



**16th Annual "Seek The Old Paths"
Lectureship**

Editor: GARLAND M. ROBINSON

**TRADITIONS
OF MEN**

VAIN RELIGION

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL
"SEEK THE OLD PATHS"
LECTURESHIP

JULY 22 – 26, 2001

THEME:

Traditions of Men
Vain Religion

Editor:

Garland M. Robinson

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FORWARD

The Annual **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship is held each year at the East Corinth Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi, the week of the fourth Sunday in July. The theme of the 2001 lectureship was **Traditions of Men — Vain Religion**. To study about traditions of men is always appropriate. The New Testament abounds with Scriptures exhorting brethren to be faithful, be on guard, remain steadfast and to expose false doctrine and those teaching it (Rev. 2:10; Eph. 5:11; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; Acts 20:28-32; Titus 1:13; 2:1; 2 Peter 1:12; Jude 3. 2 Thess. 2:10-12). There has never been a time in history where the plain and unadulterated teaching of the Word of God was needed more than it is now. Every generation must learn and know the Truth. Every generation must hear God's plain distinctive Word. All men everywhere must adhere to it in order to be saved. This book is sent forth in an effort to educate people in the precious Word of God. It will go around the world many times. It will provide lesson material for many and encourage thousands, perhaps millions, to obey and cling to God's eternal hand. It certainly is not the Bible, but directs men to the Bible. You will profit from the decades of study, experience and wisdom of its authors. We encourage each one to learn and obey the Truth while you have the opportunity. Remain faithful in the Lord's church and you will receive a crown of life that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.

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1988, Christ, our Perfect Example *	1997, The Church at Colosse
1989, Old Testament Questions	1998, The Home
1990, New Testament Questions *	1999, The Uniqueness of the Church
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1992, Most Needed Lessons For Today *	2001, Traditions of Men— Vain Religion
1993, Preaching Needed For The Nineties *	* currently out of print.
1994, Immorality	
1995, The Church at Corinth	
1996, The Seven Churches of Asia	

*Garland M. Robinson
July, 2001*

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DEDICATION



Doyle C. Gough 1924-2001

We dedicate this 16th volume of “Seek The Old Paths” Lectureship to the loving memory of brother Doyle Gough who passed from this life on January 16th, 2001.

Brother Gough was a man of superior ability. Hundreds throughout the brotherhood share this sentiment. Doyle and Barbara were always the first to arrive and the last to leave the lectureship each year. They worked continuously for the spread of the Gospel. They walked in the old paths. One is amazed at the amount of work they have done. Our youth loved “brother Gough.” He was a great inspiration to all our lives.

Brother Gough was a good teacher and example to all who knew him. He was well known for his firm stand for the truth. In this age of liberalism, it is hoped that this volume will be effective in bringing people back to the sound solid type of the Gospel that he loved and followed.

Elders: Wallace Benjamin
Earl Case
Bill Kimbrough
Edmond King

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Traditions Of Men Regarding Preachers

Raymond Hagood

1. The city of Corinth in the first century was one of the most corrupt cities of the ancient world.
 - a. Yet the Gospel, with all of its power, was able to turn Corinth upside down and lead to the conversion of many Corinthians and to the establishment of the Lord's church in this evil and despotic city.
 - b. If the Gospel could achieve this in Corinth, then we can be assured that it is adequate to save the souls of mankind everywhere.
2. The Gospel is God's power to save, because it is the instrument through which salvation may be appropriated.
 - a. Paul affirms this in 1 Cor. 1:21, where he says, "*It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.*"
 - b. Therefore, the Gospel must be preached to a lost and dying world.
3. The devil, realizing the power of the Gospel and the importance of faithful Gospel preaching in preaching the Gospel, has done all within his power to destroy the Gospel and corrupt preachers and preaching.
 - a. This lesson deals with false concepts and false doctrines concerning preachers, their role and their work.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **WHAT IS A PREACHER AND WHAT IS HIS WORK AS DESIGNED BY GOD?**
 - A. A preacher is authorized by God to preach the whole counsel of God (Titus 2:15).
 - B. This preaching is to be done when it is convenient and when it is not convenient.
 1. Preachers are to "reprove," "rebuke," "exhort" with the doctrine of Christ.
 2. The preaching of the word is to be done with all long-suffering (2 Tim. 4:1,2).
 - C. Preachers have responsibilities to themselves and to others.
 1. Take heed to self (1 Tim. 4:16).
 2. Keep pure (1 Tim. 5:22).
 3. Be an example to believers (1 Tim. 4:12).

