



EAST CORINTH
CHURCH OF CHRIST
1801 Cruise St.
Corinth, Miss

Most Needed Lessons For Today

Seventh Annual SEEK THE OLD PATHS LECTURESHIP

1992

**SEVENTH ANNUAL
SEEK THE OLD PATHS LECTURES**
Formerly the Annual Mississippi Lectures

July 26-30, 1992

**“Most Needed Lessons
For Today”**

**EDITOR:
Garland M. Robinson**

This book is NOT to be SOLD.
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Held at the
EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST
1801 Cruise St.
Corinth, MS 38834

FORWARD

This book contains the lesson outlines of the **SEVENTH ANNUAL MISSISSIPPI LECTURES**. This is the fourth year this lectureship has been held at the East Corinth Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi. It was decided that its name would be changed to **SEEK THE OLD PATHS LECTURESHIP** beginning in 1992, which would compliment our Gospel Paper by the same name. **Seek The Old Paths** is mailed free to everyone who desires to receive it. Its purpose and design can be read in: Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1 and II Peter 1:12.

This year's lectureship is based on the theme: "**MOST NEEDED LESSONS FOR TODAY.**" Speakers were selected and then asked to submit ten topics which they felt were among the most needed lessons in today's world. They were asked to be "balanced" in these lessons to insure a "well rounded" lectureship program. From the topics submitted, 36 different subjects were selected. We sincerely appreciate the speakers for submitting such great topics. There was enough material presented to make three lectureship programs like this one. It was a hard task selecting the topics for this year because every subject submitted is certainly vital for today's world.

This lectureship is a well balanced program of needed subjects. Lessons are covered from evangelism to withdrawal of fellowship, from faithfulness to digression, from Bible authority to human authority.

Use this material to the glory of God and his everlasting Kingdom. Preach the Word (II Tim. 4:2)!

Garland M. Robinson
July 1992

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THE FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT

Allen Webster

1. Of the 31,102 verses in the Bible, which is the most important? How could it's 1,189 chapters be summarized? If one were writing a dust-cover synopsis for the Book of books, what two sentences would describe it? Read Matthew 22:36-40.
2. It is strange that John, "the apostle of love," is the only Gospel writer *not* to include the "first and great commandment" (cf. Mark 12:28-31; Luke 10:26-28).
3. This is the "first" commandment. First in:
 - a. **Time** because it issues from the nature of God (I John 4:8).
 - b. **Importance** because it is our foremost duty (Matt. 22:37-38). It is the "primary muscle of the soul" (Camp).
 - c. **Benefit** because without it nothing avails (I Cor. 13:1-3; Gal. 5:6).
 - d. **Revelation** because it is the foundation of the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:40).
4. The first and great commandment is not:
 - a. **Religion alone** (John 5:39-42). The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes were fanatically religious (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42), but did not practice it.
 - b. **Legalism**. One can keep many commands without love, but one cannot love without keeping commandments (I John 5:3).
 - c. **Sentimentalism**. We can love those we do not even like. God loves sinners but hates sin (Eph. 2:4; Titus 3:4,5; Psalm 119:104).
 - d. **Lust**. Hollywood has glamorized "love" until it is debased to sensualism in the minds of many.
 - e. **Acceptance**. Love does not condone evil, but condemns it (II Cor. 12:15,20; James 5:19-20). Love disciplines (Prov. 13:25; I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20; Rev. 3:19).
5. The first and great commandment is:
 - a. An **attitude of gratitude** (I John 4:19; I Peter 1:22).
 - b. **Expressed in actions** (Prov. 23:7; Matt. 7:16; I John 3:18). It is not so much "a feeling," as "a doing."
6. A **commandment (entole)**. This is an "injunction, i.e., authoritative prescription." Doctors order patients to take medications. Patients obey, not out of fear or duty, but from a desire to get well. Love is life's "prescription."
7. Of all of God's commands, why is this one called the greatest?

DISCUSSION:**I. IT IS DIRECTED TOWARD THE GREATEST BEING.**

- A. Jesus said to love the “Lord thy God.” God is love (I John 4:8; Eph. 3:17-19).
1. When God is regarded ONLY as Judge, King and Law-giver, fear will be the dominant emotion. We will “have just enough religion to make us miserable.”
 2. When love matures, fear of punishment is no longer the motivating force for obedience. Fear of grieving God becomes the focus.
- B. We sing this beautiful truth, “Could we with ink the ocean fill, Were ever blade of grass on earth a quill, Were the world of parchment made, And every man a scribe by trade: To write the love, Of God above, Would drain the ocean dry; Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though stretched from sky to sky” (Meir Ben Isaac Neherai).

II. IT DEMANDS THE GREATEST SACRIFICE.

- A. Jesus states that we must love the Lord with “ALL” of our being (Matt. 6:24,33).
1. We must love with all our “heart.” The Word uses it:
 - a. Of the physical organ (II Sam. 18:14). [Not under consideration here].
 - b. Of affections (II Sam. 15:6).
 - c. Of intellect (Matt. 13:15; Rom. 10:10; II Cor. 10:5).
 - d. Of will (Rom. 6:17; cf. Matt. 21:28-31).
 - e. Of emotions (Prov. 3:5; Matt. 22:37; Rom. 10:1).
 2. We must love with all the “soul.”
 3. We must love with all the “strength” (Mark 12:30). This refers to our abilities, might, the sum total of man’s powers (John 4:34; Matt. 6:10; cf. 26:39).
 4. We must love with all the “mind.” We are transformed by “renewing the mind” (Rom. 12:2); Our goal is to have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5).
- B. We must love our neighbors as ourselves (Rom. 13:10). Love would eliminate every sin committed against another (cf. John 15:13; Rom. 5:6-8; 16:3,4; Phil. 3:20).

III. IT IS DESCRIBED IN THE GREATEST BOOK.

- A. This “four letter word” is described in only one place—the heavenly book for the earthly life (II Tim. 3:16-17).
- B. The best description of love’s behavior comes from Paul’s pen (I Cor. 13:4-7). Read this chapter once a week!

1. **Love is patient** (“longsuffering,” 13:4a). God is patient (I Peter 3:20; Gal. 4:4), and so we are to “forbear” (put up with) each other (Eph. 4:2). Love is slow to become irritated at the shortcomings of others. We are patient with those we love, making excuses for their mistakes. Those we do not love can do nothing to please us. This does not indicate permissiveness (Gal. 4:16; Heb. 12:10). This would heal broken homes, unite congregations torn by pettiness, restore the penitent, and reach out to a ignorant world that misunderstands the church (Camp).
2. **Love is kind** (13:4b). Love is a verb! (Longsuffering is passive; kindness is active). This literally means “to show oneself useful” (Strong) (cf. Acts 10:38). Love without action is as dead as faith without works! “The greatest thing a man can do for his heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His children.” Love always builds up (II Cor. 8:1). William Penn wrote, “I shall pass through this world but once: any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not deter nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.” Of the virtuous woman we read, “In her tongue is the law of kindness” (Prov. 31:26). One does not smile in English or do a kindness in Chinese. Kindness is a language the dumb can speak and the deaf can hear.
3. **Love is generous** (“envieth not,” 13:4c). Love is not in competition with others and does not look with an evil eye on other’s successes (cf. John 3:25-30; cf. Psalm 73:2-3). It delights to see a brother honored, as a father does a son who succeeds. “Envy” (**zeloo**) is “warmth of feeling for or against.” From a root meaning “to be hot; boil as liquid; glow as hot metal.” In a bad sense, Joseph’s brethren “moved with envy sold him” (Acts 7:9). Pilate recognized that envy was the reason for Jesus’ delivery to him (Matt. 27:18). The root word is used in a good sense also (II Cor. 7:11; 9:2).
4. **Love is humble** (“vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,” 13:4d). “Vaunt” is “to boast or brag so as to exalt self.” “Puff” carries the idea of “blow up or inflate” (cf. 4:6, 18-19; 5:2; 8:1). Boastful people are empty. Love keeps one from having too high an estimation of his importance (Rom. 12:3). Humility is a virtue unaware of its own existence (if you think you have it, you don’t). We remain humble when we compare ourselves with Him instead of

each other (II Cor. 10:12). Love is anxious to serve, not impress (James 4:10; I Peter 5:6), as Christ is our example (Phil. 2:8; I Peter 2:21). The pleasure of praise is dangerous (cf. Col. 2:18-23).

5. **Love is courteous** (“doth not behave itself unseemly,” 13:5a). Love has good manners and is not rude. It is concerned with “little things.” The true definition of gentleman is “a gentle man.” When frankness becomes rudeness it lacks love.
6. **Love is unselfish** (“seeketh not her own,” 13:5b). A Christian does not insist upon his rights (Mark 8:34-37; I Cor. 10:24,33). He seeks to give, not get (Acts 20:35); to serve, not be served (Luke 22:6; Mark 10:43-45); to help, not be helped (Rom. 15:1,2); to see, not be seen (Phil. 2:4). Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). He emptied Himself (Phil. 2:7; cf. Rom. 15:3; Matt. 26:36; John 5:30).
7. **Love is good-tempered** (“is not easily provoked,” 13:5c). It restrains as did Christ when He was beaten, spat upon, scourged and crucified as a criminal (I Peter 2:23). Many look at a bad temper as a harmless weakness, “a vice of the virtuous.” But remember, “To enter heaven a man must take his disposition with him.” Heaven will house no ill-tempered folk. A man with such a mood would make it a miserable place for others. The chief cause of a bad temper is selfishness. (cf. Matt. 5:38,39).
8. **Love is pure** (“thinketh no evil,” 13:5d). “Think” is an accountant’s word meaning to “reckon; calculate; enter an item in a ledger so it will not be forgotten.” Love does not brood over wrongs done to it. The mind’s archives should not store grievances. When God’s love dwells in us, we do not go back to months gone by to pull out long lists of hurts. We train our minds to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report (Phil. 4:8). Love knows how to forget as well as forgive (cf. Heb. 8:12) and puts the best construction on everything. Love does not keep score. To overcome evil thinking, one must fill his mind with truth (Prov. 4:23; Matt. 12:34,35) and use it to resist Satan (James 4:7).
9. **Love is sincere** (“rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth,” 13:6a). “Rejoice” is “to be glad.” This is not the delight in doing wrong, but the pleasure which comes by hearing someone else has. Many prefer to hear

of another's misfortune rather than his good fortune. It is easier to "rejoice over them that weep" than "weep with them that weep." Love has no pleasure in sinners or their sins (Rom. 1:32; II Thess. 2:12). It never resists truth (II Tim. 3:8) nor holds it in unrighteousness (Rom. 11:18). It rejoices when truth is advanced and defended, regardless of who does it (Phil. 1:12-18).

10. **Love is strong** ("bears all things," 13:7a). "Beareth" means "to cover or provide a roof." It covers a multitude of sins (I Peter 4:8) by trying to hide the faults of others. It smothers the fire of anger. Isaac bore the hate of the Philistines (Gen. 26:15-22). It is not disposed to revenges (Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30).
11. **Love is trustworthy** ("believeth all things," 13:7b). Love is ready to believe the best of everyone, and does not have the tendency to look for flaws. It believes "all things" that are true (it does not believe false doctrine or lies). It is slow to judge or condemn (Rom. 2:1-4).
12. **Love is optimistic** (13:7) ("hopeth all things," (13:7c). It believes that all will turn out well. It thinks sinners will be saved. It knows that God answers prayers and keeps promises (Rom. 8:28; James 1:17).
13. **Love is durable** (13:7d-13). As good soldiers, Christians endure hardness (II Tim. 2:3) without complaint. They even pray for those who spitefully use them (Matt. 5:44). Love outlasts unreasonable husbands or wives, persecuting brethren, wayward church members, unbearable inlaws and nasty neighbors. It is the one thing that will stand when all else has fallen. Love has a spirit which never knows defeat and is not deterred by disappointment. Love does not allow afflictions to crush it, but uses them to become stronger (II Cor. 12:7-10).

CONCLUSION:

1. Of all the world's shortages, the shortage of love must be the greatest! Let's do our part to solve this problem.
 2. Let us work toward making the church such an "ocean" where timid souls, rescued from the world's sea of hatred, learn to enjoy God's great blessings.
-

WORSHIP

A SOLEMN AND SERIOUS PRIVILEGE

Wade Webster

1. From the beginning of the Bible when we read about Cain and Abel's worship (Gen. 4), to the end of the Bible when we read the admonition of the angel for John to worship God (Rev. 22), God is instructing man regarding the vital subject of worship.
2. In fact, the word worship, in one form or another, appears approximately 200 times in the Bible.
3. The importance of this subject can also be seen in the fact that the second controversy that God ever had with his people was over worship (Gen. 4:3-7).
4. Someone has well said this subject needs studying because "most people do not enjoy coming, are late in arriving, early in leaving, and bored while there."
5. John Milton wrote, "True religion is the true worship and service of God, learned and believed from the word of God only. No man or angel can know how God would be worshipped and served unless God reveal it; He hath revealed and taught it to us in the Holy Scriptures by inspired ministers, and in the gospel by His own Son and His apostles, with strictest command to reject all other traditions or additions whatsoever."
6. In this lesson we shall go to the word of God and find what it says on this subject.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE MEANING OF ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

A. The origin of the word.

1. The English word "worship" derives from "worth-ship" and implies an expression of worthiness, honor, praise, or exaltation. Someone said, "His worthship demands my worship."
2. The English word "worship" is used to translate a number of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words. For the sake of space, I will list the two most prominent ones.
 - a. *Hishtachawah* — the primary O.T. term translated as worship. It means to prostrate oneself or to bow down (Exodus 23:24; II Kings 17:35).
 - b. *Proskuneo* — the primary word for worship in the N.T., which occurs 60 times in some form. It means "to

- kiss toward one, in token of reverence” (Matt. 4:9-10).
- B. Batsell Barrett Baxter quoted the following definition for worship: “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.”
- C. Misconceptions relative to the meaning of the word.
1. Many teach that worship and service are the same, and thus, all that we do in life is worship.
 - a. **Ervin Bishop** said that worship “encompasses the worshipper’s total life and relationship with God” (*Firm Foundation*, March 1973, p.7).
 - b. **Lindsey Garmon** said, “You dedicate your job to Jesus. You be a good employee or a good employer and you offer that as an expression of worship to God.” To the women he said, “You serve in that home and you change those dirty diapers and you do it to the glory of Jesus, and that’s worship” (Sermon transcript, June-July 1978).
 - c. **Jim McGuiggan** wrote, “Worship is as broad as the Christian life.” He added, “Involved in that life of worship is paying debts, providing for one’s family, doing good.” He even said that he didn’t see any difficulty getting “golf, brushing one’s teeth, washing one’s hands, and the like” into worship (doing homage, honoring). (*Commentary on Romans*, pp.338-348).
 - d. **All worship is service, but not all service is worship.** The Bible carefully distinguishes between worshipping and serving (Deut. 4:19; 8:19; 11:16; etc.).
 - e. The Bible speaks of going to worship which clearly shows that not all of life is worship (Gen. 22:5; Exodus 24:1; I Sam. 1:3; Acts 8:27; etc.).
 2. Many today are teaching that the worship of God is not defined in the Scripture.
 - a. **W. E. Vine** wrote, “The worship of God is nowhere defined in scripture...” (*Vine’s*, p.686).
 - b. **Given O. Blakely** said, “Precisely where has God authorized any element of worship in any place at any time? A single reference will suffice for that...No believer was ever arraigned by the apostles for worshipping incorrectly...In fact, you are hard pressed to find any place in Scripture where anyone acceptably worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ...that he did so by

- authorized act or by a prescribed manner.” He saw defining worship as creed-making. He said, “The ‘I have done it right’ syndrome is out of nature with the new covenant, is borrowed from the moonlight period of the law and is owing more to law than to grace” (*Highers-Blakely Debate*, p.38-40).
- c. While it is admitted that many different actions and thoughts are referred to as worship in the Bible, God has defined the worship that He desires (John 4:24; II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:3).
3. Some “brethren” even go as far as defining worship as an “existential moment,” “a mysticism” and a “holy WOW.” (Rubel Shelly, taped lesson, 1991).
 - a. It is amazing to me that one who claims to be serving God could speak of worship in such a flippant and irreverent manner.
 - b. To speak of worship as “a holy WOW” is blasphemy against that which is sacred and right (Ezek. 22:26; 44:23).

II. THE MOTIVES OF ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

- A. We worship God out of thankfulness for what God has done (Deut. 26:10-11; Psalm 42:4; 95:2-3; 106:1; 116:12; 117:1-2; Heb. 13:15).
- B. We worship God out of fear and reverence for His holy name (II Kings 17:36; Psalm 30:4; 89:7; 96:8-9; 99:5, 9; 148:12-13; Rev. 15:4).
- C. We worship God out of a desire to be in His presence (Matt. 18:20; 26:28-29; cf. Exodus 40:34-38).
- D. We worship God out of a desire to please our Creator (Psalm 45:11; 95:6-8; 100:3-4; John 4:23; Rev. 4:11).
- E. We worship God out of a desire to obey the Lord fully (John 4:24; Heb. 10:25; James 1:22).
- F. We worship God out of love for Him (John 14:15,21,23; I John 4:19).

III. THE MANNER OF ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

- A. Certainly, the manner in which we worship God is of supreme importance. This is seen by:
 1. The condemnation of vain worship, will worship, ignorant worship, etc... (Matt. 15:8-9; Col. 2:20-23; Acts 17:23).
 2. The fact that God does not speak in vain (Isa. 45:19; Ezek. 6:10; James 4:5; John 4:23-24).

3. The fact that sincerity is joined with truth by God (Josh. 24:14; I Cor. 5:8).
 4. The fact that the first thing that the early church learned after her establishment was how to worship God (Acts 2:46-47).
 5. The many examples of men who were condemned for worshipping in the wrong way (Cain — Gen. 4:3-7; Heb. 11:4; Nadab & Abihu — Lev. 10:1-3; Matt. 15:9; etc.).
- B. Our Lord clearly outlined the manner in which God is to be worshipped (John 4:23-24). (Wendell Winkler's material, Truth in Love Lectureship).
1. The **Aim** of worship is given — God (Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9; Phil. 3:3).
 2. The **Action** of worship is mentioned — Worship (John 4:24). (The word worship involves action paid to God (Matt. 18:26).
 3. The **Absolute** of worship is pointed out — Must (John 4:24; cf. Heb. 11:6; Acts 9:6; 22:16; John 3:5-7).
 4. The **Attitude** of worship is stressed — Spirit (Heb. 12:28-29; Matt. 15:7-8; Psalm 122:1).
 5. The **Authority** of worship is laid down — Truth (John 17:17; Col. 3:17; I Peter 4:11).
- C. God has specified certain acts to be carried out in His worship.
1. **Singing** (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; I Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; James 5:13).
 2. **Praying** (I Cor. 14:15; Acts 2:42; 4:24-37; James 5:15-16; I Thess. 5:17).
 3. **Giving** (I Cor. 16:2; Rom. 15:26; II Cor. 8:9).
 4. The **Lord's Supper** (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 11:20-34; 10:16, 21).
 5. **Preaching or Teaching** (Josh. 8:30-35; Deut. 31:9-13; Neh. 8:1-9; Luke 4:16-21; Col. 4:16).

IV. THE MISSION OF ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP.

- A. First, and foremost: to honor and magnify God (I Chron. 16:29; Psalm 29:1-2, 9; 96:8; 99:5; Rev. 4:10-11; 14:7; 15:4).
- B. Second: to draw nigh unto God (Matt. 15:8; cf. Exodus 3:5; Lev. 10:3; 21:21; Num. 8:19; Psalm 100:2; Ezek. 33:31; James 4:8).
- C. Third: to strengthen and edify those that participate (I Cor. 14:17; Heb. 10:25; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

CONCLUSION:

1. We must make sure that we worship God in the way He has specified.
 2. If we do not worship God acceptably then we might as well shut our doors. Notice Malachi 1:10-14.
 3. One day, God is going to root up those who do not worship him correctly (Exodus 32:10; Lev. 10:2; I Kings 13:3; Matt. 15:13).
 4. May God give us the strength to stand firm upon His word when many are “making havock of the church.”
-

THE BASIS, BOUNDARY, AND BENEFITS OF FELLOWSHIP

Charles Blair

1. Throughout this lesson we shall emphasize that questions about fellowship (basis, boundaries and benefits) must rest with God.
2. Each of us must be willing to accept what God has revealed on this, and all other subjects.
3. At our conclusion, I hope we shall all strive to accept those God will accept and reject those whom God rejects.

