thing that was on Etter's mind as an incidental was obviously instrumental music in the worship of God.

Both he and Reedy felt called upon to deal with this question and yet they *both conceded the only point that we are concerned about or ever contend for on this issue!*

We are in the negative in this discussion: we affirm nothing as to instrumental music. Those who use such music offer us deductions, adduce arguments and present



reasons *et cetra* to justify their practice and to convince us that we should do as they do. We often answer these sophisms and show them to be sophistries (thousands of times have Etter's incidentals, hymn books, meeting houses, etc., been taken from those who put them into the debate, properly classified and set in the service while those who so disingenuously laid these useful incidentals under tribute for their cause were silenced on the point and forced to seek other makeshifts for an argument) but our only contention is *that the New Testament is silent on instrumental music and that New Testament churches did not use it!*

Reedy and Etter concede this, our only point!

But they say it is such a trivial and incidental matter that we do not need to follow the example of the *New Testament Churches* in this respect! We must not *exclude* things because they *excluded* them.

So we see again that this is a repudiation of our Standard!

Fourth, Etter's statement that in our preaching and practice "The merest incidental in the daily experiences of New Testament characters is magnified into a matter of great importance and around it is built an article of faith for the unwritten creed" is pathetic in the extreme. If Etter made any effort to guard his statements so as to disguise the depths of bitterness he forgot his caution here and let his feelings get the better of his judgment. To save his soul he could not sustain this charge with an example from our practice. Any attempt to do so would further betray his bitterness and demonstrate his weakness in argument. It would convince any reader that Etter cannot distinguish between that which is commanded and that which is *incidental* to the thing commanded.

For that baseless charge to be true we would have to do something like this: (1) Christ sat on a mountain and preached, we, therefore affirm that any preaching in order to be scriptural *must be done from a mountain side.*

(2) When the disciples assembled in a room they closed the door. (John 20:19.) Therefore it would be unscriptural

tural to meet and worship in any room while the doors are open!

(3) Christ was baptized in a river. Therefore it would be unscriptural to baptize in any water except a river—lake or creek would not do!

(4) When the disciples at Troas met to break bread they assembled in an “upper chamber”—three stories up (Acts 20:7-9). Therefore it would be unscriptural for us ever to assemble for the Lord’s supper in any room that is *not on the third story of a building!*

(5) The only methods or means of travel that our Lord ever used, so far we know, were (1) Walking (2) Riding in a boat (3) Riding on the back of an ass.

Therefore we can never travel in any other way or by any other means—walk, ride an ass or go in a boat.

(6) When Christ sent out his disciples he sent them “two and two.” Therefore when we go out to preach we must go *two* together. One man going alone would be unscriptural. Three together would not do.

Now if we did any of these things or anything like them, Etter’s charge would have some basis, but of course *nothing remotely resembling such foolishness was ever thought of by sane people.*

“How long wilt thou speak these things?

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a mighty wind? (Job 8:2.)

Fifth, Etter further betrayed his inability to discern in spiritual matters or even to understand plain scriptural statements when he referred to the washing of hands controversy of Mark 7. These “hand washers” were Etter’s exact prototype and the attitude of our Lord and his disciples is our attitude precisely. Just the reverse of what Etter tried to get out of it. Notice carefully: The washing of hands was not an *incidental* in the doing of what God had commanded—such as Etter charges that we observe and magnify into a creed—but it was something that they took the liberty to do without a command from God; it was something added to God’s word and exalted above God’s commandment. They did it by the

*authority of men* and not by God's authority. To condemn them for this and to *call for their authority* would be to incite their scorn and to make the word of God both *inclusive* and *exclusive*. To make the word of God *exclude* such an innocent, such a trivial but withal such a sanitary, cleanly and beautiful practice would be to excite the contempt of all the Etters of all the ages!

But our Lord, nevertheless condemned them for adding this unauthorized practice to their religious services and said it made their *worship vain* because it rested upon the *commandment of men!*

How blind must Carl Etter have been to introduce this?

Sixth, Poor Carl further displayed his ignorance of God's word and gave us another proof of the feebleness of his reasoning powers when he said: "The Jews and Samaritans consider the place of worship an incidental of great importance but Jesus pointed out to them that the place of worship is a mere incidental and focused their attention upon the more important fact that God is a spiritual being," etc.