- D. The work of a preacher is clearly seen by the words used to describe his work as commanded by God.
1. The following are New Testament words that describe the work of a Gospel preacher.
 - a. *karusso* — to proclaim publicly the Gospel (Acts 8:5)
 - b. *dialegomai* — to debate, to argue (Acts 17:17)
 - c. *evangelizo* — to proclaim the good message (Luke 2:10)
 - d. *apologia* — to make a defense of (Acts 19:33)
 - e. *didasko* — to teach (Matt. 28:20)
 - f. *agonizomai* — to strive, to wrestle, to fight (1 Tim. 6:12)
 - g. *parakaleo* — to beg and admonish (Luke 15:28)
 - h. *strateuo* — to war (1 Peter 2:11)
 - i. *diangello* — to make known far and wide (Mark 16:15)
 - j. *parrasia* — to proclaim boldly (Acts 9:27)
 - k. *elegko* — to expose and refute (Eph. 5:11; John 8:9)
 2. As a defender of the faith, a Gospel preacher is to do the following.
 - a. Fight (1 Tim. 6:12)
 - b. Reason (Acts 17:17)
 - c. Reprove (1 Tim. 5:20)

II. FALSE CONCEPTS ABOUT PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

- A. False ideas concerning Gospel preachers began in the apostasy of the first century and following.
1. Catholicism made a nonexistent distinction between clergy and laity which elevated the one and relegated the other.
 2. The elevation of the preacher led to several unscriptural practices.
 - a. Improper designations
 - b. Changing of the role and work of an evangelist
 - c. Ascribing authority to preachers that God never authorized
 - d. Elevating the preacher and other members of the clergy to a higher degree of holiness than other members of the church
 - e. Positioning preachers as mediators between God and man

- f. Giving them the authority to forgive sins and offer terms of forgiveness
 - g. A wide variety of other distinctions
- B. The following is a discussion and refutation of some, though not all, of the false traditions of man regarding preaching and preachers.
1. First, it is false to say there is a distinction between preachers and others.
 - a. Catholicism distinguishes between clergy and laity, but the Bible makes no such distinction.
 - b. The distinction between “clergy” and “laity” is of human origin.
 - c. All are one in Christ (Gal. 3:27; Matt. 20:25-28).
 - d. All Christians are priests, not just a select few (1 Peter 2:5).
 2. Second, it is false to give preachers titles and designations that are not authorized of God.
 - a. Denominational preachers are given titles like “Reverend” and “Father.”
 - b. There is no authority for such designations.
 - c. Additionally, we are forbidden in calling anyone “Father” in the sense in which it is used by the religious world (Matt. 23:9).
 - d. The word “reverend” is found only one time in the Bible, and that is in Psalm 111:9.
 - 1) In this text the word “reverend” refers to God and to God alone.
 - 2) God is to be revered, not man.
 3. Third, it is false to say preachers are miraculously or perceptively called by God.
 - a. A Gospel preacher is a Christian, and all Christians are called by and through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14).
 - b. All Christians are called to win souls, but no one receives a special or miraculous call directly from God.
 - c. Our call comes from a non-miraculous source, namely, the inspired written word of God.
 - d. Men are led to preach by a sincere desire to proclaim the word without fear or favoritism.
 - e. There is no New Testament proof that preachers are ever called by God by a miraculous sign or by any other miraculous means.