DISCUSSION:

I. QUESTIONS CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP AROSE DURING THE FIRST CENTURY:

- A. Could Gentiles, who had not been circumcised, be accepted into the body of Christ?
 1. Acts 15:1-2
 2. Eph. 3:4-6
- B. Could you fellowship someone who was “weak in the faith?”
 1. Important to define “weak in the faith.”
 2. Rom. 14:1-3
 3. The issue had to be settled. It could not be ignored.
 4. Rom. 14:5
- C. Could you fellowship someone living in adultery?
 1. I Cor. 5:1-2

- 2. Paul was dealing with the attitude of those within the church.
- D. If you will take notice that in each example above, truth is what was appealed to in order to solve the problem.
- E. The answers, then and now, must rest with God.

II. IN ORDER TO FIND THOSE ANSWERS I MUST GO TO GOD'S REVEALED WILL.

- A. Such a journey requires some basic attitudes:
 - 1. "Good and honest heart" — Luke 8:15.
 - 2. Willingness to "dig" — II Tim. 2:15.
 - 3. Pay the price to know — Acts 17:11.
- B. At no point can we elevate man above the revealed will of God.
 - 1. Paul followed his conscience, but at times it was wrong because his conscience did not have truth (Acts 23:1).
 - 2. He had good training but even this is not right if you do not have truth (Phil. 3:5-6).
 - 3. I Cor. 4:6

III. THE ONLY BASIS FOR FELLOWSHIP IS "TRUTH" FROM GOD.

- A. There is no other standard by which one can determine fellowship.
 - 1. John 12:48
 - 2. John 6:63
 - 3. Col. 3:17
- B. Great "cry" today for unity. This cry is really about "fellowship."
 - 1. Who can we fellowship?
 - 2. II John 9 points us to the doctrine (truth) of Christ to settle the issue.

IV. THE BOUNDARIES OF FELLOWSHIP ARE DETERMINED BY GOD'S REVEALED WILL.

- A. Once I find the truth on "who" God will or will not accept, the issue is settled for all faithful Christians.
 - 1. John 9:31
 - 2. Acts 10:34-35
- B. Let us consider briefly what God states about the matter.
 - 1. God will not accept those who:
 - a. Create divisions contrary to the doctrine of Christ (I Cor. 1:10; Rom: 16:17).

- b. Are living in adultery (I Cor. 5:1).
 - c. Are covetous, railers, drunkards, extortioners (I Cor. 5:11).
 - d. Are idolaters, homosexuals, thieves, revilers (I Cor. 6:9-10).
 - e. Will not walk orderly (in step) (II Thess. 3:6).
 - f. Does not obey truth (II Thess. 3:14).
 - g. Are heretics (Titus 3:10).
2. If God will not accept this kind of behavior, neither can I.
- C. Will God accept lukewarmness?
- 1. Rev. 3:16
 - 2. If he will not, can I?
- D. When God speaks about an issue, that settles it.

V. THE BENEFITS OF FELLOWSHIP ARE PROMISED BY GOD.

- A. By obeying the gospel we come into the house of God as the family of God.
- 1. I Tim. 3:15
 - 2. I John 3:1
- B. As family, we bear each other's burdens — Gal. 6:2.
- C. We find encouragement from each other — Heb. 10:24.
- D. We are bound together by our God and each other — I John 1:7.
-

THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Edward White

- 1. The Christian life is God's way of life.
- 2. That Christianity is to be distinct cannot be denied.
- 3. The word DISTINCT means "distinguished from others; capable of being easily perceived; clear; well defined; separate" (Webster).
- 4. Thus, the Christian life is a life that is different from the world (II Cor. 6:17; 5:17).

DISCUSSION:**I. THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH LIES IN THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF EACH MEMBER.**

- A. When we lose our distinctiveness, we lose our strength.
- B. When we lose our distinctiveness, we lose our influence for good (cf. Phil. 2:15).
- C. The strength of Christianity is not where it is LIKE other religions but where it is UNLIKE them.
 - 1. When Israel of old desired to be like everyone else, she lost her distinctiveness and strength (I Sam. 8:5, 20).
 - 2. When we as Christian people think like, live like, love like, talk like, dress like and do like the world, we lose our influence, our distinctiveness and our strength!
 - 3. The Christian life will not allow room for compromising with that which is evil...we must make a clean break...
- D. Christians are a “peculiar people” (I Peter 2:9).
 - 1. Many have failed to realize that the Christian life is distinctive and different (cf. I Peter 4:4).
 - 2. Could this be the reason our influence on the world has weakened?

II. CHRISTIANITY CALLS FOR A DIFFERENT OR DISTINCT LIFE.

- A. Those in Christ are “NEW” creatures (II Cor. 5:17).
 - 1. They have new goals, new purposes, new desires, etc.
 - 2. The whole soul, mind and body are consecrated to the new life in Christ.
- B. They now seek those things which are above (Col. 3:1-3).
- C. They are no more servants of unrighteousness but servants of righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18).
 - 1. The life we live determines whose servants we are.
 - 2. The Christian is in the God-serving, God-pleasing business (cf. Acts 4:13, 18-20; 5:29).
 - 3. We cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24; 12:30). (There is no third master...no middle ground!)
- D. The Christian life is a washed, sanctified and justified life, thus, a distinct, separate, well-defined life (I Cor. 6:9-11).

III. GOD HAS ALWAYS DEMANDED HIS PEOPLE TO BE DIFFERENT OR DISTINCT.

- A. Being distinct or different is not a request of preachers or elders but a DEMAND of God (Lev. 20:26; Deut. 2:5,9,19; 7:1-4; Rom. 15:4).

- B. Christians are called out of darkness (I Peter 2:9).
- C. God hath called us to holiness (I Thess. 4:7).
- D. We are to be without spot and blameless (II Peter 3:14).
 - 1. “Without spot:” means undefiled; spotless; unblemished, pure (cf. James 1:27).
 - 2. “Blameless” means not condemned; without blemish or without rebuke (cf. Phil. 2:15).
 - 3. This calls for a lot of self-discipline, which is hard in such a permissive society, yet God demands it (cf. I Cor. 9:27).

IV. GENUINE DISTINCTIVENESS BEGINS WITH RESPECT FOR GOD AND HIS WORD.

- A. We’ll NEVER be the people God wants us to be until we have a proper respect for God and His Holy Word.
- B. Why is there such a steady flow of worldliness into the church?
 - 1. A lack of respect for God and His Word (cf. Deut. 6:4-14).
 - 2. God doesn’t think and reason like we do (Isaiah 55:8-9).
- C. Our society has generally rejected God and His supreme right to rule in the lives of men (cf. Judges 17:6; 21:25).
- D. Thus, the only way for the Christian life to be distinct or different is for us to love God with all our heart (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37) and respect His word enough to do what it says (Matt. 7:21-27).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. If you want to go to heaven, you’ve got to be different from the world in the life you live.
 - 2. When we lose our distinctiveness, we lose our influence for good.
 - 3. When we lose our influence for good, we cease to be the “light of the world” and “the salt of the earth” (Matt. 5:13-14).
 - 4. Can people around you see the real difference or distinctiveness in you?
-

GOD'S PLAN FOR KEEPING THE CHURCH PURE

Guy F. Hester

1. God wants the church to be “*a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish*” (Eph. 5:27).
 - a. God has given us a plan whereby the church might be disciplined and kept pure.
2. Discipline defined: “**1:** punishment **2** obs: Instruction **3:** a subject that is taught: a field of study **4:** **training that corrects, molds, or perfects** the mental faculties or moral character **5 a:** control gained by enforcing obedience or order **b:** orderly or prescribed conduct or pattern of behavior **c:** Self-control **6:** a rule, system of rules governing conduct or activity.” Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.
3. Discipline required everywhere.
 - a. Home — Eph. 5:22-25; Eph. 6:1-4; Prov. 22:6.
 - b. School — Luke 2:52.
 - c. Office — Eph. 6:5-9.
 - d. Church — I Tim. 3:14-15.
4. There are many different types or kinds of discipline: self, taught, enforced, etc.

DISCUSSION:

I. SELF DISCIPLINE.

- A. Timothy — I Tim. 3:14-15; 4:12,13,16.
 1. Young people (and older) are responsible for themselves.
 2. Refrain from tobacco, drugs, liquor, immorality, etc.
 3. Obey God — Eccl. 12:1; Eph. 6:1-3; II Tim. 3:14-15.
 4. Honor parents — Eph. 6:1-3; Exodus 20:12; Col. 3:20; Prov. 23:22.
- B. Paul — I Cor. 9:27.
 1. Many preachers have destroyed their reputation and influence and shamed the church as a result of a failure to discipline self.
 2. Church members often backslide for a lack of self discipline — I Cor. 10:12.
- C. Elders — Acts 20:28.
 1. Elder’s first responsibility to self and then the flock.
 2. Elders are to be “ensamples to the flock” (I Peter 5:3).

3. Even “*Jesus began both to DO and teach*” (Acts 1:1).
4. A church will never rise above its leadership.

II. TAUGHT DISCIPLINE.

- A. In the “great commission” teaching is on both sides of baptism — Matt. 28:19-20.
- B. People will do better when they are taught better.
 1. One of the crying needs of the church is stronger pulpits — II Tim. 4:1-5.
 2. The reason the church has problems with immorality, divorce, etc., is because of the general weakness in our teaching.

III. ENFORCED DISCIPLINE.

- A. We are commanded to “*withdraw...from EVERY brother that walketh disorderly*” (II Thess. 3:6).
 1. We are often inconsistent—withdraw from some but not others.
 2. Classify sins—some worthy of disfellowshipping, others not.
 3. Sometimes show respect of persons—the Bible says “EVERY BROTHER.”
 4. False teachers must be marked and avoided — Rom. 16:17; I Tim. 6:3-5; II John 9-11.
 5. We must “*have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*” (Eph. 5:11).

CONCLUSION:

1. God’s plan for keeping the church pure is proper discipline.
 2. Must begin with self.
 - a. No one can *make* you do better unless you want to do better.
 3. When we have properly disciplined ourselves then we will be in a position to instruct and assist others in molding and correcting their lives.
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THE CRISIS OF QUALIFIED LEADERSHIP

James W. Boyd

1. Define the subject.
 - a. Crisis: critical, crucial, decisive moment, crossroads situation turning point, significant, important.
 - b. Qualified: As God considers leaders qualified.
 - c. Leadership: In the church.
 - 1) Not the divine leadership which is without fault.
 - 2) Human leadership is under consideration.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHO DO MEN CONSIDER QUALIFIED?

- A. Good mixers, enthusiastic, energetic.
- B. Financially successful, highly educated, articulate.
- C. Socially prominent, family contacts.
- D. Can be all of these and be dangerous to the church.

II. WHO DOES GOD CONSIDER QUALIFIED?

- A. Qualification in I Tim. 3 and Titus 1.
- B. Recognizable, demonstrated spiritual qualities.
- C. Character; what he is, more than who he is.

III. IS IT REALLY A PROBLEM? WHEN IS IT MOST CRUCIAL?

- A. Not a problem everywhere, all the time.
 1. Some places, a problem far too often, most of the time.
 2. At most places at some time in history of a church.
 3. Many places at present time.
- B. Crisis exists at time of selection or addition to leadership.
 1. When decisions impending.
 2. When opportunities exist.
 3. When sin and trouble comes; dangers threaten.

IV. STUDY IN CONTRASTS OF LEADERSHIPS.

- A. Real life examples of real crisis.
- B. Real life examples where no crisis exists.

V. WHY THIS MATTER IS SO IMPORTANT.

- A. "Pillars" or "pillows."
- B. Affects future of the church for years, even generations.
- C. Potential provocation of rebellion, revolt, division.

VI. CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP WHEN APOSTASY THREATENS.

- A. Proper leadership can prevent/end drift into apostasy.
 - 1. Must be informed, know truth from error.
 - 2. Truth can be known, some choose not to know.
 - 3. Knowledge of brotherhood conditions and issues.
- B. Must insist on truth from pulpit and classes.
 - 1. Monitor all materials used.
 - 2. Disallow uncertain teaching and unsound teachers.
- C. Convict gainsayers, mark false teachers.
 - 1. Disallow activities that bring reproach on the church.
 - 2. Prevent preachers, teachers being participants in events that undermine the faith.
- D. Very careful what and who is endorsed and supported.
- E. Having done all, to stand; Resolute.

VII. CRISIS IN LEADERSHIP IN PREVENTING DROP-OUTS; RECOVERING THE FALLEN; ASSISTING IN GROWTH.

- A. Solemn, sacred duty to watch for souls.
- B. Devise means, expedite efforts to encourage growth and faithfulness; restore the fallen.

VIII. A PRIME CAUSE OF THE CRISIS: WRONG MAN IN RIGHT PLACE.

- A. Failure to use authority even when there is responsibility.
 - 1. Benign neglect.
 - 2. Won't act and won't let anybody else act.
- B. Temptation to "boss" and lord it over others — Diotrephes.
- C. Such reflects misunderstanding of the nature of leadership.
 - 1. Lead, not drive.
 - 2. A work, not just an honor bestowed.
 - 3. Caution, not procrastination.
 - 4. Care, not needless delay.
 - 5. Execute (carry out), not execute (just to kill).
 - 6. To LEAD (pronounced leed) one must remove the LEAD (pronounced led).

IX. CRISIS CREATED WHEN LEADERS OPENLY SIN.

- A. Not suggesting a double standard of right and wrong.
 - 1. There is a double standard of influence, responsibility.
 - 2. To whom much is given, much is required.
- B. None will be perfect, but must be beyond reproach.

- C. Few situations cause the church more harm than sin openly practiced by leaders in the church.

X. WE INVITE CRISIS IF WE DO NOT PREPARE LEADERS.

- A. Must teach proper respect for and role of leaders.
1. Train the young to aspire to the noble work.
 2. Young must guard their lives while young lest they destroy their ability to be qualified.
 3. Not a novice.
- B. Must be taught, be knowledgeable of the Word; Primary.
- C. Must understand principles of overseeing.
1. Informed, organized, sensitive to needs.
 2. Caring, loving, compassionate, decisive, open minded.
 3. Understand the goal—Help others get to heaven.
 4. Ambition for others, not self; for service, not praise.
 5. Necessity to keep growing.
- D. Taught how to make decisions founded on truth.

XI. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD LEADERSHIP, AND WHY.

- A. Good: Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Nehemiah, etc.
- B. Bad: Aaron, Saul, sons of Eli and Samuel, Jeroboam, etc.
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THE EFFECTS OF HUMANISM ON THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH

Raymond Allen Hagood

1. Humanism is perhaps the single greatest enemy of God in our day and time.
2. Its radical ontologies have influenced every aspect of human thinking.
3. Its pervasive tentacles reach into our courts, our hospitals, our schools, our government, our homes, our media and our universities.

4. Humanism is the cataclysmic force of our age, and yet the average person is ignorant of its tenets.
5. Failure to recognize the danger of humanism has fueled its rapid growth, and ignorance of its doctrines have blinded people to its lethal nature.
6. Apologists for humanism depict it as a benign philosophy which provides only good for mankind, when, in reality, it is a fatal dogma which poisons the minds and souls of all who imbibe its principles.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS HUMANISM?

- A. "Humanism is the religion which deifies man and dethrones God." (Homer Duncan, **SECULAR HUMANISM, THE MOST DANGEROUS RELIGION IN AMERICA**)
 1. An ancient Greek by the name of Protagoras expressed the heart of humanism when he said, "Man is the measure of all things, of things that are, that they are; and of things that are not, that they are not."
 2. Since humanism dethrones God and makes man the measure of all things, it denies and repudiates God's laws which control human conduct and human destiny.
- B. Additionally, humanism is a system for decision-making.
 1. One of the primary functions of humanism is to provide a method for making moral decisions.
 2. Decisions are not decided on the basis of the Bible, but by subjective individual situational choices of each individual.
 3. These choices are neither right or wrong and are based solely on human authority, separate and apart from any recognition of divine authority.

II. HISTORY OF HUMANISM.

- A. Humanism traces its roots to the ancient Greek philosophers.
 1. The Greek philosophers believed that matter was everything.
 2. These philosophers rejected God and put their trust in human wisdom.
 3. Paul dealt with the ancient philosophers when he said in Rom. 1:28, "*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.*"
- B. Modern humanism, however, came from the Renaissance era.
 1. The age of Enlightenment fueled man's reliance on self,

and as a result it made God more abstract on the canvas of reality.

2. The Renaissance humanists gave little or no attention to the Bible, but spent their time studying the ancient humane literature.
 3. This emphasis on humane literature influenced their beliefs and values and led them to accept man alone as the final and only judge.
 4. God was rejected as the source of authority and was dethroned as the great judge.
 5. Man, in essence, became a god himself with the power and ability to determine everything totally independent of God and of God's revelation.
- C. Other historical factors which contributed to modern-day humanism.
1. Advent of modern science.
 2. The equating of religion with ignorance.
 3. The role of John Dewey in restructuring modern secular education.
 4. Role of education.
 5. Growing reliance on technology which aids and abets the philosophy that God is no longer needed.

III. THE HUMANIST MANIFESTO.

- A. Humanist Manifesto I and Humanist Manifesto II were both signed by a large number of theologians, educators and philosophers.
- B. An examination of the tenets of both manifestos.

IV. THE RELIGION OF HUMANISM.

- A. Both manifestos viciously attack religion.
- B. Additionally, humanism has been legally declared a religion by the U.S. Supreme Court.

V. THE EFFECTS OF HUMANISM ON MANKIND.

- A. Humanism eliminates God altogether.
 1. This was the great problem of the Greek philosophies.
 2. This is what led to the idolatry which paved the way for Christian persecution.
- B. Humanism destroys morals.
 1. There are no godly standards for morals.
 2. Every man becomes his standard and authority for moral choices.

3. Situation ethics becomes the rule, and man makes his own moral laws.
- C. Socialism and other collective economic systems destroy individual initiative.
 1. Since man is the measure of all things, then government must serve man's whims and social needs, whether the individual deserves such care or not.
 2. Socialization of schools, homes, government and all other institutions is essential.
- D. Human life is of value only so long as it is productive and does not inconvenience society.
 1. Therefore, abortion and euthanasia are acceptable and desirable.
 2. Since man has no soul and is simply matter in motion, human life is expendable.

CONCLUSION:

1. Humanism is a product from the devil's workshop.
 2. It accomplishes his long sought-after purpose of dethroning God in man's life.
 3. We must all be warned of its grave dangers and work hard to defeat this false religion.
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RESPECTING THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18-19

Billy Bland

PURPOSE: To show that the silence of the scriptures is to be respected. (What God has not authorized — we dare not add!)

1. This subject has to do with Bible authority (I Peter 4:11).
2. We will all one day be judged by the word of Christ (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12).

3. Since judged by the word one must properly understand that word and act accordingly. (Included would be the silence of the scriptures). Col. 3:17
4. Is it the case that when the scriptures are silent that we have the freedom to choose? Or, is it the case that we are to act **only** upon that which is written?
 - a. Discussion relative to this matter is not unique to our generation.
 - b. In the 1500's Huldreich Zwingly allowed in church service and organization **only** what the Bible approved. Martin Luther would remove **only** what the Bible condemned.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE BIBLE CAN BE UNDERSTOOD.

- A. Eph. 3:3-4; I Thess. 5:21; Acts 17:11; II Tim. 2:15
- B. In Acts 2 they understood and were obedient. Note: they gladly received the word. 2:41
- C. Parable of the sower (Matt. 13:23).

II. ALL MUST BE DONE IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS (Col. 3:17).

- A. Must have Divine authority for all we speak (I Peter 4:11) and do (Col. 3:17).
- B. Jesus has all authority (Matt. 28:18).
- C. Scriptures are Divinely inspired and authoritative (II Tim. 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21).

III. THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES MUST BE RESPECTED.

- A. I Peter 4:11 If we are to obey God, we must speak where God speaks and remain silent where He is silent.
- B. **The word of God teaches** that we must respect the silence of the scriptures (and it is not simply man's inference!)
 1. Heb. 1:13
 2. Heb. 7:14
- C. Bible examples:
 1. Noah — Gen. 6:14-16, 22 (Why not Pine? Oak?)
 2. Nadab and Abihu — Lev. 10:1-2.
 3. Saul — I Sam. 13:8-14 (He did foolishly and did not keep the commandment of the Lord his God when he did not observe the silence of the scriptures!! Apply this principle to us).