It hardly seems possible that Carl Etter does not know that in this controversy the Jews were *right* and the Samaritans were *wrong*. Jesus said this. He identified himself with the Jews on this point: "Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know." (John 4:22.)

Going to Jerusalem to worship was not an *incidental*. It was a command of God. (Deut. 12:5-11; 14:23; 16:11; Ps. 122; Ps. 137:5-6.) In making this a *mere incidental* Etter is imitating Jereboam (1 Kings 12:26-30), not Jesus. Jereboam is another prototype of Carl Etter!

It is true that Christ pointed out that the *place* of worship would not be any part of true worship under the new covenant. Or as the poor woman seemed to know, "When the Messiah cometh." But Carl repudiates such things as dispensations and covenants!

Poor Carl! He got his A.B. before he learned his A-B-Cs—and then he was too proud of himself to study the alphabet of God's word and of life!

Seventh, If instrumental music in the worship is what Etter wanted and if he had not lost his faith in Christ and in the inspiration of the Scriptures why, we ask again, did he not go to the Christian Church or to the Baptist Church? Why did he line up with Modernists? Let the reader form his own conclusion on that point.

Eighth, If the "Church of Christ" is as ignorant, legalistic, tyrannical and bigotted as Carl Etter charges that it is; if it has no more *reason, sanity* or *scripture* for its faith and practice than he says it has, then why, pray, did he not leave it years ago? How could he tolerate the things he charges against us even for one hour? And now that he is gone why does he not go with joy and rejoicing? Why does he not glory in his newly found freedom and look back with pity upon the poor benighted souls that are so ignorant and bigotted? So steeped in superstition and sin? Why all this revenge and all these bitter recriminations?

It does not take a very great psychologist to see that Carl is not entirely satisfied with himself and finds it hard to prove to himself that what he has done was just the noble thing that he wants to think it is. He can't get away from the consciousness that he has failed in a life-purpose, that he betrayed a trust, that he disappointed his friends, that he broke the hearts of relatives, that he *denied his Lord* and is already in torment with no hope of escape!

It is small wonder that he berates, belabors and abuses us! That is his only chance for comfort! In the language of Shakespeare we ask:

"Who then shall blame  
His pestered senses to recoil and start,  
When all that is within him does condemn  
Itself for being there?"

Reason Number Sixteen:

Sixteenth, the Church of Christ has its eyes on the past and is more concerned with "old paths" than it is in directing people to paths they can follow suc-

cessfully in our modern age. Although we wear the habiliments of civilization some of us have not advanced far from the primitive tribal faith in the witch doctor. Our gullibility and non-scientific approach to the concepts of our forebears have prevented us from getting a true perspective of the world in which we live. In order to preserve preconceived and inherited theories of Biblical inspiration and interpretation we villify God before our youth by identifying him with the wars of the Jews and the slaughter of ancient races while we do and say little to outlaw war and relieve race tension in our own day. We pay great tribute to the inspired prophets of old and attribute marvelous things to the New Testament period of inspiration, but oppose as unscriptural innovations everything that might add beauty and inspiration in the religious experiences of our own children. These are only a few products of the backward look in religion as practiced in the Churches of Christ.

Answer: Modernism is not even thinly disguised here. Carl Etter openly avows Modernism and uses one of the oldest arguments that blasphemers and Bible haters know. He labels Bible believers as reactionaries, obscurantists, as uncivilized, unscientific, as gullible, superstitious, believers in witch doctors, and as reveling in war, cruelty and slaughter!

To believe that the Bible is inspired would be to make God responsible for the wars of the Jews; it would be to charge God with commanding Saul to destroy the Amalekites. And that is too cruel and inhuman for the tender souls of Atheists with their science and "scientific approach." That is Carl's argument.

This author first read this argument forty-five years ago in one of Robert G. Ingersoll's tirades against the word of God, but he now knows that Ingersoll was by no means the first to use it.

It is the one never failing refuge of infidels, skeptics and atheists.

It is in their minds the best one they have. Carl should have used the one about the immorality of the Bible also.