4. Fourth, it is false to say that preachers are pastors and that preachers (pastors) have authority over the church.
 - a. The name "pastor" is one of the names that Holy Writ applies to the elders of the church, not to preachers.
 - b. A pastor must meet stringent qualifications which are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
 - c. A man not meeting these qualifications is not qualified to be a pastor.
 - d. Pastors are required to be married Scripturally and to have believing children.
 - 1) Does this prohibit a bachelor from preaching? If it does, then Paul would have been disqualified from preaching.
 - 2) Additionally, a preacher would not only have to be married, but would also be required to have believing children.
 - 3) A married man who has no believing children would then be disqualified from preaching.
 - e. There is no such thing as a "pastor system" in the Bible.
 - f. Preachers are not in charge of churches, but rather, elders have authority over local congregations.
5. Fifth, it is false to say preachers must be celibate.
 - a. Celibacy originated from the false concept of asceticism, which taught that human flesh was inherently evil and therefore that marriage was not acceptable since it required the joining of human flesh. Marriage was then a dishonorable act, which stained and blotted the holy soul of humanity. Therefore, so-called holy men and women were prohibited from marriage.
 - b. The Bible teaches that Scriptural marriages are honorable in all (Heb. 13:4).
 - c. Not only that, Peter was a married man, and Paul had the right to marry, just like Peter (1 Cor. 9:5).
 - d. In fact, the New Testament strictly condemns those who teach the false doctrine of celibacy (1 Tim. 4:1-3).
 - e. The New Testament church has never forbidden Scriptural marriage to anyone.
6. Sixth, it is false to make preachers "public relations men" and "CEO's" of the church.

- a. Preachers are commanded to preach, to debate, to teach, to defend, to fight, to make war, to speak boldly, to refute and to admonish.
 - b. These requirements would make it impossible for a preacher to be a public relations man.
 - c. Preachers are not concerned with making the church “look good” to the world, but they are rather concerned with converting the world to Christ.
 - d. People are not to be converted to preachers, but rather to Christ.
 - e. The modern yuppie churches and the denominational world have turned preachers into CEO’s, overseeing and directing large metroplex churches, much like a CEO would direct a large corporation.
 - f. Preachers are not CEO’s, and churches are not corporations.
 - g. Preachers are not men-pleasers (Gal. 1:10).
 - h. Preachers are not to be skilled in business, accounting, industrial psychology, public relations and other such things.
 - i. They are to be skilled in the Bible and dedicated to preaching the word effectively.
7. Seventh, it is false to teach that women may be preachers.
- a. The New Testament prohibits women to teach or have authority over men (1 Tim. 2:12).
 - b. Women are commanded to teach, but they are prohibited from teaching over men.
 - c. They may teach other women (Titus 2:3, 4), and they may teach children, but they cannot teach over a man and therefore are prohibited from being either elders or preachers.
8. Eighth, it is false to teach that a preacher’s prayers or actions are greater or more effective than that of other Christians.
- a. Some believe that only prayers of preachers are effective or that if one is not baptized by a preacher, then the baptism is not valid.
 - b. The New Testament never teaches the prayers of a preacher are greater or more effective than those of other faithful Christians.
 - c. The thing that determines the effectiveness of prayer is whether one is righteous or not (James 6:16).

- d. A person could be a preacher and still not be able to pray to God acceptably because he refuses to live righteously.
- e. Nor is there a single New Testament passage which teaches directly or by implication that baptism is only valid if performed by a preacher.
- f. In truth, a person could be Scripturally baptized by anyone, whether he was a preacher or not.
- g. Nor is it the case that a preacher is to visit the sick just because he is a preacher.
 - 1) Yet many expect the preacher to come to their bedsides while not having the same expectations of other Christians.
 - 2) Preachers should visit the sick, like all other Christians, not because they are preachers, but because they are Christians.

CONCLUSION:

1. Sadly, the religious world and many in the church have a totally false idea about what the work and role of a preacher is. As a result of that, we have preachers doing the work of elders and deacons while neglecting their major task of preaching the Gospel. Preacher have been made into public relations men who are dedicated to entertainment, rather than to the serious mission of seeking and saving the lost.
 2. Many good men have become discouraged by the ridiculous demands made of them. And even more tragically, God's laws concerning these matters are being disobeyed.
 3. Someone once said, "More fathers take their sons to the circus than to church." Maybe that is why we have so many clowns in the church and so few faithful Gospel preachers.
-

The Righteous Traditions Of God

Jimmy W. Bates

1. Tradition is not inherently wrong.
 - a. Some traditions come from God, and are good and right, and universally binding (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:16).
 - b. Some traditions are contrary to God's law and are therefore wrong (Col. 2:8; Gal. 1:14).
 - c. Some traditions are in the realm of expediency—not binding by God's law, but not in violation of God's law. They are matters of choice.
 - d. Some traditions (while not inherently wrong) are made wrong when bound on others or placed above God's law (Matt. 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13).
2. We are all followers of Tradition (Customs).
 - a. National or Cultural Tradition
 - b. Local or Communal Tradition
 - c. Family Tradition
 - d. Religious Tradition
3. In the Spiritual and Moral realm of Religion, we must be concerned about the "origin" of the traditions we follow.
 - a. The traditions that have originated with men have no authority (Col. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 Peter 4:11), and therefore no right to exist (Matt. 15:13). They will cause one's religion to be "vain" (Matt. 15:9).
 - b. Our study will concentrate on **"The Righteous Traditions of God"** and will show that those traditions "originated" with God and are "handed down" to us from God in the written word of God.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS TRADITION?