- D. Apply principle to the Lord's Supper — Matt. 26:26-28 (Time and elements); Music — Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16; "religious holidays," etc.

IV. THE NEW HERMENEUTIC AND THE SILENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

- A. The New Hermeneutic says scripture more like a group of "love letters."
 B. Also says, "Silence is not inherently prohibitive" and "silence preeminently meant freedom" for "our Restoration fathers."
 C. One person proclaimed that mechanical music was neither scriptural nor unscriptural because the Bible says nothing about it either way.

V. GOD'S LAW OF EXCLUSION.

- A. When God says baptism is for those that believe, He doesn't have to say, "Don't baptize infants."
 B. When God says what is to be used in the Lord's Supper, He doesn't have to say don't use cake, etc.
 C. Apply to prayer. We pray to the Father through Jesus Christ. But where is the scripture explicitly stated not to pray through Mary, or anyone else??
 D. This principle in every day life.
 1. Take car to shop to rotate tires. Don't have to explicitly state "don't over-haul the engine," etc.
 2. Send child to store for bread. Don't have to state don't buy case of soft drinks, etc.
 3. Children understand this principle. Example seen in the game "Simon says." Only can do what Simon says, if child acts without authorization of Simon, he is out of the game!

CONCLUSION:

1. It is sad that some want to alter God's way by stating it doesn't explicitly say not to.
 2. We are to act upon what the authority of the Bible says.
 3. The Lord's authority comes by what He has said, not by what He has not said. We have no authority for that which He has not authorized.
 4. Col. 3:17
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THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Robert N. Lambert

1. Premillennialism has taught for years that the church and the kingdom are two different institutions.
 - a. This doctrine teaches that the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 is to be fulfilled during the seventy weeks of Daniel 9:24-27.
 - b. However, since God and His Son could not foresee the rejection of Christ by the Jews, “prophetic time” stopped during the 69th week of prophecy. The remaining week has yet to be fulfilled. In the meantime, the church was established as God’s “plan B.”
 - c. We are currently living in the “gap” between the 69th and the 70th week. It is during the 70th week that Christ will return and the Kingdom will be established.
2. It is the purpose of this lesson to show that the kingdom and the church are one and the same. This will be done as follows:
 - a. By giving the proper and correct interpretation of Daniel 2:44;
 - b. By showing that the church established in Acts 2 meets all the requirements of a kingdom;
 - c. By showing that inspired penmen understood that they were members of the kingdom of God now—not just future members.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **DANIEL 2:44** — *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”*
 - A. Daniel explained to Nebuchadnezzar that he and his kingdom (Babylon) were represented by the head of gold (Daniel 2:38).
 1. This provides us with a starting point from which to interpret the rest of the dream. It should be easy.
 2. Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that the silver, brass, and iron sections are other kingdoms which shall follow. The feet mixed with iron and clay represent the impending destruction of the fourth kingdom (Daniel 2:39-43).
 3. It is during the time of the fourth kingdom that the kingdom of God will be established (Daniel 2:44).

- B. This prophecy, by its own weight, destroys the “gap theory” of premillennialism.
1. If a prophecy speaks of something being fulfilled during a certain time (e.g. Daniel 2:44), that time element cannot be changed.
 2. Premillennialism says that “prophetic time” was stopped with the Jews’ rejection of Jesus, and will be restarted at His second coming.
 3. That thesis of premillennialism presents them with an insurmountable problem.
 - a. If the prophecy refers or is related to the first coming of Christ but was unfulfilled, the prophecies failed, thus making God a liar (Titus 1:2) or, at best, not omniscient.
 - b. If the prophecy will not meet its fulfillment until the second coming and the 1,000 year reign, then the first coming fulfilled no prophecy and becomes an event without purpose as far as premillennialism is concerned.
 - c. But, if the prophecy refers or is related to the first coming, then the first coming fulfilled the prophecy, and the second coming could not fulfill the prophecy. This necessarily shows the “gap theory” to be false because it nullifies the prophecies all together.
 - d. Therefore, we are looking at linear, uninterrupted movement from Babylon to the time of the fourth kings when the kingdom of God will be established.
- C. Who are the fourth kings? The answer to this question is found in Biblical and World History.
1. We know that Babylon is the first kingdom (Daniel 2:38), and we know that time moves uninterrupted from Babylon to the time of fulfillment.
 2. We also know that the other kingdoms will “bear rule over all the earth” (Daniel 2:39).
 3. Therefore, we are looking for three kingdoms in consecutive succession to Babylon which were world empires. The calculation is a simple one.
 - a. Babylon besieged Jerusalem around 605 B.C.
 - b. Around 538 B.C., Babylon is invaded by the Medes led by Darius and Belshazzar is slain (see Daniel 5). By this and further conquests the Medo-Persian empire became the dominant world force.

- c. In 480 B.C., Xerxes was defeated by an army of 110,000 Greeks at Plataea. This and subsequent invasions and victories led by Alexander the Great brought Greece to world domination.
- d. The Roman empire saw its beginning as a dominant world power in about 45 B.C. through the influence of Julius Caesar.
 - 1) This is the empire in power when Christ was born (see Luke 2:1-14—Augustus was emperor of Rome).
 - 2) This is the empire in power when the church is established (cf. Luke 3:1—Tiberius was emperor of Rome from A.D. 14-37. The establishment of the church would have been around A.D. 30).
 - 3) This is the empire that would collapse upon itself within two hundred years of the establishment of the church. One of the major reasons to which the fall is credited is the influence of the Christian religion (see Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*).
- 4. All of this shows us, beyond doubt, that the Roman Empire is the kingdom represented by the legs of iron and the feet of iron and clay.

D. Summary

- 1. Rome must be the fourth kingdom of which Daniel spoke.
- 2. During this time, the establishment of the kingdom/church is the major Biblical event to take place.
- 3. Now, we must decide if the church and the kingdom are one and the same.

II. THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. Four things are necessary to constitute a kingdom: 1) a king; 2) a territory; 3) subjects; 4) a law.
- B. These four are present in the church.
 - 1. King—Christ
 - a. Heb. 1:8
 - b. II Samuel 7:12-13 (see also Acts 2:29-33)
 - c. Daniel 7:13-14
 - d. Phil. 2:9-10
 - 2. Territory—spiritual; not earthly
 - a. John 18:36
 - b. Luke 17:21

3. Subjects—Christians
 - a. Eph. 2:19
 - b. Col. 1:13
4. Law—New Testament
 - a. James 1:25
 - b. Gal. 6:2
 - c. John 12:48
- C. One other comparison.
 1. Daniel said that the kingdom would destroy all other kingdoms and would stand forever (Daniel 2:44).
 2. Consider this:
 - a. Since the fall of the Roman Empire, no earthly kingdom has completely dominated the earth. By the same token, He promised that the church would stand forever (Matt. 16:18).
 - b. Further, Jesus promised to build His *church* (Matt. 16:18). In almost the same breath, He referred to the same institution as the *kingdom* (Matt. 16:19).

III. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

- A. Christ now reigns (Psalm 110:1-2; Acts 2:29-36; Zech. 6:13; Heb. 4:14; Heb. 1:13; Heb. 10:12-13; I Cor. 15:25-26).
- B. Christ uses terms “church” and “kingdom” interchangeably (Matt. 16:18-19).
- C. Finally:
 1. The kingdom was to come with power during the lifetime of the apostles (Mark 9:1).
 2. The power came with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).
 3. The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).
 4. The church was established on Pentecost (Acts 2:38-47).
 5. Therefore, the church/kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost following our Lord’s resurrection.

CONCLUSION:

1. The above shows conclusively that the church and the kingdom are the same.
 2. Having established this, our focus must now be to push the borders of the kingdom to the four corners of the earth.
 3. Eph. 3:20-21—“*Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*”
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DIGRESSION UPDATE '92

Wayne Coats

1. We are giving only a skeleton outline and the outline is not in perfect order. The student can fill in as we move along in the study. Texts to be used: Jeremiah 6:16; II Peter 3:3.

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITION OF DIGRESSION.

- A. To turn aside, swerve.
- B. From "*gradi*" to step from the main course.
- C. To digress might be in order among mundane things.
- D. Digression is never right in eternal matters.

II. BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF DIGRESSION.

- A. Israel to drive out all the inhabitants of Canaan.
 1. Num. 33:51-56
 2. No picture, person, image or high place spared.
 3. Judges 1:21, they digressed.
- B. King Saul to utterly destroy Amalakites (I Samuel 15:3).
- C. Returning the ark (I Chron. 15:13).
- D. Moses smote the rock.

III. BIBLICAL WARNINGS OF DIGRESSION.

- A. Acts 20:28-29
- B. II Thess. 2:3
- C. I Tim. 4:1

IV. EVERY DIGRESSION BEGINS WITH DISRESPECT TOWARD THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD.

- A. Disrespect grows out of a lack of love for the truth.
 1. II Thess. 1:10-12
 2. This answers why brethren can become liberals.
- B. The authoritative word is still sufficient.
 1. II Tim. 3:16
 2. I Peter 1:25
 3. II Peter 1:3

V. SUBTLE EFFORTS TO DISCREDIT AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.

- A. Sources
 1. Schools

2. Papers
 3. Forums
 4. Summits
 5. Liberal churches
- B. Some examples
1. Shelly
 2. Mayeaux
 3. Hackney

DIGRESSION WOULD CHANGE THE PLAN OF SALVATION

1. The obvious aim is to be able to accept as many as will sign a card. The obsession with growth is addictive. To grow is the chief end of the digressives. They prefer the company of pimps, pukers and the palaver of liberals far more than that of faithful preachers. Faithful preachers stand opposed to digression.

DISCUSSION:

I. DIGRESSION DIVERTS FROM THE PLAN TO THE MAN.

- A. They make a difference where there is no difference.
- B. They construct a dichotomy, as if there were two opposing parts.
- C. It is not, “The Man or the Plan” but it is “The Lord and His Plan.”
- D. The Lord gave the plan, or there is none. How stupidly simple would one be to present a **plan that there is no plan.**

II. THE DIGRESSIVE PLAN OF CALVINISM.

- A. False brethren and grace alone.
 1. Shelly
 2. Mayeaux
 3. Hackney
- B. False brethren and baptism to obey God.
 1. Baptism is to obey God.
 2. Baptism must be understood.
 3. Denominations think baptism is to obey God.
 4. They deny it is for the remission of sins.

III. DIGRESSION AND FAITH ALONE.

- A. The same mentality which gives expression to denominational dogma relative to faith only is in vogue among false brethren
- B. Faith alone is error.
 - 1. Heb. 5:8-9
 - 2. Matt. 7:21
 - 3. Rev. 22:14
- C. Examples
 - 1. Marvin Phillips — “faith alone”
 - 2. Rubel Shelly — “not one whit to our salvation”
- D. Why the easy Way? What results?
 - 1. Open up to more spineless humans.
 - 2. Can boast of figures.
 - 3. Helps the preacher’s image.
 - 4. Fattens the pay check.
 - 5. The resume’ looks better.
- E. Sometimes a prospect is only made two-fold more the child of hell (Matt. 28:15).

DIGRESSION IN WORSHIP

- 1. The simple worship of the early church is no longer acceptable to the liberals. They seem to think that they have a new way, but it isn’t. Their new wine is just “home-brew” borrowed from the Christian Church.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT DOES DIGRESSION DO FOR THE BIBLICAL WORSHIP?

- A. It destroys, changes, and perverts it into a social entertainment affair.
 - 1. Digression makes worship into a “Holy Wow.”
 - 2. Shelly’s comments — “Be absolved.”
- B. Digression brings mechanical instruments forward.
 - 1. Shelly would not object
 - 2. Mac Lynn’s “Holistic view”
 - 3. Mayeux
 - 4. Others
 - 5. The Bible still reveals **singing** (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
- C. It says, “All we do is worship.”
 - 1. Some liberal views on the matter.
 - a. Concord Road bulletin and others.

2. Answer:
 - a. This was not true in Old Testament.
 - b. God specified where and how at different times.
 - c. Why the specifics?
 - d. Acts 17:23 — the eunuch.
 - e. Acts 24:11 — Paul.

II. MAN CAN WORSHIP:

- A. Ignorantly (Acts 17:23).
- B. Rebelliously (Col. 2:23).
- C. Vainly (Matt. 15:9).
- D. Since this is so, must there not be some guide or rule of worship?

III. MAN CAN WORSHIP:

- A. Angels (Col. 2:18).
- B. Idols (Acts 19:27, 35).
- C. The beast (Rev. 13:4).
- D. The creature (Rom. 1:25).
- E. Host of heaven (Acts 7:42).

IV. SINCE THIS IS POSSIBLE, WHAT CRITERIA IS THERE TO ABRIDGE SUCH IDOL WORSHIP?

DIGRESSION CHANGES THE CHURCH

1. The church will never be changed. Men change — Heb. 12:28.
2. Matt. 16:18 — Not anything could keep the church from being built.
3. No digression will destroy it.

DISCUSSION:

I. DIGRESSION AND “DIVERSITY.”

- A. The purpose is to fellowship the denominations.
- B. The “Unity in Diversity” lie is the loophole.
 1. The program:
 - a. Divided but united, and united but divided.
 - b. A confusion of faith and opinion.
 - c. An amalgamation of essentials with non-essentials.
- C. The plea:
 1. “Unity and diversity is the only plan.”
 2. Fellowship the sects.

3. Shelly's "Big F and little f."

D. The pattern:

1. Fraternalize with the denominations.
2. Rom. 16:17 — violated.
3. II John 9-11 — violated.

E. Listing of men and events contributing to digression:

CONCLUSION:

1. We should be able to see what is occurring.
 2. We should care.
 3. We should cry out.
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DESTINY — HEAVEN OR HELL

Garland M. Robinson

1. The word "destiny" means: "something to which a person is destined, predetermined state, condition foreordained by divine will, unavoidable."
2. Every human being has an appointment with God which cannot be avoided or bypassed.
3. Every one is destined to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and receive the reward of "everlasting life" or the sentence of "everlasting punishment" (II Cor. 5:10).
4. Death and judgment are real (Heb. 9:27)!
 - a. It is our "destiny."
 - b. Either heaven or hell is everyone's destiny.

DISCUSSION:

I. HELL IS REAL!

- A. People in today's world deny that it is real.
 1. Many in the religious world deny it's real.
 2. Some say a righteous person goes to heaven but a unrighteous person is annihilated (such is false!).
- B. Jesus spoke of hell often. See Matt. 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18: ; 23:15,33; Mark 9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5.

- C. Jesus spoke often of eternal or everlasting punishment and damnation. See Matt. 10:28; 18:8; 23:33; 25:41,46; Mark 3:29; 9:48; 12:40; John 5:28-29. (cf. Rev. 14:11)
- D. The apostles warned of hell.
 - 1. I Peter 4:17-18; II Peter 2:4
 - 2. II Thess. 1:7-9; II Cor. 5:10
- E. If you deny hell, you deny the very words of inspiration.

II. WHAT IS HELL LIKE?

- A. Hell is described as a place of **FIRE**.
 - 1. Matt. 3:12 — *“unquenchable fire”*
 - 2. Matt. 5:22 — *“hell fire”*
 - 3. Matt. 13:42 — *“a furnace of fire”*
 - 4. Matt. 25:41 — *“everlasting fire”*
 - 5. II Peter 3:7 — *“fire”*
 - 6. Jude 7 — *“eternal fire”*
 - 7. Rev. 14:10 — *“tormented with fire and brimstone”*
 - 8. Rev. 19:20 — *“lake of fire burning with brimstone”*
 - 9. Rev. 20:15 — *“lake of fire”*
- B. Hell is described as a place of **TORMENT**.
 - 1. Luke 16:23,25,28 — *“in torments...thou art tormented”*
 - 2. Rev. 14:11 — *“the smoke of their torment”*
- C. Hell is described as a place of **DARKNESS**.
 - 1. Matt. 25:30 — *“into outer darkness”*
 - 2. II Peter 2:4 — *“chains of darkness”*
- D. Hell is described as a place of **SEPARATION**.
 - 1. II Thess. 1:9 — *“from the presence of the Lord”*
 - 2. Luke 16:26 — *“great gulf fixed”*

III. WHO WILL BE IN HELL?

- A. Matt. 25:41 — *“the devil and his angels”*
- B. Gal. 5:19-21 — *“Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings...shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- C. Psalm 9:17 — *“the wicked and all nations that forget God”*
- D. II Thess. 1:8 — those *“who know not God”*
- E. II Thess. 1:8 — those *“who obey not the gospel”*
- F. Rev. 20:15 — those *“not written in the book of life”*
- G. Rev. 21:8 — *“fearful, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, liars”*
- H. Compare I Cor. 6:9-11, Rom. 1:18-32, I Tim. 1:9-10, Titus 3:3; II Peter 2:20; Heb. 6:4.

IV. CHRIST DOES NOT WANT ANYONE TO GO TO HELL.

- A. He is not willing that any perish — II Peter 3:9.
- B. He died to provide the way of escape from hell — Rom. 5:8-9; John 3:16-17; Heb. 2:9; 9:22.
- C. To be saved you must:
 1. **Hear the gospel** — Rom. 10:14,17.
 2. **Believe in Christ** — John 3:16; 8:24.
 3. **Repent of sins** — Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 17:30.
 4. **Confess Christ** — Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10.
 5. **Be baptized** — Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Peter 3:21.
 6. **Continue faithful** — I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:10; Matt. 24:13.

V. HEAVEN IS ALSO A REAL PLACE!

- A. It is God's dwelling place — I Kings 8:30; Deut. 26:15; Psalm 11:4; Matt. 5:16,45,48; 6:9.
- B. Jesus went to prepare us a place in heaven — John 14:1-3 (cf. II Cor. 5:1).
- C. We are to lay up treasures in heaven — Matt. 6:20.
- D. Our citizenship and headquarters is in heaven — Phil. 3:20.
- E. We have a reward and inheritance in heaven — Matt. 5:12; II Cor. 5:2; Col. 1:5; I Peter 1:4.

VI. HEAVEN IS DESCRIBED AS A PLACE BEYOND OUR IMAGINATION.

- A. Heaven is a **better country** — Heb. 11:8-10,16.
 1. Life on earth is filled with pain, grief and death.
 2. All manner of evil is found in every place on earth.
- B. Heaven is a place where there is **no sin** — Rev. 21:27 (cf. Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 22:14-15).
 1. No curse there — Rev. 22:3.
 2. No sorrow, pain or death there — Rev. 21:4.
 3. No darkness there — Rev. 22:5.
 4. No separation there — Rev. 21:3.
- C. Heaven is a place of **rest** — Rev. 14:13. Compare Matt 11:28-30; 25:23; Heb. 4:8-11.
 1. Life on earth is a time for work and service.
 2. There will be a time when man can work no more!
- D. Heaven is a place of **permanent security** — Luke 16:26 (cf. Matt. 25:46; 6:19-20; I Peter 1:4; 5:4).
- E. Heaven is a place of **gain** — Phil. 1:21-23.

VII. WHO WILL BE IN HEAVEN?

- A. God — Matt. 6:9.

B. Christ — Heb. 1:3; 8:1.

C. Angels — Luke 15:10.

D. The saved — Rev. 5:9. (cf. Matt. 19:29)

1. Those who have been “*born again*” of water and spirit — John 5:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3-6,17-18.
2. Those who obey God’s commandments — Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; Luke 6:46.
3. Those whose names are written in the book of life — Luke 10:20; Rev. 21:27; 20:15.

CONCLUSION:

1. How beautiful heaven must be! We will never grow old.
 2. How awful, dreadful, terrible hell is.
 3. One of these two places is your destiny!
 4. The choice is yours.
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THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IS NOT IN GIMMICKS, GADGETS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Virgil L. Hale

1. God has spoken (Heb. 1:1).
2. His word is powerful (Rom. 1:16-17).
3. His word is complete (II Tim. 3:17; II Peter 1:3; John 16:13).
4. We need to listen—be concerned about authority (Col. 3:17).

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE CHURCH? (Some have forgotten)

A. Evangelism:

1. The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).
2. Note Eph. 3:10-11.
3. The Church is the “*pillar and ground of the truth*” (I Tim. 3:15).