In reply to that point we may avail ourselves of what others have said thousands of times which is in substance as follows:

If the Bible is so immoral, so obscene and vile; if its God is so warlike, so cruel, barbarous and bestial, how does it happen that those who read the Bible, believe the Bible, love the Bible and preach the Bible and practice Bible precepts *are and always have been* the dependable and substantial citizens of any community; the purest, the most peace-loving, peace-loving, altruistic and sympathetic people the earth has ever known? This cannot be denied. The story is an open book. Christians do not believe in war at all and many of them will not participate in it even in a non-combatant manner. Even while Carl Etter was writing his blasphemous charge against the saints many of them were in conscientious Objector's camps and some of them were in prison.

But now how about the Modernistic pagans with their science and "scientific approach"? They can't endure to think of the ancient Amalekites but they can boast and glory about their mechanized units, their giant planes, the block-busters and their ability to murder the total population of a city and process these human bodies into fertilizer! With one atom bomb they can murder more helpless people than all the wars of the Jews ever touched! But these are "civilized" men. They have a "scientific approach"! They are too kind and too cultured and too civilized to have anything to do with the warlike God of the Bible!

We must not look back to Noah and Moses, to Isaiah and Daniel, to Jesus and Paul for comfort and guidance! We must not revert to the Golden Rule and to the Greatest commandment in Law—Love—for our standard of conduct and our criterion of social behavior! No, no, we must turn to such men as Lenin and Stalin and Hitler: We must get our rules of life from Marx and Nietzsche and Walt Whitman and Bertrand Russell!

And for satisfaction, hope and security—for “joy unspeakable and full of glory” we should follow the example of Carl Etter! None other!

Take your choice, brethren! Look backward to the Savior or forward to a Stalin!

Incidentally (and in this sense we are “incidentalists”), the old “witch doctor” book says something about “*looking*.” First here is what Etter may look for: “But a fearful looking for judgment, and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary.” (Heb. 10:27.) But for us:

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” (Heb. 12:2.)

And remembering Etter’s fall:

“Looking carefully lest there be any man that falleth short of the grace of God.” (Heb. 12:15.)

And while we still believe:

“Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” (Jude 21.)

Reason Number Seventeen:

Seventeenth, the Church of Christ does not encourage growth and has a set policy which opposes change. No institution, including the church, can hope to survive in this changing world unless it encourages constant reappraisal of things as they are and stimulates hope that leads to action for their betterment. This does not mean that eternal verities are to be kept in constant flux, but it does suggest that these lasting values must constantly be reoriented in a changing world, as Jesus did for religion in his day. Any other policy leads to an enduring social stratification based on birth, race, religion or wealth, inherited or otherwise acquired.

Answer: Carl would have appeared in better light if he had just left off his preaching and continued his accusations. *He has nothing to preach*, but he can use strong language in his spiteful charges. Here he sets forth the same principle that Reedy tried to preach, and like Reedy he contradicts himself. Everything is chang-

ing and we must change. We cannot have an unchangeable God. We cannot rest our faith in something that happened on the earth two thousand years ago. No, no! Too many changes have occurred! The changes of time make the *facts of history not true*. If men get so they do not believe that the sun shines the sun will quit shining! Both Reedy and Etter saw the fallacy here and they tried to avoid the conclusion, but contradicted themselves.

Reedy said "ultimate truth is fixed." Ah, yes. But that leaves *some truth* not fixed, *changeable* and therefore *not true*! Carl says "the eternal verities" are not changeable! Well, does he know of any *verities* that are not *eternal*? He says they are *eternal* and that means, of course, they cannot change. If they change they lose their identity and cease to be. They cannot do that, they are eternal. But Etter says they must be "reoriented"! My, what education can do for you! It enables you to *change the unchangeable*! The word *verity* means a *truth*. It is from the Latin *veritas*. Hence *eternal verities* and *ultimate truth* are the same. Reedy and Etter know that *truth* cannot change but they darken counsel by the use of high sounding words. What they really say is that *truth* can't change but *we must change in our attitude toward truth*! Carl says the *eternal verities* must be "reoriented"! To Orient one's self means to get one's bearing mentally. To Orient some one else is to adjust that person's thinking with reference to *facts and truth*; with reference to realities. But Carl wants to Orient *facts and truth* and realities—*eternal verities*—themselves! Yes, he would not adjust his thinking or the thinking of others to square with *truth*, but he would reorient the truth to fit popular thinking! There Carl confessed more than he intended! That is his philosophy exactly.