A. New World Dictionary, Second College Edition, p. 1507:

1. Tradition – "a surrender, delivery, tradition...1) orig., a surrender or betrayal 2) a. the handing down orally of stories, beliefs, customs, etc. from generation to generation b. a story, belief, custom, proverb, etc. handed down this way...4) Law, same as Delivery..."
2. Note: The following is given as one of the definitions of Delivery. p.374, "8) Law a. The irrevocable transfer of deed or other instrument of conveyance b. the transfer of goods or interest in good's from one person to another."

- B. Tradition: from "Gr. *paradosis*: 1) a handing down or on (akin to *paradidomi*, to hand over, deliver), denotes a tradition, and hence, by metonymy."
1. The teachings of the Rabbis, interpretations of the Law, which was thereby made void in practice (Matt. 15:2,3,6; Mark 7:3,5,8,9,13; Gal. 1:14; Col. 2:8).
 2. "Of apostolic teaching, I Cor. 11:2, R.V., 'traditions' (A.V., 'ordinances'), of instructions concerning the gatherings of believers (instructions of wider scope than ordinances in the limited sense); in II Thess. 2:15, of Christian doctrine in general, where the Apostle's use of the word constitutes a denial that what he preached originated with himself, and a claim for its Divine authority (cp. *paralambano*, to receive, I Cor. 11:23; 15:3); in II Thess. 3:6, it is used of instructions concerning everyday conduct." (Vine p. 147, 148)
- C. Thayer, p. 481,482 – "a giving over, giving up; i.e.
1. the act of giving up, the surrender of cities...
 2. a giving over which is done by word of mouth or in writing, i.e. tradition by instruction, narrative, precept, etc. ... objectively, what is delivered, the substance of the teaching: so of Paul's teaching, II Thess. 3:6..."
- D. The Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 302 – "delivery, handing over, transmission; in N.T. what is transmitted in the way of teaching, precept, doctrine, I Cor. 11:2; II Thess. 2:15; 3:6; tradition, traditionary law, handed down from age to age, Matt. 15:2,3,6, et al."
- E. Summary: Tradition, in general, involves the "handing down, delivery, transfer, transmission, giving over, conveyance" of "a story, beliefs, customs, law, teachings, ordinances, instructions, doctrines, precepts, from one source (God or men) to another, or from generation to generation by word of mouth or written, and the receiving of that which is handed down orally or written."

II. TRADITIONS ORIGINATED BY GOD AND HANDED DOWN TO MAN:

- A. Biblical terms and phrases describing the Righteous Traditions of God:
1. Book – (2 Kings 22:13; John 20:30)
 2. Book of the Lord – (Isa. 34:16)
 3. Covenant – (Deut. 4:23; Heb. 8:6-9)
 4. Word of God – (Isa. 40:8; Acts 4:31)