4. The Lord's Commission was taken seriously in the first century (Col. 1:6,23; Acts 17:6; 28:22).
 5. Even when persecuted—did not quit (Acts 8:4).
- B. Benevolence:
1. Gal. 6:10; James 1:27
 2. The early church (Acts 4:32-35; chapter 6).
 3. Paul — Gal. 2:10.
- C. Edification:
1. Lord expects us to grow (I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18).
 2. Note Eph. 4:11-14.

II. WHAT THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IS NOT.

- A. Entertainment (for members nor the world).
1. Right kind of entertainment fine—but this is not the mission of the Lord's church.
 - a. Some are perverting the church's mission.
 2. Young and old need to hear God's word.
 - a. Not just be told to "feel good about yourself."
- B. The church is not a glorified "social club."
1. Fellowship is fine—but this is not the primary purpose of the Lord's church.
 2. The church is a spiritual organization.
 - a. It is not "meat and drink" or "eating and drinking" ASV (Rom. 14:17).
- C. The church is not to take responsibility that God has given to parents and the home.
1. Some are saying: "The *church* is losing our young people."
 2. Others are saying: "The *church* is not doing enough for our young people."
 - a. One preacher said to a lady who made such a statement, "What night do you want to have them in your home?"
 - 1) That ended the conversation.
- D. The church is not here to cure all of society's ills.

III. PROBLEM TODAY.

- A. Numbers—top priority.
1. Get any way you can.
 2. Make the church and worship a carnival type of atmosphere.
 - a. Anything to draw a crowd.
 3. Some terms that have been used that fit.
 - a. "Nickels—Noise—Numbers."

- b. "Gimmicks—Gadgets—Games."
- c. "Food—Fun—Frolic."
- 4. Gymnasiums (called "Family Life Centers").
 - a. Say, "The end justifies the means."
 - b. One elder wrote me, "We must have them."
 - c. One man justified by saying, "Jesus preached from a boat."
 - 1) Jesus used loaves and fishes. Does that justify the church going into the bakery and fishing business?
 - 2) We have rented gymnasiums for Gospel Meetings.
 - a) Does that justify building one?
- 5. Church sponsored Boy Scouts; Girl Scouts; ball teams, etc.
- B. Some confuse programs with spiritually.
 - 1. Thus, the more programs, the more spiritual.
 - 2. Want to be like everybody else (I Sam. 8:5,20).
 - 3. Have about "programmed" ourselves to death.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Need competent *leaders* and *preachers*.
 - a. Some elders do what suits the crowd.
 - b. Some preachers "go along to get along."
 - 2. Need to remember that we are workers together with God (II Cor. 6:1; I Cor. 3:9).
 - a. Let us be sure that God is our third partner in all that we do.
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THE TRUTH ABOUT GRACE AND LAW

Walter W. Pigg

- 1. Knowing the truth, relative to vital subjects, is essential to salvation.
- 2. The truth about GRACE and the truth about LAW.
- 3. GRACE and LAW harmonized

DISCUSSION:

- I. THE ESSENTIALITY OF KNOWING THE TRUTH ABOUT GRACE AND LAW.

- A. First, let us define TRUTH as it relates to our subject.
1. TRUTH is from the Greek word **alatheia** and is defined as follows: “In reference to religion, the word denotes *what is true in things appertaining to God and the duties of man*” (Thayer, p. 26).
 2. Examples of this usage are found in John 8:32 where Jesus says, *...the truth shall make you free*, and in John 17:17, where Jesus prayed to the Father, in behalf of the apostles, “*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*”
- B. Truth, erroneously defined, results in erroneous conclusions.
1. Pilate’s question to Jesus, *What is truth?* (John 18:38) is most important!
 2. Many false, deceptive and faith-destroying things are set forth as truth.
 - a. The New Testament warns of this (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:28-31; I John 4:1, and others).
 3. When TRUTH is defined *subjectively* rather than *objectively*, error is invited, and often prevails.
 - a. This affects any number of Bible subjects which are vital.
 - b. Those who teach error on GRACE and LAW often allow their subjective view of truth to show through, in the absence of proof by way of objective truth.
 - c. A great many current false teachings can be attributed to a false definition of TRUTH, and/or a disregard for truth.

II. THE TRUTH ABOUT GRACE.

- A. What is GRACE?
1. The Greek word **charis** is translated “grace” well over 100 times in the New Testament.
 - a. A brief, accurate definition: “Unmerited favor from God to man.”
 - b. Thayer says (p.666): “the New Testament writers use **charis** pre-eminently of that kindness by which God bestows favors even upon the ill-deserving, and grants to sinners the pardon of their offenses, and bids them accept (sic) of eternal salvation through Christ.”
 2. God owed man nothing; His plan was a favor *undeserved*.
 - a. God gave Christ to die for man as a sacrifice (Heb. 2:9).
 - b. God’s grace gave man the Gospel of Christ (Acts 20:24).

- c. God's grace "teaches" man how to live (Titus 2:11-12).
 - d. God's grace provides salvation through faith (Eph. 2:8-10).
- B. When does God's grace save?
- 1. When there is living, obedient faith on man's part.
 - a. **Robertson Word Pictures in N.T.** (p. 525), put it his way: "Grace is God's part, 'faith' is ours."
 - 2. When one gets "in Christ," where salvation is found (II Tim. 2:10).
 - a. Immersion into Christ is essential (Rom. 6:3,4; Gal. 3:27).
 - 3. When the Gospel is obeyed (Rom. 1:16-17) in response to Christ, *the author of eternal salvation* (Heb. 5:9).

III. THE TRUTH ABOUT LAW.

A. LAW defined:

- 1. From the Greek word **nomos**: "A law or rule producing a state approved of God...a precept or injunction" (Thayer, p.427).
- 2. That God has given LAW is as much a fact as his GRACE.
 - a. Those who reject God's law also reject his grace.
- 3. Isaiah said, "*out of Zion shall go forth the law...*" (Isa. 2:3), more than 700 years before Christ. Was Isaiah mistaken?

B. God's law of the New Covenant clearly revealed:

- 1. Justification by the *law of faith* (Rom. 3:27-28).
- 2. Christians are *under law to Christ* (I Cor. 9:21).
- 3. Christians are to *fulfil the law of Christ* (Gal. 6:2).
- 4. To be blessed in one's deeds it is necessary to continue in *the perfect law of liberty* (James 1:25), and it is by that *law* that one will be judged (James 2:12).

IV. GRACE AND LAW HARMONIZED.

A. Grace and Law are not "mutually exclusive!"

- 1. God's grace brought rules (law) for living (Titus 2:11-12).
- 2. Grace and law are as inseparable as faith and works.
- 3. God's grace is manifested in the Gospel, which involves law.

B. The implication of the "no law" doctrine:

- 1. One could not sin since sin is transgressing law (I John 3:4).
- 2. One could not be *obedient to the faith*, since there must be commands (law) before one can obey (Cf. Rom. 1:5).

3. It would be impossible to have Christ as one's *author of eternal salvation*, without "obeying him" (Heb. 5:9).
 4. A rejection of God's law is to reject his grace, which provided a law by which to live and have God's approval.
- C. Salvation by "Grace Alone" is false doctrine!
1. It is to *abide not in the doctrine of Christ* (II John 9).
 2. One "alone" is highly important—That is that liberal minded brethren should leave God's clear, unadulterated word **ALONE!**
- D. Unfaithful brethren are teaching "Grace Alone."
1. "People, the reason I feel good is not because I figured out the essential and non-essentials, and I'm sure I've got the essentials and all this, and I understood enough, and I give enough, and I do enough evangelism — the reason I'm saved is, I understand grace!...My salvation is on grace alone, not by anything I've added to that. He didn't do 98% of it and I have to add my 2%. I'm not saved because I believed, or because I repented, or because I was baptized, or because I go to church, or because I eat the Lord's supper, or because I give money, or because I go to Jubilee...No, I'm not going to debate anybody on the theory that salvation is by grace and grace alone. Because the Bible just makes that too plain." (Rubel Shelly, Jubilee Speech, July 1991)
 2. "Grace Alone" encourages sin!
 - a. "...But if grace will cover moral error, why are we so afraid to let it cover doctrinal error?..." (Rick Atchley at Richland Hills, October 1990).
 - b. We had better be "afraid" to "cover error" when God will not!

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us be ever grateful for God's grace which brought us the gospel, a "perfect law of liberty" by which to live and inherit eternal life.
 2. Let us never give place, "no, not for an hour," to those who are doing "despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. 1:29).
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HOW TO ASCERTAIN BIBLE AUTHORITY

Gilbert Gough

1. God gave to His Son, Jesus, all authority (Matt. 28:18).
2. Upon one occasion in the brief, but effective, ministry of our Lord, Jesus' authority was questioned (Matt. 21:23-27).
 - a. Jesus was in the temple teaching the people; no doubt the message was "*Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" (Matt. 5:17).
 - b. He was interrupted by the chief priests and elders who asked, "*By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?*" Their two part question was a good one.
 - c. Jesus, the master teacher, responds with a challenging question: "*The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or from men?*" (Indirectly, the Lord would answer their questions.)
 - 1) Jesus uses John's baptism to illustrate that authority was important, and that man must be willing to submit to that authority.
 - 2) With this question Jesus was going to establish the need for the right kind of authority; that which is of God.
 - d. Authority resides in one of two places: either in God or in man.
 - 1) All possibilities were exhausted for there were no other alternatives in which they could answer Jesus' question.
 - 2) Realizing the force of the dilemma, they "*reasoned with themselves,*" which was a wise thing, but they reasoned evasively (vs.25,26).
 - 3) Thus, they "*pleaded the fifth.*" They took the cowardly way out and said, "*We cannot tell.*"
3. There are many people today who are much like the chief priests and elders, who know the authority, but reject it.
 - a. e.g. When one takes up a conversation with those of many denominations who are in favor of and condone the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, it is obvious they do not honestly approach the authority of God.
 - b. Is the mechanical instrument of music in worship from God or from men? Those who know what Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, and other verses teach, know the answer to the question: It is from men!
 - c. Nowhere in the pages of God's good Book can one find authority for its use in New Testament worship.

DISCUSSION:**I. A VERSE TO BE RECKONED WITH — Colossians 3:17.**

- A. Those who take liberties with God's word fear this verse.
1. When it is brought to their attention concerning the errors they promote and condone, they run from it.
 2. They cry for their unauthorized practices (i.e. mechanical instruments of music, divided worship, etc.) and say, "it meets the needs of the people" or "I cannot see anything wrong with it."
- B. What meets the needs of the people is what God has authorized and, because you cannot see anything wrong with something does not make it right or permissible.
1. Examine this verse and apply it to the mentality of those who do take liberties where God has not authorized.
 2. Colossians 3:17 is a universal and comprehensive statement. It applies to all men.
 - a. Whatever men do in word (what we say) and in deed (what we do), everything is to be done "*in the name of the Lord.*"
 - b. "*In the name of the Lord*" means by the Lord's authority (cf. Acts 4:7-10).
 - c. Since man is to "do all" by the authority of God, then it is inclusive of worship and daily Christian living and to ignore this fact and act without God's authority is to "*transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ*" (I John 2:9).
- C. An action or thought not authorized is sinful.
1. Unauthorized practices must cease.
 2. The wasteful and unscriptural spending of the Lord's money, the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, the dividing of the assembly of the saints are unauthorized.
 3. If man is to "*do all in the name of the Lord,*" where is the authority for these practices? Many are like the chief priests and elders of Matthew 21:23-27. When asked for their authority, they say "we cannot tell," but the Bible has news for them. They must tell! (cf. I Thess. 5:21; I Peter 3:15)

II. ASCERTAINING BIBLE AUTHORITY IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY.

- A. Surely, this is what Paul meant in II Timothy 2:15.

1. Rightly dividing demands our need to study, learn, and adhere to God's Word.
 2. God has already established His authority in His Word.
 3. Man does not establish authority and man has no right to tamper with the established authority.
 4. Thus, the Bible has many sober warnings on how not to handle it.
- B. Man cannot go beyond, fall short, change, modify or substitute (I Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19).
1. Man cannot allow what God condemns, or condemn what God allows.
 2. Man cannot make laws which God has not made.
- C. So, how do men ascertain God's authority?
1. **First**, men must understand important Bible distinctions.
 - a. One must learn the distinctions between the Old Testament and the New Testament, between faith and opinion, between the temporary and the permanent, between circumstances and conditions, between incidentals and essentials, between means and principles, and between customs and laws.
 - b. Because of the failure of many to make these distinctions, errors of doctrine prevail.
 2. **Second**, men must understand that God's authority is ascertained in three ways; by approved actions (examples), by direct statements, and by implication.
 - a. **Approved Actions which Constitute Examples.**
 - 1) Actions which are **permanent** and **obligatory** are examples which are authorized. They are binding upon man to obey. The Lord's supper, giving, singing, are some such actions.
 - 2) There are actions which are **permanent** and **optional**. They are authorized, but they may or may not be done. Blackboards, pitch pipes, song-books, are such actions. (Optional matters are expedient matters.)
 - b. **Direct statements.**
 - 1) These statements are not limited to commands (**imperatives**) only.
 - 2) There are **declarative** statements (Mark 16:16).
 - 3) There are **interrogative** statements (Rom. 6:1).
 - 4) There are **hortatory** statements (Heb. 6:1).
 - 5) There are **conditional** statements (Col. 3:1).

- 6) There are **mandatory** statements like Acts 2:38 and Acts 16:31.
- c. **Implication** is the conclusion which comes as a result of Biblical evidences of action, fact, or teaching without being explicitly stated.
 - 1) Saul of Tarsus became a Christian by obedience to the gospel.
 - 2) Nowhere does the Bible explicitly say he repented, but one can know he did. How? Because in obeying the gospel one must repent (Acts 2:38; 17:31).
 - 3) Thus, his repentance is implied.
- d. A Word About **Expediency** which is often misunderstood.
 - 1) Some things people want to make an expedient are not expedients.
 - 2) An expedient is predicated upon a Biblical obligation and without the Biblical obligation there is no expediency.
 - 3) We have the obligation to sing. Singing demands pitch. Thus, a pitchpipe is authorized as an expedient.
 - 4) Singing together requires a songbook. The songbook is an expedient to congregational singing.

CONCLUSION:

1. The authority of the Bible, like any Bible subject, must be learned.
 - a. This study is so neglected by the Lord's people.
 - b. Maybe this simple and short study will whet your appetite to learn more.
-

WHAT BIBLE LOVE IS AND IS NOT

John 21:15-17

Paul Curless

1. The word “love” has become a great part of our vocabulary.
2. Often people use love to describe their affections toward their spouse, relative, or a friend.
 - a. Love is also used to describe man’s affection toward Deity.
 - b. Americans often remark how they love Chevrolets and apple pie, so it is apparent the word love is used very loosely and can have a variety of meanings.
3. Everyone desires to be loved and usually proclaims to love.
4. Many (so-called) gospel preachers, are teaching our young people and our older generation that proper Bible love is, “OVERLOOKING or TOLERATING” sinful actions.
5. There seems to be a “love movement” among the younger generation today.
 - a. The idea is set forth that love is the cure for every thing.
 - b. For many, it has become an excuse for ungodly (lustful) conduct.
6. There is a great deal of misunderstanding concerning the subject of love.
 - a. For most it is only a strong emotional or sexual feeling, the Greek word Eros would fit this type love.
 - b. Situation Ethics grows out of the misunderstanding of love, which allows one to compromise godly moral standards if the majority have deemed it right.
7. Generally speaking, people often confuse the love described in the Bible with our modern usage of the word.

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFINITION OF BIBLE LOVE.

- A. Bible love is not emotionalism or sentimentalism.
- B. Nor is it mystical or something we catch, but something we even understand and grow in.
- C. There are two Greek words in the New Testament translated love.
 1. **Agape** and **phileo** — both are used in our lesson text.
 2. Agape love is doing what is best and loving God’s will. It is used 116 times in the New Testament.
 - a. It is not feelings, but ACTION!

- b. Agape has been defined as, “active goodwill” or, “benevolence in action.”
- c. Agape love is a “choice,” rather than an emotion (Roy Deaver, *Spiritual Sword*, April 1982).
- d. It is the highest and noblest form of love.
- e. William Barclay says, “Agape has to do with the mind. It is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in the heart, but a principle that we deliberately live by.”
- f. Agape love often demands things that are contrary to our natural desires.
 - 1) Jesus demanded this kind of love from Peter (lesson text).
 - 2) He also demands the same of us.
- 3. Phileo love denotes a type of love between friends or family, an emotional attachment.
 - a. Feelings or natural affection toward another person, family member, or friend.
 - b. Peter did not agape Jesus, but had affection (phileo) for him (John 21:15-17).
- 4. Agape love certainly includes phileo type love but is much stronger and suggests a type of love that exists between man and God.

II. GOD’S WORD IS THE AUTHORITY.

- A. The Bible is complete and will furnish man unto all good works (II Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 1. The Bible is all one needs (spiritually speaking).
 - 2. All mankind will be judged by this same set of rules—God’s word (John 12:48).
 - 3. Christ, God’s only begotten Son, has been appointed to be the supreme judge (Acts 17:30-31).
 - a. Therefore, all who have agape love and desire Biblical unity must “...*speak as the oracles of God...*” (I Peter 4:11).
 - b. This is the only way in which Bible unity is possible (I Cor 1:10).

III. WHAT BIBLE LOVE IS NOT.

- A. Love is not turning the Lord’s church into a social or political organization (John 18:36).
 - 1. The church is not a social club where parents bring their children to be babysitted or entertained.
 - a. Family life centers.

- b. Children's church (divided assembly).
- 2. The church *is not* in the entertainment business, but the soul-saving business (Luke 19:10).
 - a. A few years ago, a congregation in the Twin cities (St. Paul/Minneapolis) had a prominent preacher from Texas for a gospel meeting. The first half hour he performed magical tricks!!!
 - b. Where is the authority for such? Many congregations of the Lord's church are being, "...*destroyed for lack of knowledge...*" (Hosea 4:6).
- B. Love is not tolerating denominational doctrine, such as "grace only" as proclaimed by Rubel Shelly, minister of the Woodmont Hills Church in Nashville, TN (Bulletin, dated October 31, 1990).
 - 1. In his book entitled, "*Christians Only*" he states, "There are sincere, knowledgeable, and devout Christians scattered among the different denominations" (p.18). The Bible makes plain that salvation is found only in Christ/church of Christ (Eph. 1:3; 5:23).
 - 2. In a speech given at Pepperdine University in 1990, Rubel Shelly condemned the Bible by saying, "...My, how awful to go into the next century with only a Bible in hand!"
 - 3. Rubel also rejects "pattern theology" He asks, "When is an example binding? NEVER! ABSOLUTELY NEVER!" (Pepperdine speech 1990).
 - 4. He sees no problem with using mechanical instruments while singing religious songs. In a speech, August 1985, Hillsboro, Ohio—he stated, "If mechanical instruments were introduced where he preached he would not mount the pulpit and protest its entrance and usage in worship." God's word says to "sing" not "play and sing."
 - 5. Nashville Tennessean (7/17/91) Rubel states, "God doesn't change, but the church must change." In April, 1990 Rubel ridiculed our goal to walk in the "old paths" as "old paths mentality." He sounds like the people in Jeremiah's day (Jer. 6:16).
- C. Bible love is not teaching that all one needs to do is pray to "Jesus" and invite him into your heart to be saved, as proclaimed by Tony Woodall and Regan Glenn, Madison Church of Christ, Teen Life Ministers, (Lifeline Flyer).
- D. Love is not extending the hand of fellowship to various denominations, such as the Christian Church (*independent or otherwise*).