But as for us we will "buy the truth and sell it not." (Prov. 23:23.)

#### Reason Number Eighteen:

Eighteenth, the Church of Christ has no place in its fellowship for those who do not conform fully to



the status quo. Even though we cast him out of our ecclesiastical circle, we expect him to remain with us and expose his children to our unfair and vicious attacks. Every man, woman and child must have a feeling of security and a sense of belonging. It has been my observation for many years that the Church of Christ withdraws these essential requirements of the human spirit from those who manifest a tendency to do independent thinking. This is a subtle type of force. more democratic institution appeals to reason rather than force to secure its ends.

Answer: This is a personal complaint. Carl is speaking from experience here. He has been regarded as unsafe, unsound, unsettled and unfaithful for a long time. Naturally he has not enjoyed his position. But if he had changed his talking and acting the brethren would have changed their attitude. We will even yet forgive Etter and help him to be a real Christian if he is willing to repent and to weep bitterly and then to preach fervently and at last to die gladly for his Lord as did another who *thrice* denied the Christ.

#### Reason Number Nineteen:

Nineteenth, the Church of Christ has a double standard for judging persons who are accused of violating what the church considers to be New Testament teaching. Those who transgress the moral code are dealt with on one basis and those who depart from the Church's theological position are dealt with on a different basis. Here is an illustration of how two leaders were handled: One man was reported to be liberal in his point of view; the other was convicted of immoral conduct. The liberal was cast out and forced to seek another fellowship, even though he loved the church with every fibre of his being. The man who had violated the moral law was exalted to the most honored positions in the church. This illustration could be multiplied ten fold.

**Answer:** This charge is also based upon some affair that was local and personal.

Since this author is not acquainted with the case he cannot, of course, express an opinion. Even if he knows of the case—which he may or may not—he does not know the facts involved.

But nothing of that kind can be the action of the church of Christ since no such organization or sect exists. It is safe to say that it was a congregation or a school or some local group that acted in this case.

There might even be sound reasons for just such an attitude as Etter describes. Did the man who was guilty of a moral lapse or misstep repent? If so, was it not right to forgive him? Did the man who was doctrinally disloyal? Who was unsound in faith repent and change his attitude? Or did he join the Congregational Church?

There is a difference in an unfortunate misstep and a perpetual attitude of disbelief and defiance.

Concerning the man who sinned:

“As for our transgressions, thou wilt forgive them.”  
(Ps. 65:3.)

Concerning the disbeliever:

“Yea, thou doest away with fear,  
And hinderest devotion before God.” Job 15:4.)

**Reason Number Twenty:**

Twentieth, there are many indications that the Church of Christ is showing signs of decadence and that it is running a marathon race with catastrophe. It is true that certain shifts in our population are causing increased membership in some sections of the country, but there is little manifest interest by those from without. Of greater significance is the fact that many members of the church are discontented, discouraged, and starving for spiritual uplifts which do not, and cannot radiate from a church whose message is fundamentally negative, argumentative, belligerent, and antagonistic.

**Answer:** This is only the prognostication of an apos-

tate! Such dire predictions have been made before. It is a common cry with those who depart from the faith. When a man loses his faith he thinks that everyone else has also lost his faith.

Truth cannot die and our Lord does not change. Those who hold on to the Lord will live as long as he does and will share in every victory he wins.

Brother, do not turn loose of the Lord.

“Your memorable sayings are proverbs of ashes,  
Your defences are defences of clay.” (Job 13:12.)



## CHAPTER VIII

### "TAKE HEED BRETHERN"

"For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to review them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6.)

"But my righteous one shall live by faith

And if he shrink back my soul shall have no pleasure in him." (Heb. 10:38.)

"Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." (Heb. 3:12.)

"Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things before hand, beware lest, being carried away by the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness." (2 Pet. 3:17.)