5. Commandments of God – (Deut. 11:27; 1 Cor. 7:19)
 6. Testimonies – (Psalm 119:2; 1 Cor. 1:6; 2:1)
 7. Precepts – (Psalm 119:4; Heb. 9:19)
 8. Statutes – (Deut. 16:12; Gen. 26:5)
 9. Judgments – (Psalm 119:106,108; Rev. 16:7)
 10. Law of God – (Neh. 10:28; Rom. 7:22)
 11. Ordinances – (Ezek. 11:20; 1 Cor. 11:2)
 12. Oracles of God – (Psalm 28:2; 1 Peter 4:11)
 13. Will of God – (Ezra 7:18; Psalm 143:10; 1 John 2:17)
 14. Truth – (Psalm 26:3; 119:30; John 17:17; 8:32; 2 Tim. 2:15)
 15. Scripture – (Dan. 10:21; 2 Tim. 3:16)
 16. Old Paths – (Jer. 6:16)
 17. Pattern – (Exodus 25:40; Heb. 8:5)
 18. Doctrine (Teaching) – (Prov. 4:2; 2 John 9-11)
 19. Instruction – (Prov. 1:2,3; 2 Tim. 3:16)
 20. Counsel – (Psalm 33:11; Acts 20:27)
 21. In New Testament — Gospel (Mark 1:1; Rom. 1:16); The Faith – Jude 3; Acts 6:7); Revelation (Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:3; Rev. 1:1)
- B. God handed down His traditions to three different groups of people in three different periods (Dispensations) of Bible History.
1. The *Patriarchal* period (Dispensation)
 - a. From creation until the giving of the law through Moses, to the Hebrew nation, at Mt. Sinai (approx. 2500 years), God delivered His Law (tradition) through the patriarchs (heads of the families) – Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc.
 - b. This was a period in which there was no written law and is covered mainly in the book of Genesis.
 2. The *Mosaic* period (Dispensation)
 - a. This period (approx. 1600 years) began with God delivering His Law to the Hebrew Nation, through Moses at Mt. Sinai and ended at the cross (Col. 2:14).
 - b. The books of Exodus–Malachi in the O.T. and Matt.–John in the N.T. cover the Mosaic period.
 - c. This was the first written law of God and was a national law given only to the Hebrew Nation.
 3. The *Gospel* Dispensation
 - a. Began at the cross (executed on Pentecost, Acts 2) and will continue until the return of Christ.

- b. The work of Jesus on earth, while under the Mosaic Dispensation, laid the foundation for a new dispensation.
 - 1) God's plan of redemption for man was culminated when Jesus died on the cross making forgiveness of sins possible (Heb. 9:12,22; 10:4)
 - 2) This ended the dispensation of the Mosaic Law (Matt. 5:17,18; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14; Gal. 3:24,25; Rom. 7:4; Heb. 8:6-13; 10:8,9).
 - 3) The new dispensation then began (the Gospel Age) (Heb. 9:15-17; Acts 2).
 - c. To all of us who live this side of the cross, God has handed down His traditions to us, through His Son Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1,2), and by inspiration these are recorded for us in the New Testament.
- C. God's Righteous Traditions Have Been Handed Down To Man By Inspiration:
- 1. 2 Tim. 3:16,17 – "All Scripture"
 - a. *theopneustos* – "God breathed"
 - b. The influence of God, exercised by the Holy Spirit over the minds of Biblical writers (2 Peter 1:20,21; Compare: 2 Sam. 23:2; Isa. 1:2; Jer. 1:9)
 - 2. Verbal Inspiration (Mark 13:11; Matt. 10:19; Deut. 4:2; 1 Cor. 2:4,5,13; Gal. 1:10-12; John 6:63,68; 17:8,14; Acts 11:14; 2 Tim. 1:13; Rev. 21:5; 22:6,18,19).
 - 3. Full and Complete (2 Peter 1:3; John 16:13; Acts 20:26, 27; Jude 3; 2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- D. The Righteous Traditions of God for us today (The Gospel), have been handed down to us in the following manner:
- 1. Originated with the righteous God (Psalm 11:7; 119:172; Rom. 1:16,17), the originator of all truth.
 - 2. Handed down through Christ (Heb. 1:1,2; John 7:16; 12:48-50).
 - 3. Handed down from Christ to the Apostles (John 17:8; 17:17,20,21)
 - 4. After Jesus ascended back to heaven, the Holy Spirit came to guide the Apostles and other men in recording these Righteous Traditions of God and we have them today in the written Word of God—the Gospel (John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 1:1-8; 2:1-47; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; Jude 3; Gal. 1:6-12; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Eph. 3:1-5).

III. MAN'S OBLIGATION TO THE RIGHTEOUS TRADITIONS OF GOD:

- A. Study, rightly divide, and grow in the Knowledge of them (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18).
- B. Believe, obey, live by, keep, stand fast, and hold them (John 20:20,31; Heb. 11:6; Rom. 10:17; Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46; Heb. 5:8,9; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6).
- C. Preach and Teach them to others (Mark 16:15,16; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2-5), teach them to our children (Eph. 6:4).
- D. Follow them as a pattern (2 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 8:5).
- E. Appeal to them for authority in all that we teach and practice in religion (Col. 3:17; 2 Cor. 5:7)
- F. Contend for and defend them against all attacks (Jude 3; Phil. 1:17; Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11; Rom. 16:17,18; Titus 1:9-11; 3:10).
- G. Never add to, subtract from, wrest, change, or pervert them in any way (Rev. 22:18,19; 2 Peter 3:16; Gal. 1:6-9).