1. “I wonder, too, if bringing Christian Church preachers in for a class like this might be good. Let them come in and tell their history in a class situation. I think you could *ease from the class to the pulpit.*” (Wayne Kilpatrick, recording of the so-called “Restoration Summit” conducted in Joplin, Missouri, Aug. 29, 1984).
 2. Monroe Hawley, minister of the Southside Church of Christ, Milwaukee, Wisconsin also extends the hand of fellowship to the Christian Church denomination (Instrumental Churches of Christ) — letter from Hawley to brother Thomas Forrest dated March 16, 1985).
 - a. If we love these (denominational) people, we will teach them the truth, not compromise Bible truth!
 - b. We are not to have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them (Eph. 5:11).
 - c. It is about time we realize the Christian Church is not the Lord’s church, and therefore *not* our brethren, at least NOT MINE!
- E. Love is not teaching that, “church is always supposed to be a party.” (Marvin Phillips, Nashville Jubilee, 1989).
1. He went on to say, “...it is fine for one person to start singing, and as he put it, For someone to be singing Amazing Grace, and somebody else hugging Grace and telling her how much he loves her.” He said, “It’s a party you see.” (Marvin Phillip is the minister of Garnett Road Church, Tulsa, Oklahoma — this congregation is one of the sponsors of the “Tulsa Workshop”).
 2. The Lord’s church assembles together to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); not to have a party! Proper worship involves showing reverence to God—with the right attitude.
- F. Love is not teaching that we need to get, “Christ back in Christmas” (Bering Drive Church of Christ, Houston, TX—Jan. 5, 1992 bulletin).
1. This congregation held a church garage sale (Feb. 16, 1992 bulletin); but what about I Cor. 16:1-2?
 2. On one occasion offered the Lord’s supper on Saturday morning (bulletin); but what about Acts 20:7?
- G. Finally Bible love is not allowing women to usurp authority over men (I Tim. 2:8-12).
1. During a Sunday morning worship service at the Brookline Church of Christ, Boston, MA (not a Boston? Cross-

roads church), the following took place (Tom Holland—tract entitled, “Issues Facing the church”).

- 1) Two different women led songs.
 - 2) Another woman served on the Lord’s table.
 - 3) A prayer was led by a woman.
2. Elders of the Cahaba Valley Church of Christ, Birmingham, AL, have published a 20 page pamphlet entitled, “The Role of Women At Cahaba Valley” January, 1990. Here are a few false teachings they are promoting (in the name of love).
- a. They comment that those members who disagree with their program are making a “mockery of the power of love...” (p.17).
 - b. “Those who prefer ‘traditional’ roles for women must not look down on those who do not. And those who do not prefer ‘traditional’ roles must not view harshly those who do. Nor can either legitimately leave this congregation as a member over this issue” (p.17).
 - c. “We will appoint deacons for this church on Pentecost Sunday, 1990. Deacons will be male and female” (p.19).
 - d. “For the years 1991-1994, we, the elders, will initiate gradual change in the Sunday morning worship assembly for worship. Each year we will increase the freedom of women to participate in the worship.” You mean the Christian women are not participating in the worship services now? The problem is, they have used the incorrect terminology, what they should have said is, “we will increase the freedom of women to take a leading role in the worship services.”
 - e. The plan is for women to be taking a leading role in the public worship services, “Reading Scriptures, Serving Communion, Leading Prayer, Presiding at the Table, Speaking to the Assembly in Sermon, and Leading Singing” (p.19-20).

IV. WHAT BIBLE LOVE IS.

- A. Bible love is being willing to comply with God’s instructions, which requires ACTION on our part.
 1. “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).
 2. “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14).
 3. Obedience is the key to God’s love (Matt. 7:21; Heb. 5:8-9).

4. Bible obedience is far more than just going through the outward motions (Rev. 2:1-7).
- B. It is not being afraid to preach and teach the truth of God's word with boldness (II Tim. 4:2). Much false doctrine continues to be taught on the following subjects:
 1. Marriage, divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:9).
 2. Instrumental music (Eph. 5:19; Co. 3:16).
 3. Liberalism and Anti-ism (Gal. 1:6-9).
 4. The Masonic Lodge.
- C. Bible love demands that we love the Lord's church (Matt. 16:18). The ONE which Christ purchased with his blood (Acts 20:28).
 1. Because God and Christ love it (John 3:16; Eph. 5:25-27).
 - a. Loving Christ means self-denial (Matt. 16:24).
 - b. We are to empty self of evil disposition (I Peter 2:1-2).
 - c. We must deny ourselves the pleasures of sin (I John 2:15).
 - d. True love demands that one deny self of anything that hinders total commitment to Christ: **NOT TO SOME MAN, FRIEND, JOB, OR FAMILY MEMBER** (Luke 10:27). The apostles said it well, "...we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).
- D. Bible love is shown when a congregation practices church discipline.
 1. Every member must encourage, support, and obey their elders (Heb. 13:17).
 2. Elders have *all* authority—in matters of opinion; they must lead in the discipline procedures (I Peter 5:2-3).
 3. Disciplining corrupt and unruly church members is a command. "*Now we command you, brethren...*" (II Thess. 3:6; also Rom. 16:17).
 4. Inform members that one can be guilty by association (II John 9-11).
- E. Bible love is defending and keeping the faith, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*" (II Tim. 4:7; Jude 3).
 1. Faithful Christians must teach and preach Bible truth (I Cor. 9:16).
 - a. "*And ye shall know truth, and the truth shall make your free*" (John 8:32).
 - b. Watered down truth does not save any one!
 2. Faithful Christians also oppose error, one cannot remain neutral (Matt. 6:24; II Thess. 3:13-14).

- F. Bible love is looking forward to (and attending) all church services and growing in Christ, unless providentially hindered.
1. Sin is committed when one forsakes the assembly (Heb. 10:25).
 - a. The church worships God, just as the first century church did (Acts 2:42; 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).
 - b. The members must continue growing in Christ (II Peter 3:18; 1:5-10).
 - c. Remember, each individual Christian must study to show *himself* approved unto God (II Tim. 2:15).
- G. Bible love is letting our light shine before men (Matt. 5:16) and taking the pure New Testament gospel to the multitudes lost in sin (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
1. Teaching them from a reliable version of the Bible, such as the beloved King James of 1611.
 2. Following the New Testament pattern (GK **tupos**—Rom. 6:17).
 3. Repenting of sins in our lives (Acts 8:22).

CONCLUSION:

1. Agape love demands things that are contrary to our natural desires.
 - a. Some may not desire to discipline unruly members, or mark false teachers.
 - b. Some may not desire to earnestly defend the truth nor oppose error.
 - c. But Bible love demands it!
 2. There is a pay day coming for the faithful Christian, "*Therefore, by beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*" (I Cor. 15:58).
 3. Agape love requires Christians to speak and teach the truth, according to God's word, remain as faithful servants unto the end; at which time Heaven will be ours.
 4. Solomon, of long ago, said it this way, "*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man*" (Eccl. 12:13). True obedience requires agape love.
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THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Joe W. Nichols

1. The Work Of The Holy Spirit has been sorted out and debated by our brethren for the past three hundred years. Books, tracts and articles have been written; yet, leaving our brotherhood divided on certain points. Recently, we have those who are again claiming the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the working of miracles; this past year, tapes were sent out by the Belmont church in Nashville advocating the dismissing of past beliefs on the work of the Holy Spirit and the acceptance of miracles in the church today.
2. In view of the foregoing, continuous teaching and lecturing on the subject is vital. Sermons on the Work of the Holy Spirit need to be included in Evangelistic Meetings. Error propagated on the subject should be addressed immediately. Preachers and Bible teachers should make a point to be well versed on the subject for the protection of the church.
3. The Work of the Holy Spirit is clearly developed in the New Testament. When approached without preconceived ideas, the Bible student is led to certain conclusions. Through a careful study of clearly defined points of the Work of the Holy Spirit, we will arrive at the desired conclusions.

DISCUSSION:

I. BASIC TRUTHS ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- A. Holy Spirit is a divine being, the third member of the God-head (Matt. 18:19).
 1. Designated by the pronouns “he” and “him” (John 14:17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14).
 2. Referred to as “another Comforter” (Greek: **PARAKLETOS** literally, “called to one’s side” i.e., to one’s aid, is primarily a verbal adjective, and suggests the capability or adaptability for giving aid—*W. E. Vines*, p.208).
 3. “The Spirit is the truth” (the essence or substance of Truth, I John 5:7).
 4. The Spirit “bears witness” to the credibility of Jesus and His spokesmen (Mark 16:20; Acts 5:32; that Jesus is the Christ and that His spokesmen speak the word of God).
- B. The Holy Spirit magnifies and glorifies the Christ.
 1. “He shall glorify me” (John 16:14).

2. "He shall bear witness of me" (John 15:26).

II. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A. Two Great Promises of the Old Testament.

1. Gen. 12:1-3, 22:17; Gal. 3:16, 26-29—Abraham's physical offspring (Israelites) and spiritual offspring (Christians).
 - a. Promise of a Saviour.
 - b. Realized in the preaching of the Gospel (I Cor. 1:21).
2. Joel 2:28-32 — Holy Spirit's working to provide "vessels" to communicate the Saviour to the world.
3. Both promises unite in Acts 2:
 - a. The reality of a Saviour through the death of Jesus.
 - b. The "vessels" to communicate the message—apostles.
 - c. A message of a Saviour and the means to communicate it to the world—inspired spokesmen of God.
 - d. Inerrant communication and divine witnessing.

B. The Holy Spirit and the Apostles.

1. Apostles, ambassadors of Christ (Acts 1:5, qualifies John the baptist's promise of Matt. 3:11-12) to the world (Acts 1:8; Gal. 1:7).
2. Apostles, Christ's only human witnesses (John 15:27; Acts 1:8,22; 2:32; 5:32; 9:15; 22:15).
3. Power peculiar to the Apostles (Acts 8:19; II Cor. 12:12).
4. Pattern set in New Testament: Holy Spirit (gifts) imparted to the church *only* by the Apostles (Acts 2:38-39 promise to Jews; Acts 8:14-17 to Samaritans; Acts 19:1-6 and Gal. 3:1-5 to Gentiles).
 - a. "Gifts" involved: (1) Communicating truth, I Cor. 14; (2) Confirming truth, Mark 16:20.
 - b. "Gifts" could not be passed on to others by church.
5. Written word (New Testament) product of the Apostles and Prophets (Eph. 3:3-5).

C. Miraculous to Cease

1. Miraculous means of communicating the Truth to cease (I Cor. 13:8).
2. Miraculous means of confirming the Truth to cease (Mark 16:20).
3. Miraculous communication of Truth—revelation in "parts."
4. "Parts" to be replaced by the "Perfect"—complete, fully realized revelation of Truth (I Cor. 13:10).
5. Inspired spokesmen gave way to an Inspired Book (Eph. 3:3; Col. 4:16; II Thess. 2:15; 3:14; John 20:30-31; Heb.

13:22; II Peter 1:12-15; 3:1; I John 2:1-6; II John 9-10; Jude 3; Rev. 1:3).

- a. Inspired spokesmen existed for about fifty years.
- b. The Inspired Book continues for over nineteen hundred years.

CONCLUSION:

1. We (the church of the twentieth century) are the product of the Inspired Written Word.
 - a. Without the written word, we would not exist.
 - b. By the written word we exist in completeness (II Tim. 3:16-17), as the church purchased by Jesus Christ.
 2. Of the Three Powers of the Holy Spirit Manifested in the New Testament, Only One remains.
 - a. The power of the Apostles ceased with the Apostles.
 - b. The power imparted to the church by the Apostles could not be passed on and therefore ceased.
 - c. The *only* power of the Holy Spirit remaining is the Inspired Written Word. In this manner, we are “led by the Spirit” today and through this source, God, the Father, Christ, the Son and the Holy Spirit dwell in us today.
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WHAT CONSTITUTES “SOUNDNESS”

Ken Burlison

1. Definition of the word “Sound.”
 - a. “To blow as on trumpet.”
 - b. Some preachers sound off at lectureships and other congregations but will not preach the same lessons at their home congregation.
 - c. I know men that were speakers on a lectureship some few years ago that jumped up and down while speaking against liberals and their doctrines. Later the lectureship committee selected liberals to speak on that lectureship and when others complained, the same brethren who had sounded off about the liberals now began to cry “moderation, moderation.”
2. “To take soundings”

- a. Acts 27:28
- b. Test the waters.
- c. Some preachers test the “waters” of the brotherhood. They make wild and shocking statements to see how they are accepted.
 - 1) “I am an apostle of Christ.”
 - 2) “Before you leave the building tonight you will know that a prophet has been among you.”
3. “Physically sound.”
 - a. Prov. 14:30
 - b. Psalm 38:3,7
 - c. Isa. 1:6
4. “Perfect, whole, complete.”
 - a. Psalm 119:80
 - b. Titus 2:8
 - c. I Tim. 1:10
 - d. II Tim. 1:13; 4:3
 - e. Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1,2
5. The “soundness” we shall discuss is with reference to number 4 — “perfect, whole, complete.”

DISCUSSION:

I. DEFENDING THE FAITH.

- A. Peter defended the truth (Acts 2:22-36; Acts 5:29).
- B. Jesus defended the truth (Matt. 21:23-27).
- C. Paul defended the gospel (Acts 9:20-22).
- D. We are to defend the faith (Jude 3).

II. PREACHING ONLY THE WORD.

- A. The word furnishes us completely to every good work (II Tim. 3:16,17).
- B. God’s power to save resides in the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
- C. Nothing else can save, so preach the word (II Tim. 4:2).

III. PREACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD, PAUL DID (Acts 20:20,27).

- A. All men will not be pleased when we preach the whole counsel of God, but we must preach it.
 1. Peter and John cast into prison (Acts 5:18).
 2. Stephen stoned to death (Acts 7:51).
- B. As Peter and the others said, “we ought to obey God rather than man” (Acts 5:29). Likewise, our desire should be to please God and not man (Gal. 1:10).

- C. In preaching the whole counsel of God the following must be preached:
1. What must I do to be saved?
 - a. Hear the gospel (Rom. 10:17).
 - b. Believe the gospel (Mark 16:16; John 8:24).
 - c. Repent of sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
 - d. Confess the deity of Christ (Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37).
 - e. Be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 2. Living a faithful Christian life.
 - a. Abstaining from the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - b. Add the Christian graces (II Pet. 1:5-11).
 - c. Add the things that make up the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23).
 3. Scriptural worship.
 - a. Singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
 - b. Prayer (I Thess. 5:17).
 - c. Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:23-24).
 - d. Giving (I Cor. 16:1,2).
 - e. Preaching (II Tim. 4:2).
 4. The only exception for divorce and remarriage, is fornication (Matt. 19:9; Matt. 5:32).

IV. GOD MUST BE THE CENTER OF OUR PREACHING (Acts 3:16-18).

- A. Many discuss the lives of such men as Napoleon, Abraham Lincoln, John Kennedy, etc., in their sermons.
- B. We are not opposed to illustrations.
- C. It is all right to use the lives of great men and women for illustration.
- D. There is a time and place for everything. But the pulpit is not the place for a detailed study of the lives of individuals other than Biblical characters.

V. OUR PREACHING MUST BE SPECIFIC.

- A. Call sin, sin.
- B. It must be without fear or favor.
- C. Paul taught that which was specifically needed (Acts 24:25).
- D. Jesus did the same (Matt. 23).

CONCLUSION:

1. There has become a famine in the land of sound preachers.
 2. Therefore, there is a famine of the preaching of sound doctrine.
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AM I BECOME YOUR ENEMY BECAUSE I TELL YOU THE TRUTH?

Melvin Sapp

1. The Galatian brethren had been troubled by the Judaizing teachers, who were teaching a perverted gospel (1:6-9).
2. Paul declared that he preached a “certified” gospel, revealed from heaven (1:11-12).
3. Paul could understand the Judaizing teachers predicament because he had excelled in the Jews’ religion. But he did not place tradition above revelation (1:13-16).
4. People who hold traditions above revelation often become your enemies when you tell them the truth.
5. Those who teach error have a platform among God’s people when teachers of truth close their mouths in subjection (2:4-5).
6. No man is above the Gospel, not even an Apostle (2:6-14).
7. The Judaizers were trying to get the Gentiles to submit to the Law of Moses, which could offer no justification (2:15-16).
8. Those who pervert the gospel by offering righteousness by some other law, frustrate the grace of God (2:21).
9. False teachers try to bewitch God’s people to prevent them from obeying the truth (3:1).
10. Paul made a clear distinction between truth and error [Gospel & the Law] and appealed to all to stand with Christ (3:10-29).
11. Paul’s untiring labor among them gained their admiration, so that they received him as an angel of God (4:13-14).
12. Their appreciation for this gospel preacher was so great, that even their eyes were not too precious to be sacrificed for him.
13. But compromise, liberalism and perversion had stolen that blessedness, and they looked upon Paul as their enemy for telling them the truth (4:16).
14. False teachers often use zeal to influence people to follow them and abandon the truth (4:17-18). Zeal is good if we are zealous about something that is good, but zeal without knowledge is dangerous (Rom. 10:1-3).
15. It is heart-rending to have taught someone the truth only to see false teachers bewitch them to embrace error.
16. When faithful gospel preachers have dedicated their lives to telling men the truth, opposing error, false teachers often attack their stand as being unkind, unloving, unmerciful, unwise and damaging to the cause of Christ.

17. Yet, Paul knew that he cared for them as his own children in Christ, and was willing to endure the agony necessary to restore them to faithfulness again (4:19).
18. Like Paul, every gospel preacher needs to ask the church, Have I Become Your Enemy Because I Tell You The Truth?

DISCUSSION:

I. EVERY GOSPEL PREACHER IS CHARGED BY GOD TO PREACH THE TRUTH.

- A. Paul was under necessity to preach the gospel (I Cor. 9:16).
- B. Paul charged Timothy to preach the Word (II Tim. 4:1-3).
- C. Any preacher who will pervert the gospel is under a curse (Gal. 1:6-9).
- D. Thus, the preacher must through sincerity and honesty make the truth of Jesus known to all men (II Cor. 2:17; 4:1-5).

II. PREACHING THE TRUTH WILL NOT MAKE ONE POPULAR AMONG MEN.

- A. Paul was faithful to the truth because he was seeking to please Christ and not men (Gal. 1:10).
- B. Those who seek to please men ought not try to serve Christ by preaching.
- C. Paul had not done anything wrong by preaching the truth, yet, he was perceived as their enemy.
- D. Therefore, the truth must be preached even if we are perceived as enemies.

III. THE CHURCH MUST BE ON GUARD AGAINST TREATING FAITHFUL GOSPEL PREACHERS AS ENEMIES, SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY TELL YOU THE TRUTH.

- A. Do we consider the preacher our enemy when the popular sins of the day are exposed? (drinking, smoking, fornicating, cheating, mixed swimming, petting, marriage and immodest apparel)
- B. Do we consider the preacher our enemy when Denominational doctrines are exposed as damnable heresies? (Faith only, grace only, Original Sin, Premillennialism, or Any church will do-ism)
 1. Paul didn't hesitate to point out the sins of his day (2:4-5).
 2. One can't faithfully preach the truth without opposing error.
- C. Do we consider the preacher our enemy when false brethren are named and challenged?

1. The church must be on guard against error from within as well as without.
 2. False teachers are to be marked and avoided (Rom. 6:17-18).
 3. The “real” enemies are not faithful gospel preachers, but smooth talking liberals who turn men from the truth.
 4. The truth must be preached because only it can make men free (John 8:31-32).
-

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH IN JEOPARDY

(Singing Groups, Instrumental Music,
Plays, Skits, etc.)

Virgil L. Hale

1. A need to define worship.
 - a. **Proskuneo**—to prostrate oneself in homage; to revere, to adore.
 - b. Thus, worship is adoration to God.
2. Some have forgotten (if they ever knew) *what* worship is, and the *purpose* of worship.
 - a. This is evident from what is being done today.

DISCUSSION:

I. JESUS HAS GIVEN THE DIVINE PRESCRIPTION FOR WORSHIP.

- A. Note John 4:23-24.
 1. Right object of worship—“God.”
 2. Right attitude of worship—“in spirit.”
 3. Right acts of worship—“in truth.”
 4. The essentiality of these—“must.”
 - a. Not “can,” “may.”
- B. Thus we have the HOW for worship.

II. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF SEVERAL WAYS THAT MEN WORSHIP.

- A. Vain worship (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7).
 - 1. Right object—wrong plan.
 - 2. Men's doctrines will perish (Col. 2:22).
- B. Ignorant worship (Acts 17:23).
 - 1. Cannot worship the true God in ignorance.
- C. Will worship (Col. 2:23).
 - 1. This according to man's will rather than God's.
- D. Worshipping of Angels (Col. 2:18). Note Rev. 19:10.
- E. The host of heaven (Acts 7:42-43).
- F. Creature worship (Rom. 1:25).
- G. True worship (John 4:23-24).
- H. God is not worshipped with men's hands (Acts 17:25).