#### 1. *The Dangers that surround us.*

Brethren, it is clearly taught in the Scriptures and it has been pointed out repeatedly in this review that we can know God only by faith, that we become children of God by faith, that we walk by faith and that we live by faith—our spiritual lives are sustained only by faith. And the Scriptures also teach in unmistakable terms that unbelief or a ceasing to believe will cause us to lose our reward. (Heb. 3:18; 4:1.) However strong our faith may be it needs to have things added to it or to be exercised in supplying unto us the grace and culture of a Christian character and life. (2 Pet. 1:5-11.) We are

warned and exhorted by the inspired writers to take heed, to watch, to be sober and to pray always that we may not be carried away by the error of the wicked. This would all be unnecessary if there were no danger of our falling: if our faith could not be overthrown and destroyed. Let us consider here the things that may happen to our faith:

1. Our faith may fail. (Luke 22:32.)
2. We may depart from the faith. (1 Tim. 4:1.)
3. We may deny the faith. (1 Tim. 5:8.)
4. We may make shipwreck of the faith. (1 Tim. 1:19.)
5. We may err or miss the mark concerning the faith. (1 Tim. 6:21.)
6. Our faith may be overthrown. (2 Tim. 2:18.)
7. We may continue in the faith or be moved away. (Col. 1:23.)

We seem to think that these warnings only apply to the dangers of carnality: that we are to guard against moral missteps only. That is a mistake. It is true that the sins of the flesh will cause us to be lost (Gal. 5:19-24), and it is true also that they will harden us, and destroy our faith. (Heb. 3:12-13.) But there are other and perhaps more grave dangers that arise from other sources. Those who sin in a carnal way may repent and be forgiven, but those who, moved by pride of intellect and by scorn and presumption set at naught God's laws are beyond redemption. Not because God is implacable and will not forgive, but because they are impenitent and cannot return to the Lord. Our wrestling is not against "flesh and blood," says Paul, but against "spiritual boasts of wickedness in heavenly places." (Eph. 6:12.) There are "deceivers," "false prophets," "seducing spirits," "doctrines of demons," "the error of the wicked," "the deep things of Satan," "profane babblings" and "science, falsely so-called" to be prepared for and guarded against. Furthermore all false teachers use "smooth and fair speech," they come in privily—that is they keep their motives and their actual unbelief a secret. They are boastful, they claim *superior faith*, superior culture and *very much superior learning*; yet with all that they feign a humility

and such a superior amount of devotion and spiritual elevation that they cannot endure to engage in an investigation of religious doctrines. No, that would be controversy, and controversy is crude and uncultured. Such teachers always "promise liberty." (2 Pet. 2:19.) They boast of their freedom and "free thinking"—though they are the bond servants of Satan and they are not *free* nor are they *thinkers*. They, as a rule, are puppets in the hands of organized propaganda and what they are saying instead of being new and modern is old and pagan: it was all preached by pagans before Christ came to save sinners. And instead of being original and individual with the false teacher it is stereotyped, patented and universal with men of his ilk. They are all saying the same thing in the same tone the world over. They all got it from the same source and many of them have never had the independence of intellect or the strength of character to test what they were told or to try to find the truth for themselves. They go on sneering and mocking at that which they do not know and cannot receive. (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 8:7.) They go on boasting of their intellect and learning and discoveries, and blaspheming that which is as high above their thinking as the heavens are above the earth. (Isa. 55:8-9.) They go on using smooth and fair speech and making flattering and seductive promises. They tell you to throw off the shackles of *creeds* and *customs* and to give your reason an opportunity to function. They also promise freedom from restraint in social and moral relationships. They advocate "free love" and promiscuous sex relationships. *And they manage to connect all this up with religion and philosophy.* But few false teachers in our age advocate or advise men to give up *religion*. No, no, *religion* is an essential element in our psychological and social life. Do not give up religion but change your creed and your practice to meet the latest demands of lasciviousness and the most fanciful requirements of theorists. That is the attitude of the majority.

These are the dangers that have always beset Christians and they surround us in this age and are making assaults

upon the faith of our young people with a vehemence that has never been known in the United States before.

## 2. *Watching Our Ramparts.*

On certain points of attack we need to fortify ourselves and be prepared:

1. We must guard against sectarianism in our midst. We must not be factional or sectarian in spirit and we must not constitute ourselves a sect. As this has been so thoroughly stressed in other chapters of this review it does not need further emphasis here. Surely we can see from the attacks of Reedy and Etter how vulnerable a sect is; and if sects are all Christian, and to go from one to another is merely to change fellowships when another fellowship becomes, for any reason, your choice, then "our Sect" can have little hope for the future. If it is all a matter of "preference" then people of this age are going to prefer things more modern than New Testament Christians can have. When we turn into a sect, however, there will be no need to try to stay within the limits of New Testament teaching.