CONCLUSION:

1. What tradition do you follow in religion?
 - a. If you follow the "traditions of men," then you're lost, for your religion is vain (Matt. 15:9).
 - b. If you follow the "Righteous Traditions of God," then remain faithful unto death and you'll receive a crown of life (Rev. 2:10).
2. Let's all determine to fulfill our obligations to the traditions God has handed down to us!

Bible Authority In Practice

Garland M. Robinson

1. Matt 21:1-18, 23-27
 - a. In this text, Jesus enters Jerusalem for the last time before his death. This event is commonly called the Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. When he went into the temple, he saw the corruption of those who bought and sold and he overthrew the tables and ran out all the animals and merchants.

- b. The next day, as he was teaching in the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came unto him and asked: *"...By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?"*
- c. Jesus addressed their question of authority by clearly showing that authority comes from either heaven or men.
- 2. Therefore, the issue of authority is certainly a subject that people today need to address as well.
 - a. By what authority are we meeting on this occasion?
 - b. By what authority do we sing and pray and teach?
- 3. There are several relevant points that people everywhere need to learn from the text of Matt. 21:23-24.

DISCUSSION:

I. AUTHORITY IS NECESSARY.

- A. God's people are obligated to walk and please God.
 - 1. 2 Cor. 5:7, *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*
 - 2. Heb. 11:6, *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*
 - 3. The chief priests and elders recognized that authority was necessary. They said, *"By what authority doest thou these things?"* Matt. 21:23
- B. The way many people act today is that they have never heard of the principle of authority.
 - 1. When it comes to religious activities, authority is the farthest thing from most people's minds.
 - 2. When we ask the simple question of authority in regards to people's religious activities, they act like we're crazy!
 - 3. According to them, there is no standard except what one feels within their own heart.

Judges 17:6, *"In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."*
- C. God demands we have authority for all we say and do.
 - 1. Col. 3:17, *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus...."*
 - a. "In the name of the Lord" means by the authority of the Lord — as the Lord has authorized.
 - b. If the police came to your door and said, "Open in the name of the law," we would understand that means "by the authority of the law."

2. Acts 4:7-10, When Peter and John healed the lame man in His name, they did so by the Lord's authority.
 3. Acts 4:12, It is in His name we will be saved.
 4. John 12:48, It is in His name we will be judged.
- D. The Scriptures are filled with examples of the necessity of authority.
1. **Cain and Abel** — Heb. 11:4
 - a. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God, Rom. 10:17.
 - b. Therefore, for Abel to offer "by faith," he had to have offered according to the instructions or authority of God.
 - c. For Cain's offering to be rejected, he offered that which was not according to faith, i.e., not authorized.
 2. **Noah and the ark** — Gen. 6:14-16
 - a. Had Noah changed or ignored any of God's instructions, he would not have followed God's authority.
 - b. Men may ridicule and mock at the example of authority, but that does not change the truth of it.
 3. **Nadab and Abihu** — Lev. 10:1-2
 - a. They had no authority to offer any fire that did not come from the altar.
 - b. However, they offered "strange" fire (unauthorized fire) and paid for their sin with their lives.
 4. **King Saul and the Amalekites** — 1 Sam. 15:3-23
 - a. Saul was not authorized to offer a sacrifice.
 - b. He offered one anyway and was rejected by God.
 5. God has always demanded respect for his Word!

II. JESUS IDENTIFIED TWO SOURCES OF AUTHORITY — ONE APPROVED AND ONE NOT APPROVED.

- A. Not just any authority is adequate.
1. Many look to the pope, the church, the pastor, a creed, council, synod, conference, etc. for authority.
 2. It's not enough to say, "I like it," "I want it," "It makes me feel good," "It does a lot of good."
 3. Our concern must be what "God likes," "what God wants," "what pleases God."
- B. Jesus asked the priests and elders concerning the baptism of John and by what authority John baptized (Matt. 21:25).
1. Jesus summed up the issue of authority in this simple question.
 2. Authority either comes from heaven or it comes from men.