III. TRUE WORSHIP IS IN JEOPARDY TODAY IN THE LORD'S CHURCH.

- A. Both the PURPOSE and the PLAN have been revised. Today:
 - 1. Purpose—entertainment.
 - 2. Plan—anything that accomplishes that end.
- B. Some think of worship as a "spectator sport."
 - 1. We are *participants*, not mere *spectators*.
- C. **Marvin Phillips**—Jubilee, Nashville, Tennessee:
 - 1. Said Luke 15 tells us "what a worship service should be."
 - 2. "Church is always supposed to be a party."
 - 3. Said it is "Scriptural to clap while giving."
 - 4. When a goal for giving is exceeded and is announced to the congregation, it is fine to "clap, jump up in the air."
 - 5. Further said, "Not one example in the whole New Testament of the church meeting together and singing praises to God."
 - 6. Contended that I Cor. 14:26 is the closest thing to it—and there it was a "solo."
- D. **Rubel Shelly**—Woodmont Hills, Nashville, Tennessee.
 - 1. Bulletin article: "Woodmont Hills Chorus."
 - a. They sing in the assembly.
 - b. At first uncomfortable—realized this was tied to "custom."
 - c. Said the New Testament was clearer for a solo or small group singing than for congregational singing.
 - d. Has made statement that if a congregation desired to use an instrument and the elders decided to do so, he

would not mount the pulpit and condemn them and divide the church.

E. Middle Tennessee Youth Series 1991.

1. Article by David McCain, "Sensationalism Or Simple Service" (Green Plain Proclaimer).
 - a. Advertisement—in bold letters—"When J. C. TALKS, the natives get RESTLESS! 5 NIGHTS OF PRAISE."
 - b. List of activities: "personal testimony, singing, drama, art work, poetry, short stories, special music, prayer, scripture reading, sharing, fellowship fun."

F. Purpose of singing.

1. To worship and praise God—to teach and admonish one another.
2. Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16).
 - a. Were they singing to entertain the other prisoners?

G. Today:

1. Choruses, quartets, solos, humming, etc. etc.
2. Some make instrumental music sounds with their voice.
3. Rom. 10:1-3 fits many in the church today.
4. Plays, skits, etc.

H. Ben F. Vick, Jr. (*Seek The Old Paths*—Oct./Nov. 1991).

1. Article: "The Church's Participation In A Christmas Parade."

CONCLUSION:

1. It is high time that we heed Col. 3:17.
 2. This would eliminate all of the problems that we have discussed, and any akin to them.
-

PRAYER, A NEEDED STUDY

Howell Bigham

1. A disciple of the Lord said, "*Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples*" (Luke 11:1).
2. That disciple is to be commended for his interest in such a sublime subject and for his wisdom in going to the proper source for instruction—the Lord!

3. We must have a great interest in the study of prayer and also, like that disciple, go to the correct source—the Lord’s word, to receive proper instruction on such a grand subject.
4. Prayer is a needed study! But why? Let us examine several reasons as to why we need to be good students of the subject of prayer.

DISCUSSION:

I. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE ATTENTION IT RECEIVES IN THE BIBLE.

- A. Prayer is found in at least 45 of the 66 books of God’s library. By the space allotted to it in the Divine record, surely we can see the need to study prayer!
- B. There is much attention given to prayer in the Old Testament.
 1. With the introduction of Enos, it seems to be announced that men began regularly to call upon God. Genesis 4:26 states “...then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.”
 2. Abraham was a man of prayer (Gen. 18:23-33; 20:17).
 3. Moses gave attention to prayer (Num. 21:7).
 4. Hannah believed in prayer (I Sam. 1; 2:1-10).
 5. Samuel gave attention to petitioning Jehovah (I Sam. 12:19).
 6. David stressed the need to pray (Psalm 17:1; 55:17).
 7. Daniel, an example of one who faithfully prayed (Dan. 6:10-11).
 8. Other prayers recorded in the Old Testament include the prayers of Manasseh (II Chron. 33:18-19); Agur (Prov. 30:7-10); and that of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3).
- C. There is much attention given to prayer in the New Testament.
 1. There is the recording of the “Model Prayer” (Luke 11:1-4).
 2. The church of the first century prayed (Acts 2:42).
 3. Paul was a man of prayer and taught much concerning it (Acts 16:25; Col. 1:9-11; I Tim. 2:1-3).
 4. Peter gave attention to prayer (I Peter 3:12).
 5. Jesus Christ, our perfect example, gave much attention to prayer (Luke 3:21; 18:1; 18:9-14; John 17; Matt. 26:36-44; Luke 23:46).
 6. Because of the emphasis given to prayer in the Bible, we need to study the sublime subject!

II. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE IT IS MAN'S AVENUE OF COMMUNICATING TO GOD.

- A. God communicates to man through His word (Heb. 1:1-2).
- B. Man communicates to God through prayer.
 - 1. Luke 18:1; John 9:31; I Peter 3:12
 - 2. Matt. 7:7; Heb. 4:16; James 1:5-6; Acts 10:9; Psalm 62:8
 - 3. James Harding believed in the avenue of prayer. It is reported that the morticians were amazed at the callouses on his knees which they observed while preparing his body for burial. He had spent much time upon them praying!

III. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE ASSURANCE THAT GOD HEARS OUR PETITIONS.

- A. We live in a world filled with trials, tribulations, and troubles.
- B. Christians are assured that God hears our prayers when we pray according to His will.
 - 1. I John 5:14-15
 - 2. Psalm 3:4; 6:9; 28:6; 77:1; 120:1

IV. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE POWER ASCRIBED TO IT.

- A. James 5:16
- B. II Kings 20:1-6

V. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE ANXIETY OF SOME WHO PRAY.

- A. Some pray and expect God to answer their prayers at once!
- B. God answers prayers by saying "NO" (II Cor. 12:7-9); "YES" (James 5:17); and "WAIT AWHILE" (Jer. 42:4,7).
- C. God answers prayers, but the answer that He gives may not be the answer we desire. It is, however, the best answer!

VI. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE FAILURE OF SOME TO ACCEPT GOD'S TERMS REGARDING PRAYER.

- A. Some live like Satan and then pray to God (Isa. 1:15; 59:1-2; Prov. 28:9; Psalm 66:18).
- B. Some fail to understand the requirements of prayer.
 - 1. It must be in faith (James 1:5-6); according to God's will (Matt. 26:39); and with the right motive (James 4:1-3).
 - 2. The petitioner must be faithful (I Peter 3:12).

VII. PRAYER IS A NEEDED STUDY BECAUSE OF THE ATTACK BY MANY TOWARD IT.

- A. The denominational world teaches that one can pray his way to salvation.
 - 1. Acts 9:11,18; 22:16
 - 2. Acts 10:2,4; 11:14
- B. Some say Christians can address Jesus in prayer as we do God.
 - 1. Matt. 6:9-15
 - 2. John 15:16; 16:23,26
- C. Some argue that women can lead prayer in the presence of men.
 - 1. I Tim. 2:8-12
 - 2. I Cor. 14:34-35
- D. Man must stop attacking God's regulations regarding prayer and start abiding by them!

CONCLUSION:

- 1. May all go to God's library—the Bible, to study on the needed subject of prayer!
 - 2. May all live according to God's instructions that, like Daniel, we can pray and give thanks before our God (Daniel 6:10) and our petitions would not be hindered!
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ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Ed Casteel

- 1. No one should ever underestimate the valuable role that women play in every area of life.
 - a. They are invaluable to our society, to our schools, to our homes, and especially to the church.
 - b. Today, if we are to have faithful elders, devoted deacons, and effective preachers, then we must have women who are grave, not slanderous, sober and faithful in all things (I Tim. 3:11).
 - c. When God created Adam he gave him the greatest gift of the day; he gave him Eve to be his help meet. She must be

- willing to be a help meet to him both in the home and in his service to the Lord.
2. The topic assigned for this hour is “The Role of Women in the Church.” We shall examine this study in two sections:
 - a. The limitations of the role of women.
 - b. The service and work that she must render as a Christian woman in the church.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

- A. All people live with limitations.
 1. Jesus had limitations (John 6:38).
 2. Both the Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles were under submission to higher authority (II Peter 1:20-21).
 3. Paul had limits to his preaching (I Cor. 11:23; 15:3), and warned concerning others preaching another gospel (Gal 1:6-9).
- B. To study I Cor. 11:3, one can easily establish the proper line of authority.
- C. Because of limitations, there are certain areas of work and responsibility that are not open to women.
 1. She can not serve as an elder.
 - a. Notice the qualification found in I Tim. 3 or Titus 1.
 - b. No woman can meet the qualifications to serve as an elder.
 2. She can not be a deacon.
 - a. Again notice the qualifications (I Tim. 3:7ff).
 - b. Let's consider Phoebe (Rom. 16:1). Examine the word “*diakonon*.”
 - 1) Rom. 13:4 — “servants of God.”
 - 2) Christ was a *diakonon* in Rom. 15:8.
 - 3) Paul was a *diakonon* (I Cor. 3:5; II Cor. 3:6; 6:4).
 3. She cannot be an evangelist, for she cannot teach nor usurp authority over the man (I Tim. 2:12).
 - a. In 1970, 2% of the denominational preachers were women. In 1984, that figure had doubled to 4%. It was projected that by the year 2,000 approximately 20 to 25% of all denominational preachers will be women and by the middle of the next century, that figure will approach 50% (*Gospel Advocate*, Dec. 1988, p.16).

- b. Examples of women taking the role of teaching over the men and/or preaching in congregations today.
- D. With all the abuses and so called liberties, remember that Paul said, *“it is a shame for women to speak in the church”* (I Cor. 14:35).

II. THE BIBLICAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH.

- A. Women are to teach but not over the man (I Tim. 2:12).
 - 1. They need to teach other women and younger women (Titus 2:3-5).
 - a. Who can better teach younger women to love their husbands and children as well as how to be a proper keeper at home, than one who has already performed these noble roles for years.
 - b. Many congregations are failing to tap the resources of their older, knowledgeable women.
 - 2. They are to teach the children the way of the Lord (II Tim. 3:14-15; II Tim. 1:5).
- B. Women are to show benevolence to those in need.
 - 1. The saints at Joppa wept over the death of Dorcas for she had used her needle to make garments for the needy widows (Acts 9:36-43).
 - 2. A woman is assisting to bring virtues to herself as she *“stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hand to the needy.”*
 - 3. To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions is only a part of her worthy work (James 1:27). Therefore:
 - a. She carries food to help and comfort the bereaved of those who have just come home from the hospital.
 - b. She sits at night with her spiritual sister who is ill and in the hospital so that the family can rest.
 - c. She will clean the house and do the laundry, for her services are needed.
- C. Hospitality naturally falls in the hands of godly women.
 - 1. In Acts 16:15 Lydia opened her house to Paul and Silas.
 - 2. The widows in deed of I Tim. 5 were remembered for their hospitality (5:10); therefore, they were worthy of help.
- D. Teaching the lost the way of salvation.
 - 1. Aquilla and Priscilla, a husband and wife team, took Apollos aside to teach him the way of the Lord more perfectly.
 - 2. Phil. 4:3 *“And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with*

Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.”

- a. Their service would be like that of Philip’s daughters Acts 21:8 *“And the next day we that were of Paul’s company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.”*
 - b. We need more women in the church who will take seriously the great commission and spend their time trying to teach their neighbor rather than tearing down their brethren.
- E. Just because a woman can not stand before a mixed class and teach, or enter the pulpit to preach, wait on the Lord’s table or lead in public prayer does not mean there is nothing for her to do in the church. Her work is endless and eternal; valuable.

CONCLUSION:

1. God gave us women who both know the truth and love the truth to the degree that they want, with a burning heart, to fulfill their sacred function and duty in the church.
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DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES AFFECTING THE CHURCH

Ronnie Hayes

1. II John 1:1-11
2. Note especially verse 8, where we are reminded not to lose those things. The problem with Denominational doctrines is we are losing what God gave us to maintain its purity.

DISCUSSION:

- I. DILEMMA – II John 1:8 *“we lose not those things...”*

- A. “Look to yourselves,...” The dilemma is personal.
1. Paul told Timothy that the church is “*the pillar and ground of the truth*” (I Tim. 3:15).
 2. Mordecai told Esther, “...*and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for (such) a time as this*” (Esther 4:14)?
 3. Jude wrote, “*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort (you) that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*” (Jude 1:3).
- B. “...*That we lose not those things which we have wrought....*” In this statement we see the problem. Someone could ask, why is this a problem if we lose these things.
1. Heb. 2:1-4 The Hebrew writer asks, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?
 2. Gal. 3:1 Paul calls these brethren foolish for forsaking the truth.
 3. Gal. 1:6-9 Paul marvels at the same brethren that they would be removed from the gospel.
 4. II Peter 2:18-22 — Peter says, “...*the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known (it), to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*”

II. DOCTRINE — II John 1:9 “...in the doctrine of Christ...”

- A. Marriage:
1. Matt. 19:1-9 The law and the exception.
- B. Fellowship:
1. Psalm 119:63
 2. Phil. 1:3-5
 3. I John 1:7
- C. Women’s role in the church:
1. I Tim. 2:9-3:1
 2. Titus 2:3-5

III. DISTINCTIVENESS — II John 1:10 “...bring not this doctrine...”

- A. Name:
1. The church of God — Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2.
 2. The church — Acts 2:47.
 3. The churches of Christ — Rom. 16:16.

4. The house of God — I Tim. 3:15.
 5. The church of the firstborn — Heb. 12:23.
- B. Instruments of Music:
1. Eph. 5:19
 2. Col. 3:16
- C. Salvation:
1. Hear — Rom. 10:17.
 2. Believe — Mark 16:16.
 3. Repent — II Peter 3:9.
 4. Confess — Matt. 10:32.
 5. Be Baptized — Acts 22:16.

CONCLUSION:

1. Don't lose what Christ died for!!!!
-

REMAINING FAITHFUL IN THE MIDST OF DIGRESSION Rev. 2:8-10

Kent Bailey

1. The faithful Christian life is the greatest life one can live.
2. This DOES NOT mean that such a life will be without controversy, for truth is ALWAYS controversial.
3. Because of the opportunities in this life, as well as the promise of ETERNAL LIFE in the hereafter—THE FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN LIFE IS the most profitable!
4. There exists a need for FAITHFULNESS in the midst of digression.

DISCUSSION:

- I. THE NEW TESTAMENT PICTURES THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THE TERMS OF CONFLICT.
 - A. We MUST put on the whole armour of the gospel (Eph. 6:10-18).
 - B. Our enemy is indeed strong (Eph. 6:10-12).

- C. Our enemy is extremely deceptive.
 - 1. Rom. 16:17-18
 - 2. II Cor. 11:13-15
- D. We **MUST** fight the good fight of faith (I Tim.6:12).
- E. We **MUST** earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3).
- F. We **Must** be set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:16).

II. THERE IS A NEED FOR FAITHFULNESS REGARDING THE PURITY OF LIFE.

- A. Note the comparison and the line drawn between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:16-25).
- B. We **MUST** maintain separation from the world (II Cor. 6:14-18).
- C. We **MUST** be aware that God requires **HIS** people to be different (I Peter 2:1-10).
- D. We **DARE NOT** be conformed to this world (Rom. 12:1-2).
- E. Our fellowship with God is conditional (I John 1).

III. THERE IS A NEED FOR FAITHFULNESS IN THE PRESENTATION OF THE TRUTH.

- A. Such a presentation requires a presentation of **ALL** truth—both **POSITIVE** and **NEGATIVE** (II Tim. 4:1-5).
- B. Such a presentation **REQUIRES** our fervent opposition to **ALL** forms of error both within and without the church (Gal. 1:6-9).
- C. Such a presentation **REQUIRES** division and separation from those who insist upon rejecting the Lord's way (Rom. 16:17-18).

IV. THERE IS A NEED FOR FAITHFULNESS REGARDING PRACTICE.

- A. We must be faithful regarding our own personal worship (John 4:23-24; Heb. 10:25).
- B. We **MUST** remember the importance of edification (Eph. 4:16).
- C. We **MUST** be faithful in evangelism (Mark 16:15-16).
- D. We **MUST** be faithful in scriptural benevolence (James 1:27; Gal. 6:10).

V. THERE IS A NEED FOR FAITHFULNESS TO ONE ANOTHER.

- A. We are members of one another (Eph. 4:25).

- B. Because of our being one in Christ there is a great need for love among ourselves in both standing for the truth as well as in opposing error (Phil. 2:1-4; Rom. 12:10).
- C. This love should cause us even to be willing to engage within the practice of self-sacrifice (Acts 20:35; I Cor. 12:15).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. It is not always easy to stand for the truth.
 - 2. "Ease" MUST never be the determining factor for faithfulness!
 - 3. While FAITHFULNESS may cost us our families, friends, preaching opportunities; such will NEVER separate us from God!
 - 4. "BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE" (Rev. 2:10).
-

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-49
John 20:21; Acts 1:8

Sidney White

- 1. This commission shows:
 - a. Man's need for salvation (Rom. 3:23).
 - b. The scriptural basis for evangelism — the Lord Himself (Matt. 28:18).
 - c. The Relationship between the church and evangelism (I Tim. 3:14-15).
- 2. Challenge given:
 - a. Note birth rate—tremendous population increase each year.
 - b. One lost soul never hearing the gospel—we've failed.
- 3. If we are to carry out this commission, some demands must be met.

DISCUSSION:

I. "GO" —

- A. "All authority" is behind the commission.
 - 1. To reject the commission is to reject Christ's authority.
- B. The assignment is "Go" — not "come."

1. Build buildings and expect community to come to us?
2. “Reach out or fadeout.”
- C. In Acts 8:4 — “went” (go) “everywhere” (into all the world) “preaching” (preach) “word” (gospel).
 1. The exact same principle of Mark 16:15.
 2. The process that will work.

II. DEVELOP PROPER ATTITUDES.

- A. Self sacrifice — padded pews & air conditioners will not save souls (Acts 20:22-24).
- B. Debt — Rom. 1:14-16.
- C. Fear — Rom. 11:22; Heb. 10:31; II Cor. 5:10.
- D. Love — II Cor. 5:14-15.
- E. Urgency — John 4:34-35.
- F. Compassion — Matt. 9:36-39.
- G. Optimistic faith — Phil. 4:13; Heb. 13:5-5.
- H. Hatred — Rom. 12:9; Psalm 119:104 (sin- not sinner).
- I. Anticipation — Acts 1:11; John 14:3 — second coming.

III. PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS INVOLVED.

- A. Passion for lost souls — Acts 21:13; Rom. 9:1-3; 10:1.
- B. Every creature — Mark 16:15; not selective evangelism; cf. Luke 14:12-24.
- C. House to house — Acts 20:20.
 1. Very small percent of our audiences are unbelievers.
 2. To win the battle, must get to where the battle is.
 3. Can we evangelize the world by evangelizing the church building on Sunday morning.
 4. Don’t exhaust our Christianity at the building.
- D. Every member.
 1. Acts 5:42; 8:4; II Tim. 2:2; Heb. 5:12
 2. Estimate that 95% never personally win a soul to Christ— 95% unemployment!
- E. Program of edification for babes — I Peter 2:2; Acts 9:31.

IV. MUST BELIEVE CERTAIN THINGS — II Cor. 4:13.

- A. All men outside of Christ are lost — John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:3.
- B. Bible tells us clearly how to get into Christ — Rom. 10:17; John 8:31-32; Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21ff.
 1. Faith, Repentance, Confession and Baptism — John 8:32; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:10; I Peter 3:21; Rom 6:3-4.
 2. Do we teach against “faith only” and then practice it?

- C. Man has ability to change — Josh. 24:15; Gen. 3:6; II Peter 3:9.
- D. God has given us the ability and responsibility to evangelize.
- E. Results will come. Acts 2:41,47; 9:31; 16:5.
 - 1. Not limited to first century.
 - 2. Some say “won’t work”—how do we know?

V. MUST HAVE SOULS AS A MAJOR PRIORITY.

- A. Because we have a command — Mark 16:15-16.
- B. Will be so if we have proper love — Rom. 10:1; II Cor. 5:14.
- C. Because of what we know about hell — Luke 16:24.
 - 1. Need to be in hearing distance of hell.
 - 2. Concern for self and brethren; not business and bank account.
- D. Because of the example we have.
 - 1. God sent Christ.
 - 2. Christ sent apostles.
 - 3. Apostles sent brethren.
- E. Because of the eternal nature of the soul — II Thess. 1:7-9.
 - 1. “To Canaan’s Land I’m On My Way, Where The Soul Never Dies.”