2. *Churches of the New Testament order are not organized—that is, they are not grouped together into a corporate body.* Therefore they own no schools, no publishing houses, papers or anything else. The tendency to think of schools as *Church Schools* and papers as *brotherhood organs* needs to be watched and deprecated. The churches do not control the schools and the schools *must not* control the churches. All Christians, both as groups and as individuals, may and should cooperate in every good work. But when any group begins exercising the power of control and raising the voice of authority things have already gone awry, and we would as well begin hauling down our colors and seeking recognition at courts ecclesiastic. The schools that are operated by Christians should teach Christian principles, especially as these apply to morals and to practical every-day living, and they should *teach the Bible as the word of God.* When doc-



trinal points arise they should be settled at once by just what the Bible says, and not by what some man thinks or by what some group or some editor has determined and decreed must or must not be believed and taught. If the Bible says nothing on the point then it should be dropped completely and at once. This is also just the type of teaching that should be done from the pulpits and everywhere else. When schools begin offering courses in "*our doctrines*" they have become denominational schools. They are also *theological* schools. Students who go out from such schools will be denominational preachers and will work for the spread and the glory of their denomination.

If we want to continue to be simple New Testament Christians we must make Christ the only object of our faith and his word the only law to govern our lives. We must forbear to judge one another and overcome the desire to "*boss*" one another. *We must be Christians.*

3. "*O my people, they that lead the cause thee to err.*"

Many of the preachers today are young men, and the majority of the teachers in the Christian colleges are also young men. Only one college president among Christians is above fifty.

That is in keeping with the spirit of the age, and it is probably as it should be. But there is danger.

These young men are all loyal to the Lord and sound in the faith, so far as this author has right or reason to believe. He does not judge anyone of them and certainly would not make a charge against anyone. But these young men have been reared and educated under conditions that are very different from those that obtained fifty years ago. They have come up since the theological "*restatement*" went into effect. Some of these modern conditions are not wholesome, and although they are generally accepted and all but universally sanctioned, *Christians cannot conform to them.* But how can we expect young men to teach very strongly against things that they have been accustomed to

all of their lives, and which they have seen many professed Christians practicing? Already we see, not only among students of Christian colleges but everywhere, liberties and lascivious doings tolerated and practiced among some who are professed Christians. Denominations have relaxed their laws and religious people everywhere have let down the bars on many social and moral questions. We may mention a few of these questions: dancing, drinking, smoking, petting, birth control and divorce. These may not all be of equal value of interest or of equal degree turpitude but they are all associated with the blackest deeds in the catalogue of crimes. And they all represent things upon which public sentiment and religious convictions have radically changed in the last half century—and what is more, these things grow more prevalent and sentiment grows more tolerant, if not more approving, all the time. How are any of us going to change the sentiments of our own people on these questions? And how are we going to prohibit and prevent these evils among our own young people?

But—and here is our greatest danger—if we give way on birth control, divorce and other moral issues how do we expect to hold our people loyal to the Lord on doctrinal questions? A man who can set at naught, ignore or alter God's word on one issue cannot be expected to be a stickler for what God says on anything else. If we change our views on moral issues to meet the changing social conditions why may we not also change our views upon doctrinal matters—matters of faith—to meet the changing religious conditions?

If we have preachers, teachers and elders who have agreed to alter God's word so as to allow these immoral practices but who still claim loud and long to be loyal and strict on such questions as premillenarianism and instrumental music and baptism, etc., how do they expect anybody to respect their views and claims? Claims like those are simply items of a creed and represent an inherited prejudice, a party plea with those who are not in other things equally as anxious to respect and observe

God's word. We have some men today who make very solemn asseverations on certain current issues—those upon which they think the "brotherhood" is demanding loyalty—and yet their attitude on other important matters does not indicate so much sincerity or an equal amount of solicitude for the cause of Christ. Some of them show no genuine reverence for or devotion to the Lord. Of course their loud claims and vehement protestations cannot be looked upon as anything but the shoutings of partisans and the mumblings of shibboleths: hurrahs for our sect. May the Lord pity his people when men of that spirit—and men thus devoid of the Spirit—get into positions of influence. And may the Lord grant his people the wisdom to see the difference between a *peddler of party pronouncements* and a preacher of the gospel of our blessed Lord: "The gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24.) Especially may God give to the brethren who have money the wisdom to use that money to the glory of God and not to the creation and perpetuation of factions; or to the personal advantage of individuals. Brethren, make this your daily prayer.