3. The consequences of the answer to this simple question are profound.
 - a. If one's authority comes from heaven, it stands approved of God.
 - b. If one's authority comes from men, then it stands condemned of God.
- C. Do you want to be approved or condemned by God?
 1. The answer is simple. We desire to be approved of God.
 2. The answer is so obvious that even a child can understand it.
- D. Therefore, we must refuse to participate in practices that are not authorized in the Bible, but instead are based on human authority!
 1. Col. 3:17, *"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."*
 2. Matt. 15:9,13, Human teaching makes worship vain.
 3. 2 John 9-11, We must abide in the teaching of Christ.
 4. Gal. 1:6-9, God's curse rests upon those who teach differently.
- E. Human wisdom is not what pleases God — we must worship him according to his will, not our will.
 1. Jer. 10:23, Man cannot direct his own steps.
 2. Isa. 55:8-9, God's ways are not man's ways.
 3. Prov. 14:12, Many ways "seem" right to man, but only God's way is right.
 4. Prov. 3:5-6, Men must trust in the Lord and not depend upon themselves.
- F. God tells us exactly what he wants and he does so in the Bible!
 1. 2 Peter 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17, God's Word is complete and contains all of God's will.
 2. We displease God when we teach and practice things not taught in the Bible!

III. GOD USES THREE METHODS TO EXPRESS HIS WILL — AUTHORIZE CERTAIN ACTIONS.

A. A Direct Statement.

1. A clear and plain statement or command is given to do a certain thing.
2. Acts 2:38, *"Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins..."*
3. 2 Thess. 3:6, *"Now we command you brethren..."*

B. An Approved Action Or Example.

1. There are instances in which God does not expressly tell us to do a thing, but gives instances of Christians doing that thing with his approval.
2. Eating the Lord's supper on the first day of every week is an approved example.
 - a. Acts 20:7, *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them...."*
 - b. This example is valid because of the underlying command to eat the Lord's supper found in Matt. 26:26-29.
3. Giving of our means on the first day of every week is an approved example.
 - a. 1 Cor. 16:1-2, *"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. ²Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."*
 - b. The Lord's work (church's work) is to be financed through the free-will offerings of its members.
 - 1) No authority for fund raisers of any kind can be found in the Scriptures.
 - 2) We have no authority to beg from the public to do the work God has given us to do (2 Cor. 9:6-7).

C. An Implication or Logical Conclusion.

1. A certain truth may not be expressly stated, but it follows from what is stated. It is implied. It is just as authoritative as if God said it specifically.
 - a. What God implies is not man's assumption or reading into a thing. It is what the Bible teaches.
 - b. What God (the Bible) implies is sure and certain.
2. We teach the truth when we say that Lot went down into Egypt, even though the Bible does not say that he did. It does say he came up out of Egypt (Gen. 13:1). He could not have come up out of Egypt unless he had gone down into Egypt. The Bible implies this.
3. Matt. 19:9 implies one who has "put away" their mate because of their mate's fornication can remarry with God's approval.
4. Mark 16:16 implies that infants cannot be baptized. They cannot believe, therefore they cannot be baptized.

- D. If God has not authorized an action by one or more of these three ways, then we have no authority to act.
1. Authority is necessary for **EVERYTHING** we do!
 2. No exceptions have been found concerning this Bible principle.
 3. There must be authority for a building, song books, etc.

IV. WE MUST HAVE BIBLE AUTHORITY IN MATTERS OF EXPEDIENCY.

- A. An expedient is an action which expedites or helps carry out an obligation God has given.
1. When God has authorized an action and told us **HOW** to do it, we have no option but to do it the way he said do it.
 2. In many cases, God has not specified "exactly how" a matter is to be carried out.
 - a. We have the command, but he didn't tell us how to do it.
 - b. We may then proceed in any way in accordance with our best judgment so long as it does not violate the general instructions of Scripture.
- B. How **LIMITED** we are regarding any practice, depends on whether God used "specific" terms or "general" terms to express his will.
1. When God uses specific terms, it would be sinful to proceed in a way other than the way God said.
 - a. God gave Noah specific instructions regarding the dimensions of the ark, one window, one door, etc.
 - b. Noah would have sinned if he had not followed those instructions.
 2. When God uses general terms, man can use several alternative choices in carrying out the obligation. Noah could use hammers, saws, etc. in building the ark.
- C. The area of expediency is far reaching in application.
1. It is the ground upon which we have authority for: church buildings, baptisteries, song books, PA systems, multiple communion cups, chalk boards, **EVERYTHING!**
 2. We must have authority for everything we have and do!