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Reward is great.
 - a. For the lost who are found.
 - b. For those who seek the lost — I Cor. 15:58.
 - 2. Will cost time, effort, money, inconvenience, etc., but the joy is great.
 - 3. Will cost us these things here, or our souls hereafter.
-

WHAT IS BIBLE REPENTANCE?

Eddy Craft

- 1. The Bible places great emphasis upon repentance. Faithful men entrusted with God’s word preach repentance.

2. Repentance implies an action on the part of the person who has fallen away. Repentance is one of the hardest, if not the hardest, commands that God has given to man.
3. Although repentance is mentioned so often in the Bible, there are many misunderstandings regarding it.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

- A. Repentance, is a change of mind, leading to a change in conduct. In Matt. 21:28-30, Jesus tells the parable of the two sons:
 1. *“But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterwards he repented, and went.”*
 2. Jesus calls this change of mind repentance.
- B. Thayer defines repentance thus: *“To change one’s mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one’s past sins.”* Repentance is a change of mind, leading to a change of life (Matt. 3:8).

II. REPENTANCE IS NOT:

- A. Repentance is not merely being sorry for our sins.
 1. While sorrow is indispensable, sorrow is not repentance.
 2. One may be sorry because he is caught in sin. Two young boys may steal a car—sorry because of possible penalty.
 3. Herod was exceedingly sorry for promising Salome anything yet had John the Baptist beheaded anyway (Mark 6:26).
 4. Matt. 27:3 reads, *“Then Judas...when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself...”*
 - a. He never expected Jesus to be condemned, but he was!
 - b. Judas regretted (**metamelmai** — regret — II Cor. 7:8; Heb. 7:21; 26:20; 11:18) that he betrayed Jesus.
 - c. Paul says that repentance worked by godly sorrow brings no regret (II Cor. 7:8-10). Regret is godly sorrow.
 5. In these examples, sorrow of the world was involved.
 - a. But sorrow of the world worketh death (II Cor. 7:10).
 - b. Another kind of sorrow is mentioned here. It is godly sorrow, but even that type of sorrow is not repentance: *“godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation.”*

- c. Godly sorrow is a contrite heart which realizes our sins have offended God (Psalm 38:18; 51:3-4).
 - d. Godly sorrow precedes repentance and causes repentance.
- B. Conviction of sin is not repentance:
- 1. Like sorrow, it is necessary. The sinner must realize his lost condition.
 - 2. But just like the prodigal son who went into a far country, he must “*come to himself*” (Luke 15:17).
 - 3. By preaching, Peter convicted people of sin (Acts 2:37) yet they needed to repent (Acts 2:38).
 - 4. Conviction is not repentance; it precedes it.
- C. Being zealous is not repentance (Rom. 10:1-4; Acts 22:3-5).

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF REPENTANCE.

- A. Its importance is seen in preaching. Repentance has always been God’s message to fallen man.
- 1. Jonah declared this great theme to the people of Nineveh (Jonah 3:4; Matt. 12:41).
 - 2. John the immerser declared repentance (Matt. 3:1-11; Mark 1:4).
 - a. His baptism was one of (growing out of) repentance and unto (binding to a life of) repentance.
 - 3. Christ proclaimed repentance (Matt. 9:13; 11:20-24).
 - 4. Peter on Pentecost and other occasions (Acts 2:38; 3:19; II Peter 3:9).
 - 5. Paul, when in Athens, called for repentance on the part of Athenian idolaters (Acts 17:30).
- B. Its importance is seen in the promises of God.
- 1. Repentance is necessary for the remission of sins (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38).
 - 2. Repentance is necessary for the blessings of Heaven (Luke 13:3,5).
- C. Its importance is seen in the picture of sin; its nature, its awfulness, its universality and its punishment.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Can we not see from the preceding why all men everywhere must repent? If not, notice the following.
 - a. Because sin in any form ruins the soul.
 - b. Because one sin not repented of inevitably leads to another until we are ultimately destroyed.

- c. Because even one sin is sufficient to enslave and damn ones life (Heb. 12:1).
 - d. Because the very sin you are clinging to may bring down the wrath of God upon you.
 - e. Because my sin was responsible for Christ's death.
 - f. Because my sin affects the life of others.
2. God wants all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30; II Peter 3:9).
-

THE WORK OF THE PREACHER NEEDS TO BE BETTER UNDERSTOOD

Charles Blair

1. Our title suggests that some do not properly understand what the work of the preacher is to be about.
2. Criticism of preachers will emerge from a lack of understanding on the part of the members.
3. Failure of preachers to understand their role as defined by God may cause some to go through life with "continued hurt feelings."
4. The intent of our study is to clear up misconceptions and get the God ordained "picture" right.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **ALL PREACHERS NEED TO REMIND THEMSELVES OF WHO THEY BELONG TO.**
 - A. We belong to Jesus.
 1. I Tim. 4:6
 2. We are not to be the mouthpiece of any "church," "school" or "paper."
 - B. When we speak we are to be the "mouthpiece of God."
 1. I Peter 4:11
 2. II Tim. 4:2 "...the Word"
 - C. I Cor. 6:20

II. PART OF THE WORK WHICH THE PREACHER ENGAGES IN IS TO WAGE A SPIRITUAL BATTLE BEFORE ALL.

- A. Paul told Timothy to wage a “*good warfare*” (I Tim. 1:18).
 - 1. This “warfare” required him to use the Old Testament Prophets.
 - 2. As he waged this war, he was to hold faith and a good conscience (v.19).
- B. Others must be able to see the spiritual gains in our life.
 - 1. I Tim. 4:15
 - 2. Key to these gains was for Timothy to “*meditate*” and give himself to them (prophecies).
 - 3. This requires us to spend time with the Book!
- C. The inner man demands the greater portion of our attention.
 - 1. I Tim. 4:7-8
 - 2. II Cor. 4:16
 - 3. The outward man is not to be neglected but it is the inward man who receives the greater attention.
 - 4. Golf, fishing, hunting, can provide necessary good outlets for the outward man but they should never move to the number one position in our life.

III. ALONG THESE SAME LINES, IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO SET THE PROPER EXAMPLE.

- A. Paul reminded Timothy of this great area of work.
 - 1. I Tim. 4:12
 - 2. The wording here shows us the area under consideration.
 - 3. We are to be examples “of the believers” not “to the believers.”
 - 4. Other passages would show the importance of “to the believer.”
 - 5. Paul is telling Timothy to show the world what a believer is.
- B. Note the areas under consideration.
 - 1. Word: the truth from God.
 - 2. Conversation: manner of life.
 - 3. Charity: the love toward others.
 - 4. Spirit: proper attitude.
 - 5. Faith: our confidence in what God has revealed in knowing it and in practicing it.
 - 6. Purity: proper conduct in life.
 - a. All counseling should be done with a desk between the preacher and the one being helped.

- b. We can offer advice, point souls to the Lord, a Kleenex, but nothing more.
- c. We cannot afford to lose soldiers of the cross because of improper conduct.
- d. Good dose of I Tim. 5:1-2 will solve most of these kinds of problems.

IV. THE PREACHER MUST HAVE CARE FOR THE LOCAL CONGREGATION AND THE BROTHERHOOD.

- A. Paul describes Timothy as being one who cared for the local church.
 - 1. Phil. 2:20
 - 2. Timothy cared what happened to them.
- B. Epaphroditus is likewise shown to be of this disposition.
 - 1. Phil. 2:25-27
 - 2. Epaphroditus cared about what the church thought (v.26).
 - 3. He was willing to wear himself out for the Lord and the church (v.27).
- C. When members are suffering, they need to be able to turn to us.
 - 1. We visit them when they are sick (hospital, home, etc.).
 - 2. We are there to point them back to the Saviour when they go away from God (Gal. 6:1).
 - 3. We share their problems and help them search for solutions based on the Word of God.
 - 4. If you do not have time for such efforts, perhaps being a preacher is not what you really want.
 - 5. They must develop confidence both in what we tell them and the assurance that private things remain with us.

V. MAN'S FAMILY IS PART OF THE WORK OF THE PREACHER.

- A. If we save a world and lose our own, what have we accomplished.
- B. Our wives often need us, in a different way, than maybe "sister so and so" but they do need us.
- C. It often falls their lot to be in the background.
- D. We must remind them they are the "wind beneath our wings" which carry us to lofty heights.
- E. Our children need "dad" to laugh, talk, play and just "be there."
- F. Many a child has given up the faith because of the pressure of being "preacher's kids."

- G. We can relieve some of that pressure by showing them “who we are.”

VI. THERE IS A TREMENDOUS DEMAND ON A PREACHER'S TIME. THE LOCAL CONGREGATION NEEDS TO SEE SOME THINGS WHICH WILL HELP THE RELATIONSHIP.

- A. The preacher needs to have time to be a good student of the Word in order to preach or write.
1. I Tim. 4:13
 2. II Tim. 2:15
 3. His worth in this area cannot be measured by how many “hours” he is in his study.
 4. With most of your jobs you “knock off” at a certain time and go do other things which you like.
 5. The preacher is on call, like a doctor, at all hours.
 6. If you “think” he is “goofing off” then do not be trapped into thinking office hours will solve the problem. Talking things over will do more good.
- B. As already pointed out, he needs to be a husband and a father.
1. The church can do so much to help by allowing him the honor of fulfilling that role.
 2. A lot of times with the preacher's home next to the building, it can afford some tense situations.
 3. Tensions can be relieved by each of us remembering, it is his home (even though it is owned by the church).
 4. Be respectful of meal times or family times which the preacher spends with his family.
- C. He is your friend, do not be afraid to treat him as such.
- D. Hold up his hands because of the many “hats” he has to wear, he might become discouraged. Let him know you are there.
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THE CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME

Melvin Sapp

1. Satan is busy making havoc in every institution that God has ordained. (Civil government, the church, and the home)
2. His primary route of attack is through the destruction of the leadership. Their person, authority, and their need to exist.
3. If we allow the Devil to succeed, ruin and destruction will surely come.
4. Our society is at the point of crisis and we need men who will stand in the gap and challenge men to answer the call to leadership in the home (Ezek. 22:23-31).

DISCUSSION:

I. LEADERSHIP IS IMPORTANT.

- A. Leadership assures organization and order (Titus 1:5).
- B. Leadership provides direction and discipline (Gen. 18:19; Eph. 6:4).
- C. Leadership guarantees physical provisions and protection (I Tim 5:8).
- D. Leadership enhances emotional, physical, spiritual, and social development and stability (Luke 2:52).
- E. Lack of leadership leads to disorder and chaos (I Sam. 2:12,22; 3:13).
- F. Lack of leadership leads to broken homes and shattered dreams (Gen. 37:1-4).
- G. Lack of leadership is the death-knell to the home and society. "As the home goes, so goes the nation and the church."

II. GOD'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME.

- A. Every institution operates under some form of Leadership. (State, church, and the home)
- B. God instituted the home and laid down the guidelines for its leadership.
 1. Adam was first formed and given the responsibility for keeping and dressing the garden (Gen. 2:7-8, 15-17; I Tim. 2:13).
 2. The woman was made from one of Adam's ribs to be a help meet to him (Gen. 2:18-25).

3. After they both had sinned in partaking the forbidden fruit, God addressed Adam first concerning their disobedience (Gen. 3:8-13).
4. All were punished for their role in the fall, but the leadership of man in the home was confirmed (Gen. 3:16).

III. THE CRISIS THAT THE HOME FACES IS LARGELY DUE TO LACK OF LEADERSHIP.

- A. Divorce is at an all-time high (Mal. 2:16; Matt. 19:9).
- B. Desertion and non-support crashes families into poverty (I Peter 3:7).
- C. Depravity due to indolence (I Tim. 5:8).
- D. Molestation caused by spiritual bankruptcy (Rom. 1:21-31).
- E. Promiscuity allowed by negligence and ignorance in informing our children of the dreaded consequences of their behavior.

CONCLUSION:

1. If men would accept the responsibility of leadership in the home, some of these crises can be corrected or prevented.
 2. The well-being of the society, the church and the home depends on men taking the leadership in the home.
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THE NEW HERMENEUTIC AND PATTERN THEOLOGY

Jimmy W. Bates

1. It is necessary that we understand the will of God, as revealed in the Bible.
 - a. Commanded (Eph. 5:17; cf. Eph. 3:3,4).
 - b. Doing the will of God is preceded by understanding (Matt. 7:21-27; cf. Matt. 13:13-15).
2. One's understanding of the Bible depends upon...
 - a. Genuine desire to know (John 7:17; 8:32).
 - b. Recognition and respect for the inspiration and authority of the Bible (II Tim. 3:16,17).

- c. Diligent Study (II Tim. 2:15).
- d. Correct “hermeneutics” (science of interpretation).

DISCUSSION:

I. THE NEW HERMENEUTIC.

- A. An effort by false teachers within the Lord’s Church to throw off the restraints of the Bible.
 - 1. To expand the role for women in the church beyond what the Bible authorizes.
 - 2. To allow for the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship.
 - 3. To allow for and encourage fellowship with the denominations.
- B. Denies the authority of scriptural silence (cf. Heb. 11:4; Gen. 6:14; Lev. 10:1,2; II Cor. 5:7).
- C. Denies the attainability of absolute truth (cf. John 8:32).
- D. Attempts to separate Christ from His Gospel; emphasis on “the man” not “the plan” (cf. John 12:48).
- E. Attempts to reduce “matters of faith or doctrine” into “matters of opinion.”
- F. Argues for “levels” or “degrees” of fellowship with those for whom the Bible forbids fellowship (cf. II Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; I John 1:2).
- G. Denies that the New Testament is the “pattern” that we are to follow today.

II. PATTERN THEOLOGY: THE BIBLE PATTERN FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH.

- A. “*Pattern*” — from Greek word — (Tupos).
 - 1. Translated:
 - a. Pattern (Titus 2:7; Heb. 8:5).
 - b. Print (John 20:25).
 - c. Figure (Acts 7:43).
 - d. Form (Rom. 6:17).
 - e. Example or ensample (I Cor. 10:6; Phil. 3:17; I Thess. 1:7; II Thess. 3:9; I Tim. 4:12).
 - 2. Defined by Thayer (p.632) as:
 - a. “The mark of a stroke or blow; print:
 - b. A figure formed by a blow or impression; a figure, image.
 - c. Form — the teaching which embodies the sum and substance of religion and represents it to the mind ... the contents and form of a letter (Acts 23:25).

- d. An example: “1) in the technical sense, the pattern in conformity to which a thing must be made (Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5). 2) in an ethical sense, a dissuasive example, pattern of warning...an example to be imitated.”
3. Thus, our “pattern” (the sum and substance of Christianity) to which we must conform today is the New Testament (Heb. 8:5).
 - a. This is the main characteristic which distinguishes the Lord’s Church from the denominational world.
 - b. When we deviate from the Pattern, we cease to be the New Testament Church.
- B. Evidence that the New Testament is the Pattern that we must follow in detail:
 1. A pattern (blueprint) is a detailed outline or plan.
 - a. The New Testament furnishes us with a detailed outline or plan (II Tim. 3:16,17; II Peter 1:3; Heb. 8:5).
 - b. Writers of the New Testament were not free to bind the traditions of men (Matt. 15:9), but were guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth (John 14:26; 16:13).
 2. We are commanded to, “*holdfast the pattern of sound words*” (II Tim. 1:13; cf. I Thess. 5:21).
 3. If the New Testament is not our “pattern,” why so much emphasis on “sound doctrine?” (I Tim. 1:3, 9-10, 18-19; 3:15; 4:6,13; 5:7,17; 6:1,3,13-14; II Tim. 2:14; 3:10,16; Titus 1:13; 2:7,10,15)
 4. If the New Testament is not our pattern (blueprint), the standard for church organization, worship, doctrine, etc., how could we determine what is right? One could believe and practice anything!
 5. The fact that the New Testament demands obedience of us proves it to be the pattern that we are to follow (Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46; Heb. 5:8,9; James 1:22).
 - a. God, in every dispensation of time has demanded obedience.
 - b. He has demanded that His pattern be followed: Noah (Gen. 6:14-22), Tabernacle (Exodus 25:40; Heb. 8:5; II John 9-11).
- C. Pattern equals Authority.
 1. The pattern refers to the authority that we must appeal to for all we teach and practice in religion (II Cor. 5:7; Col. 3:17; II Tim. 3:16,17; John 12:48).

2. When men engage in those things in religion for which they have no authority, they have deviated from the pattern.
- D. For a thorough discussion of “pattern theology,” I highly recommend the book “*Behold the Pattern*” by Goebel Music.

CONCLUSION:

1. The pattern is loved by some and despised by others.
 2. Apostasy occurs when men do not “holdfast the pattern” God has given us.
 3. Those who have espoused the “new hermeneutic” have gone into apostasy.
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THE SIN OF RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE

Charles W. Leonard

1. The casual observer can readily see that religious indifference is a reality.
2. The vast majority of people are caught up in the sin of indifference.
3. Because of indifference, spirituality is on the decline.
4. Religious indifference is a loss of interest, lack of concern for spiritual things.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **HOW HAS RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE DEVELOPED?**
 - A. The development has been so gradual that many are not aware of the change.
 - B. It developed as there was a change in the thinking of people (Prov. 23:7; Matt. 15:9; Phil. 4:8).
 - C. It has brought about a change in our value system.
- II. **WHAT ARE THE CAUSES FOR RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE?**
 - A. We have permitted the word to be taken from us (Matt. 13:19).

- B. Lack of genuine commitment (Matt. 13:20-21).
- C. Cares of the world (Matt. 13:22; 6:24; James 4:4).
- D. The desire to be pleased (Gal. 1:10).
- E. Ignorance of God's word (Rom. 10:3; Acts 17:30).

III. WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF INDIFFERENCE?

- A. Failure to attend religious services (Heb. 10:25).
- B. Lack of Bible study (I Tim. 4:13; 2:15; Acts 17:11).
- C. Little praying is now being done (I Thess. 5:17).
- D. Little planned and sacrificial giving (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7).
- E. Very little work for the Lord (Phil. 2:12; Titus 3:1; I Cor. 15:8).
- F. A great moral break down (Rom. 1:24-32).
- G. Lack of concern for others (Luke 12:16-21; 19:10; Matt. 20:28).
- H. Many are fellowshiping error and those in it (I Cor. 10:20; II Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11; I John 1:7).
- I. Sound doctrine is no longer important to those who are indifferent (John 7:16; Acts 2:42; I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 1:13; Titus 1:13).

IV. WHAT IS THE CURE FOR RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE?

- A. One's thinking has to be changed by the word (Acts 18:19-24; Matt. 4:4; Acts 20:32; Rom. 1:16).
- B. Association with the right kind of people (I Cor. 15:33; Gal. 5:9).
- C. Interest can also be developed by involvement in the Lord's work.

CONCLUSION:

1. Indifference is a threat to the survival of the church.
 2. It will destroy our value system.
 3. Ultimately, souls will be lost both in and out of the church.
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DANGERS OF MODERN VERSIONS!

Melvin Elliot

1. My subject certainly qualifies as a “Most Needed Lesson For Today.” Not only is it needed, it must be heeded if the truth of God is to be followed. **If one believes and follows the new versions he will be opposing the truth of almighty God and placing his soul in jeopardy. Neither can the church survive if the teachings of modernists in these versions are followed.** The posture that produced and sustains these modern versions, for some time, has also been the policy in many congregations and we are seeing them joining the denominations.
2. One reason things are not worse than they are is because many users of modern versions have been taught the truth from the **King James Version (KJV)** and really don’t know what they are reading in these new versions. For example, I heard one preacher who used the **New International Version (NIV)**, use **KJV** language in his explanations and comments. Others couldn’t see the difference between the **New American Standard Version (NASV)** and the **KJV** in I Cor. 2:14. However, a generation is here who does not know or regard the truth, and when they teach what the new translations really teach, then hopefully some will see the seriousness of this matter.
3. For example, observe please the **KJV** states (I Cor. 11:24) “...*Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you:...*” The **NIV, RSV and NASV**: “...*This is my body which is for you:...*” although many, if not most, would say, “I don’t see any difference...” there is a vast difference! The very heart and foundation of the redemption story is ripped out and the gospel is replaced by Catholicism. Did you know the **American Standard Version (ASV)** does the same? More and more the teaching of sectarianism that is in these modern versions is being taught in our classrooms and from our pulpits.
4. We can only touch the hem of the garment in our allotted time so we will consider a few fundamental things upon which the faith and our salvation rests.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHERE I STAND.