What is here said may seem almost like a repetition of one of Carl Etter's charges. If it does, the reader must observe that it is not made against all of God's people: also it must be emphatically shown that a wrong among God's people *can never justify anyone in forsaking God*. Two wrongs never make a right. It must be remembered, too, that in the beginning of this review it was conceded that there is some truth in some things that Reedy and Etter said. We must have a care on these points and try to show a consistent loyalty and reverence concerning all that the Bible teaches.

### 3. *Do We Have Modernists Among Our Preachers and Teachers?*

Etter claims to know men who are in agreement with him but who are remaining with the saints with the hope and the expectation of changing the people of God—of making Modernists of all of us. If this is true these men

are more dangerous, and also more culpable than Reedy and Etter. *They can change God's children into Satan's servants!*

But is this true? This reviewer does not know any man whom he is willing to suspect, though he will confess to a feeling of anxiety. Some of our young men have taken the highest academic degrees and we rejoice in that fact. They must have these degrees in order to teach in the colleges, if the work done in the colleges is to be recognized. But this presents our problem again. Can these young Christian men receive an infidel education and yet not be infidels? That is almost like telling them to be *taught* for ten or twelve years and yet charging them not to *learn* anything that they are *taught*. When they have been exposed to the sneering attacks upon their faith by brilliant and learned men for years will they not be influenced at all? If that were true then some well known aphorisms are wrong. Paul said, "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." Homer and Tennyson say, "I am a part of all I have met." If education expands the mind it does it by filling it with *something*—facts, ideas, thoughts, convictions, emotions, prejudices, etc. How can a man change without changing?

Of course one does not have to change all of one's ideas in one's growth, but it is difficult sometimes to know what is of faith and what is tradition. All of our men do not make that distinction, as we have seen.

Perhaps none of our Ph.D. boys have become Modernists, but it seems that some of them, *as well as some who have no degrees at all*, have been influenced by Modernism. They are, no doubt, unconscious of this fact but it is seen in their *attitude* more than by any plain declaration. They talk of progress and growth and new findings and late discoveries and what the most recent views are on this or that. This is all right in matters of science and inventions, but it sounds suspicious when the question is one of faith or if it has to do with the Bible and Bible teaching. This suspicion is increased when the speaker

shows impatience if not contempt for older views and ideas. When you discuss apologetics and speak of such books as Fisher's "Grounds For Theistic and Christian Belief" and you see the young teacher dismiss that book with a gesture and the remark, "that is an *old book*," you can't suppress the feeling of disappointment and fear. Of course it is an "old book," but so is the Bible and so is the question under study. Any book that discussed the inspiration of the Bible and the authenticity of Christianity in a worthy manner is still an important book. But this is just one illustration of the *attitude* referred to above.

The average church member today shows that he has been influenced by Modernism when he is indifferent to the preaching of the gospel and is not concerned about the cause of the Lord in these degenerate times. He does not attend the night services or any other service except the Sunday morning service. *That is a popular practice with Modernistic denominations.* They unite with each other and put on sensational programs in order to get a night crowd. They close their churches in summer and take vacation. Should we do that? If *all* our people were like the *majority* we would have to do it. Brethren, we can never evangelize the world or stay the tide of Modernism and of sin with that attitude characterizing the majority of the church members. *What is more to the point, we can't be saved ourselves with that attitude.* Our children cannot be expected to regard our morning worship with any serious concern if we do not regard the evening worship as of any account. Worship is worship regardless of the hour of the day when it is offered to God. The preaching of the gospel *is the one mission of the Church* and if we are not interested in that we would as well give up all pretense and line up with Modernists and Atheists and Communists and kill all the preachers and turn the church houses into clubs or cow barns, as they did in Russia. Where is your interest and *what cause* are you supporting and spreading, brother?

The fight is on, brethren, are you going to be good soldiers or are you going to be cowards and traitors?

“But as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.”