- A. In some manner, inspired writers of both testaments received word for word revelation from God. I hold this to be absolute truth which cannot be compromised.

- B. The original autographs, with great care, were copied and recopied and widely circulated.
- C. Thousands of these documents consisting of a few lines to nearly complete New Testaments are extant.
- D. Copyists were uninspired and variations are found but approximately 90% of all copies form one line of teaching.
- E. Very early, men corrupted the scriptures. These documents (about 5% of the whole) do not form another line of teaching but go their separate ways.
- F. Nearly all modern versions basically follow two or three of these corrupt copies with some input by two or three others. Of these documents Dean John William Burgon said they are *"...without character without a history in fact without antecedents of any kind."* Further, he states of them *"...are three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant: — exhibit the most shamefully mutilated texts which are anywhere met with—the depositories of the largest amount of fabricated readings, ancient blunders and intentional perversions of truth...."*
- G. I do not believe the **KJV** to be perfect nor the text from which it is translated to be perfect, but I do believe and defend that it contains no fatal error and its wording more consistent with truth than any other translation.
- H. Would I accept a revision of the **KJV**? Yes, but I must emphatically say there are comparatively few places improvement is needed. Today the **KJV** stands in a class by itself. Let the elite scoff—I know where I stand.

II. I HEAR THERE ARE 200,000 MISTAKES IN THE BIBLE.

- A. If in one manuscript, one word is misspelled 4,000 times—that's counted as 4,000 mistakes.
- B. Transpositions, such as "our Lord Jesus Christ" to "Jesus Christ our Lord," etc. account for many others.
- C. As far as the teachings are concerned, these mistakes are "much ado about nothing."
- D. Modern critics question about 48 New Testament verses.
 - 1. For over 100 years this contention has been shown to be baseless and textual critics simply refuse to regard the overwhelming evidence against them.
 - 2. At the most, two or three verses can be seriously questioned and none involve essential doctrine.

III. THE BELIEF OF MODERN TRANSLATORS.

- A. In many, if not most cases, they do not believe we have a fully

inspired inerrant complete revelation from God. They believe the Bible is written from man's experience and contains errors that must be corrected (to fit their views). They believe the Bible is a product of evolution.

- B. Some do not believe Jesus was the virgin born Son of God (namely Harry M. Orlensky—an unbelieving Jew). Hence “*young woman*” is put in Isaiah 7:14; “*only begotten*” is removed from John 3:16, etc.
- C. Some reject the miracles of Christ. Walking on the water is an “optical illusion;” the resurrection of Christ is only “spiritual.”
- D. Some reject predictive prophecy in the Old Testament — accuse the prophets of visual hallucinations.
- E. Some are caught “red-handed” in putting the creeds of men in the text of modern versions.
- F. Can such be trusted with the truth of God? Not at all!

DISCUSSION OF DANGERS

I. Modern Versions Cast Reflection on the Inspired, Inerrant and Complete Revelation of God. Luke 1:1-4 NIV.

- A. RSV omits many whole verses, parts of verses, phrases and words including names of our Lord. (46 verses; 187 parts of verses; and 213 names of Deity).
- B. NIV does basically the same. Mark 16:9-20 is not omitted as the RSV, but it is set apart by a footnote.
 - 1. They say “*the most reliable early manuscripts omit*” (Mark 16:9-20).
 - 2. In view of the fact that approximately 2,500 manuscripts and copies contain it, how many would “most” be? There are only TWO.
 - 3. The ASV does the same but is honest to say two.
- C. NASV.
 - 1. “*Some of the oldest manuscripts do not contain verses 9-20*” (Mark 16:9-20).
 - 2. It reads: “*A few later manuscripts and versions contain this paragraph usually after verse 8.*” A few have it at the end of chapter and say: “*and they promptly reported these instructions to Peter and his companions. And after that Jesus Himself sent out through them from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation.*”

3. For over one hundred years, Mark 16:9-20 has been shown to be scripture, sustained by almost all the evidence.
4. Modern translators have not, nor can they, successfully deny this proof. They are so wedded to two corrupt manuscripts (**Vaticanus** and **Siniaticus**) they refuse to accept the evidence.

D. Use of footnotes.

1. Introduction to **NIV**: *“Footnotes call attention to places where there is uncertainty about what constitutes the original text.”* There was no “original text.” Time after time in the **NIV**: *“Some early manuscripts read;” “Other manuscripts vary widely;” “Some later manuscripts allow;” “Some manuscripts omit;” “The most early manuscripts omit.”*
2. In the **RSV** the statements are: *“Other ancient authorities add—omit—read—insert.”* The **NASV** does about the same.
3. **NIV** has the following number of such footnotes:
Matthew — 16; Mark — 29; Luke — 22;
The **RSV** has: Matthew — 45; Mark — 36; Luke — 44.
4. How can one know how the Bible is supposed to read?

E. By their introductions.

1. **NIV**: *“The Greek text used in the work of translation was an eclectic one.”* Eclectic — “Choosing, selecting from various systems, doctrines or sources.” Obviously no such authentic and reliable text could exist.
2. Such a text would be a mixture of whatever the composers wanted according to their beliefs. This is nothing short of a confession of what the Wescott-Hort text is and what their translation is.
3. *“Where existing texts differ, the translators made their choice of readings in accord with sound principles of textual criticism.”* Simply not so! They wanted to rid the world of **KJV** and its text.

II. Cast Doubt On The Deity Of Christ.

- A. Isaiah 7:14 **RSV**: *“Young woman”* — Virgin in footnote.
Matthew 1:22-23: Inspired Matthew said that it took a virgin to fulfil what Isaiah said. **That** means — “It gives the reason and states the condition upon which a stated thing was done.”
- B. John 3:16 **RSV**: *“only Son;”* **NIV**: *“one and only Son.”*
- C. Matt. 19:16-17 **RSV**, **NIV** and **NASV**: The inquirer called Jesus good. Jesus answered that none was good but God so

the man in calling him good stated that Jesus was God. “*Good master*” is replaced with teacher — not good teacher — and “*why callest thou me good*” is changed to “*why do you ask me about what is good*” and thus mutilates the man’s statement and Christ’s answer that confirm’s his deity.

- D. I Tim. 6:16: “*Who only hath immortality*” to “*Who alone is immortal*” (NIV): “*alone possesses immortality*” (NASV): and “*alone has immortality*” (RSV).
1. To say God ONLY hath immortality means he was never clothed in the flesh or mortal.
 2. To say God ALONE is immortal means no one else is, hence it denies the deity of Christ.
- E. I Tim 3:16 (NIV, RSV and NASV): the word “*God*” is changed to “*he who*” and thus removes the teaching that Christ is God (Deity). Since 1871 Bishop Ellicott (Chairman of the revision committee) had in his possession 76 pages in which Burgon showed overwhelming proof for GOD as well as showing Ellicott’s contention for HE WHO was without support; that it was a “calamitous perversion of the truth.” In 1897 Ellicott edited a set of commentaries. He states a scribe made a “trifling alteration” and that the whole verse is a fragment of an ancient Christian hymn. This is proof of knowing deliberate perversion of the truth.
- F. In a multitude of passages, names of Deity are omitted, changed or minimized in these new versions. Why?

III. Multiple Translations Destroys The Concept Of Word For Word Revelation From God.

- A. Num. 22:18; I Sam. 23:2; Jer. 1:9; I Peter 1:23-25; I Thess. 2:13; I Cor. 14:37; I Cor. 2:13; II Peter 1:20-21; Matt. 1:22; 10:19-20; John 14:26; Acts 20:35; Rev. 2:7; Acts 1:16; 2:25.
- B. Use of multiple translations leads to speculation as to what the scriptures teach.
1. I sat in a class studying (?) the feeding of the 5,000 according to Luke. They were speculating whether Jesus knew what he would do or was he just taking it one step at a time.
 2. Remarks as: “Well my Bible says...;” “What does your Bible say;” “What do you think” went on for 15 minutes.
 3. The teacher (?) read from seven different versions and the confusion of Babel existed. All that was needed was to take the Bible and read either Matthew or John for the answer.

4. Some time ago I heard a radio talk show where a religious question came up. One man said the answer would depend upon who you ask. The other replied "It would depend upon which Bible you read!"

IV. Doctrinal Errors.

A. Faith Only.

1. Rom. 1:16-17 (NIV) Righteousness is by "...*faith from first to last.*"
2. Rom. 10:9-10 (RSV) "*Will be saved*" — "*and so is justified,*" "*and so is saved*" aids faith only.
3. NIV: "*Will be saved,*" "*believe and are justified,*" "*confess and are saved.*" These certainly suggest salvation at the point of faith.
4. NASV: "*believes, resulting in righteousness,*" "*confesses, resulting in salvation.*" Hardly an improvement on the KJV.
5. Rom 3:29 (NIV): By changing "*By what law*" to "*on what principle*" and "*the law of faith*" to "*that of faith*" implying the principle of faith — again supports faith only.
6. Rom. 4:3 (NIV): By changing faith being "*counted unto him FOR righteousness*" to "*AS righteousness*" again, faith only.
7. Gal. 2:16,20 (NIV): By changing faith "*of*" Christ to faith "*in*" Christ, again the NIV suggests saved by faith only.

B. Calvinism (NIV).

1. Psalm 51:5 "*Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.*" By wording that artfully, it changes the circumstances under which one is born (KJV) to the characteristics to the one that is born, the NIV places pure Calvinism into the text.
2. I Cor. 2:14 "*The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the spirit of God for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*"
 - a. "In other words, without the Holy Spirit, one is not able to understand the things of God." (Five Points of Calvinism by Edwin H. Palmer, p.16)
 - b. The RSV is as bad or worse.
3. Rom. 8 (NIV): is full of Calvinism by stating "*sinful nature.*" Also used in Galatians 5 & 6; Col. 2:11-13.

C. Premillennialism (NIV).

1. Acts 3:19-21. By taking part of verse 19 and placing it

with verse 20 and changing “*times*” to “*the time*” the passage is made to lend help to the theory.

2. Rom. 11:26: The change of “*shall*” to “*will*” suggests the future restoration of national Israel.
3. Eph. 1:9-11 v.10: “*To be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment....*” Premillennialism to the core! These are not Paul’s words.
4. Heb. 12:28: By inserting the word “*are*” the time of the verse is altered from referring back to verses 22-24 to some future fulfillment.

D. Pentecostalism.

1. John 3:8 In verse 8, the Lord shifts from the new birth to the one born but by adding “*it*” and “*with*” the Pentecostals are given the verse by making the new birth a mysterious operation of the Holy spirit.
2. I Cor. 1:6 “*Testimony about Christ*” from “*Testimony of Christ.*”
3. I Cor. 12:13 “*we were all given the one Spirit to drink*” Nonsense!
4. Eph. 4:13 “*Unity of the faith*” to “*unity in the faith*” and “*that*” to “*then*” assists the Pentecostals in their affirmation of continuing miraculous provisions to men today.

CONCLUSION:

1. The faithfulness and beauty of the KJV has not been improved upon by any nor all modern translations. It has upheld the truth in debates of every nature. All new discoveries have neither added to nor taken away from that which its noble pages through the centuries have faithfully proclaimed. No scholarship has improved upon its “*Thus saith the Lord*” but has rather obscured, lessened, confused and perverted its simple proclamations. For example: modern translators seem not to know the difference in DESTROY and ABOLISH (Matt. 5:17 and Eph. 2:15); OF and ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS and DOING RIGHT SEED and DESCENDANT. Time after time, wording both without text or reason is changed that destroys the meaning and thus the power of the scriptures because they have not followed the sacred command “*Hold fast the form of sound words....*”
2. From the beginning, Satan has tried to change God’s word. He did this in the garden giving rise to false prophets, Christs, apostles and teachers. As Paul said, these are transforming themselves into angels of light. Into this group, modern day translators surely fit. They remind me of Balaam who knowing

what God had said, yet wanted to see what he'd say more. Finally, his madness was forbidden by his donkey. Surely, if Balaam's donkey had been present in the circles of modern translators he'd have forbidden their being "*wells without water.*"

3. Balaam's donkey is long gone but we are here and I'm speaking out against them. If that makes me a long-eared donkey in the eyes of modern scholars my answer is I'd rather be God's donkey than satan's scholar. Those who bow to that Jezebel of modern scholarship and accuse us who contend for the truth of causing trouble in Israel, I answer, we have not caused the trouble but they, in following unbelievers, modernists, denominational dogmas and the subjective imaginations of charismatics, have forsaken the complete inspired and inerrant word for word revelation from God.
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THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF THE CHURCH

Gilbert Gough

1. Our text is II Corinthians 6:14-17.
 - a. God always demanded of His people in any generation of time to be distinct and separate.
 - b. Holiness and exclusiveness has been required under Patriarchy, Judaism, and Christianity.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF GOD'S PEOPLE UNDER PATRIARCHY.

- A. It was required of **Noah** and his family that they be distinct and separate from other families of the earth (Gen. 6).
 1. As the world of humanity was doing "*evil continually,*" God was displeased.
 2. "*But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*"
 3. Therefore, God's call was for Noah to build an ark. Why?
 - a. First, God was going to flood the entire earth and destroy wicked man.

- b. Second, God desired to save righteous Noah and his family.
- c. Righteousness is distinct from wickedness.
- B. It was required of **Abram** and his household (Gen. 12:1-3).
 - 1. Because Abram's family had been idolaters, God demanded that Abram and his family be distinct, thus God said, "*Get thee out from thy kindred, and from thy father's house*" (12:1).
 - 2. He was called to serve God and God had great purpose for Abram's life and lineage.

II. THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF GOD'S PEOPLE UNDER JUDAISM.

- A. God raised up a great leader named Moses while the Israelites were in bondage to Egypt.
 - 1. His message from God for Pharaoh was "*Let my people go that they may serve me*" (Exodus 8:20).
 - 2. That the children of Israel be distinct and exclusive from the Egyptians was necessary for the idolatry of Egypt was in direct contrast with the worship of Jehovah God.
- B. The Israelites under Moses became a holy nation at Sinai (Exodus 19:4-5; I Kings 8:53).
- C. That distinctiveness and holiness had to be sustained if they were to remain God's faithful people (I Kings 9:6-9).
 - 1. But they were rebellious and throughout their history, they failed to abide by God's law given at Sinai and served other gods.
 - a. Therefore, after the kingdom divided, Israel went into Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C. during the reign of Hoshea.
 - b. Judah went into Babylonia captivity. Nebuchadnezzar came in 606 B.C. and fought against Jerusalem; he returned in 597 B.C. and finally destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in 586 B.C..
- D. After the seventy years of captivity, God allowed the Jews to re-inhabit Jerusalem and restore worship and service.
 - 1. The returns were under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C., Ezra, 458 B.C., and Nehemiah in 445 B.C.
 - 2. All these events happened to the Jews because they refused to be a separate nation as God demanded.
 - 3. It was not until they distinguished themselves as a separate people that God allowed them to remain in Jerusalem without persecution.

III. A DISTINCTIVENESS OF GOD'S PEOPLE UNDER CHRISTIANITY.

A. Examine the church of the New Testament.

1. It is the "called out" of the world by God.
 - a. *"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints..."* (I Cor. 1:2).
 - b. *"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son"* (Col. 1:13).
2. The church is a royal priesthood (I Peter 2:5, 9).
3. It is a holy nation (II Tim. 1:9; I Peter 2:9).
4. It is made of peculiar people; peculiar means *"a people for God's own possession"* (Titus 2:14; I Peter 2:9).

B. God people are to be distinct in:

1. **Speech.**

- a. *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..."* (I Peter 4:11).
- b. *"...Sound speech, that cannot be condemned..."* (Titus 2:8).
- c. We should only speak where the Bible speaks.
- d. Many brethren speak the "language of Ashdod" (Neh. 13:23-24) when they use such wording foreign to the Bible: Reverend, Pastor, my church, join the church, sanctuary...

2. **Doctrine.**

- a. *"Hold fast the form of sound words..."* (II Tim. 1:13).
- b. *"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears"* (II Tim. 4:3).
- c. *"But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine"* (Titus 2:1).
- d. *"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son"* (II John 9).
- e. Israel was considered peculiar as long as she kept the commandments of God.
- f. The church will be considered peculiar today if she *"contends earnestly for the faith"* (Jude 3). [Bible only — baptism — one church — marriage].

3. Worship.

- a. There is a tendency today toward modern idolatry just as there was in the days of Israel.
- b. Matt. 15:8-9 *“This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”*
- c. Read Colossians 2:20-22.
- d. The church is considered peculiar because we have no mechanical instruments of music; or because we eat of the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week.

4. Life.

- a. Rom. 12:1-2 *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service...”*
 - b. *“Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”* (James 4:4).
 - c. *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...”* (I John 2:15).
 - d. Christians live in the world, but are not to fashion their lives according to the world in dress, recreation, etc...
 - e. If there is no difference in the life of a Christian, and the life of one in the world, how is the Christian ever going to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth?
 - f. In Christ, a Christian is a new creature. He is separated from the world of sin. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (II Cor. 5:17).
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THE HOME THAT PLEASES GOD

Raymond Allen Hagood

1. The home is a divine institution.
 - a. God ordained the home in the garden of Eden.
 - b. Gen. 2:18-24
2. Since the home is a divine institution, we must be concerned with creating our homes around those precepts which please God.
 - a. Failure to follow God's laws carries tragic consequences.
 - b. Compliance to God's law produces the best and happiest homes.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE HOME THAT PLEASES GOD HAS CHRIST AS ITS HEAD.

- A. To restore the home to its original place in God's plan, we must restore the *headship* of the home.
 1. Christ the Lord is the head of the home.
 2. Eph. 4:5
- B. The one Lord is Jesus Christ; he is the master and ruler.
 1. Through his word he directs our way in every area of life.
 2. II Peter 1:3
 3. John 12:48

II. THE HOME THAT PLEASES GOD HONORS GOD'S LAWS OF MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE.

- A. The Lord teaches that marriage is honorable.
 1. Heb. 13:4
 2. The Hebrew writer here teaches against the false ascetism extant in that day which believed and taught that marriage was really not honorable, but rather, defiling or filthy.
- B. God's law of marriage.
 1. Marriage is for life.
 - a. Rom. 7:2-3
 - b. The proper way for a marriage to end is when one partner in marriage dies.
 2. Marriage can end prior to death for one reason and one reason only.
 - a. That one reason is for the cause of fornication (*porneia*).
 - b. Matt. 19:9; Matt. 5:32

- c. Marriage is for life, and it can only end prior to death if one of the parties in the marriage is guilty of fornication and the other party innocent.

III. THE HOME THAT PLEASES GOD HONORS GOD'S LAWS OF HEADSHIP AND SUBMISSION.

- A. The Lord designates the husband as the head and leader of the home.
 - 1. Eph. 5:23
 - 2. Husbands are not to be dictatorial tyrants, but neither are they to be skirt-wearing wimps.
- B. Wives are to submit to their husbands.
 - 1. Eph. 5:22
 - 2. Submission is not an act of weakness, but rather, an act of strength.
 - 3. Such does not relegate a woman, but rather it exalts her.

IV. THE HOME THAT PLEASES GOD IS FILLED WITH LOVE BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES AND BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

- A. Husbands are to love their wives.
 - 1. Eph. 5:25; Eph. 5:28-29
 - 2. It is love that wishes only the best for someone else.
- B. How is the husband to love his wife?
 - 1. As Christ loved the church—he died for it.
 - 2. As his own body.
- C. Husbands and wives have physical obligations.
 - 1. I Cor. 7:3-5
 - 2. When we marry, we surrender our bodies to our mates.
- D. Parents have obligations toward their children.
 - 1. To train them according to God's law.
 - 2. Prov. 22:6
- E. Children are to obey their parents.
 - 1. Eph. 6:1
 - 2. Children are to honor father and mother (Eph. 6:2-3).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The home is a precious thing and must be protected and cherished.
 - 2. If we honor God's laws concerning the home, we will find nothing but happiness and joy unspeakable.
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