V. LET'S APPLY THIS LESSON OF AUTHORITY TO SOME OF THE CURRENT PRACTICES AMONG US TODAY.

- A. Has God given authority for the use of **mechanical instruments of music in the church?**

1. We are hearing of places and men all over the brotherhood who do not respect God's word on this devilish error!
 - a. I heard of one place that tried out 13 preachers and not one of them believed instrumental music was sinful!
 - b. I heard of a certain meeting of preachers in which the majority did not believe it was sinful.
 2. Where is the Bible authority for mechanical instruments of music? Where's the Scripture that authorizes them?
 - a. The Bible only authorizes SINGING.
 - b. Eph. 3:16, "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart unto the Lord.*"
- B. Has God given authority for us to fellowship denominations or otherwise encourage them?**
1. So-called unity meetings have been doing exactly that! We could name several across this land and the world who are supporting error and compromise with the denominations.
 2. The command of Scripture is the opposite of what many are doing.
 - a. 2 Peter 2:1-2, "*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. ²And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken...*"
 - b. Eph. 5:11, "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*"
 - c. 2 John 9-11, do not bid them godspeed
- C. Has God given authority for the church to use gimmicks, gadgets and entertainment to draw a crowd and promote its cause?**
1. Congregations have "Gymnastics to the glory of God." Some have built gymnasiums to keep their young people, have ball teams, parties, prizes, movies, festivals. Even a "don't talk with your mouthful ministry!"
 2. In many churches now, one has to be a combination magician, joke teller, puppeteer, musician and master of ceremonies.

3. The way of the Lord is through the drawing power of the Gospel!
 - a. Rom. 1:16, *"for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation..."*
 - b. 1 Cor. 1:18-21, *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. ²⁰Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? ²¹For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."*
 - c. 2 Tim. 4:2, *"preach the word..."*
 - d. A preacher is a "herald of the king." He preaches the king's message.
- D. Has God given authority to **divide the worship assembly**?
 1. Congregations all over this land are doing so.
 2. Where is the Bible authority for it?
 - a. Heb. 10:25 does not authorize it
 - b. Acts 20:7 does not authorize it
 - c. 1 Cor. 11:18, 20 does not authorize it
 3. If we can separate the young people, why then can't we separate the older folks, those who can't hear well, the divorced, those with special needs, etc.?
- E. Has God given authority to **preach all positive inspiring lessons and leave off the negative**?
 1. Many preachers are doing this. I've heard them say so with their own mouth!
 2. Whole congregations are saying, "Don't be negative, you'll run people off." Preach on love, fellowship, be positive.
 3. 2 Tim. 4:2, *"reprove, rebuke, exhort"*
 4. 1 Tim. 5:20, *"them that sin rebuke before all..."*
 5. Titus 1:9-13, *"rebuke them sharply..."*
 6. Rom. 16:17-18, *"mark them..."*
 7. Every book in the N.T. was written to correct some false doctrine or problem with the exception of Philipians.
 8. What is positive preaching anyway?

- a. It is preaching those things God has commanded. When I faithfully proclaim his whole counsel, then I am positively doing that which he has commanded.
- b. When I refuse to preach his whole counsel, I have become a negative preacher, I refuse to do what he said! Consider Phil. 1:7,17 and Acts 20:20,26-27

VI. WE HAVE STRICT WARNING AGAINST CHANGING OR TAMPERING WITH GOD'S WORD.

- A. Jesus has all authority, Matt. 7:28-29; 28:18; 17:1-5
- B. Jesus placed that authority in the words that He spoke.
 - 1. John 12:48-50, Jesus is the judge
 - 2. We will not be judged by: opinions, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, the pastor or preacher, church, manual, catechism, creed, etc.
- C. The word that has been given is all sufficient, John 16:13; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
- D. God demands we respect his Word, 1 Peter 4:11; Gal. 1:6-9; Rev. 22:18-19; Matt. 15:7-9

CONCLUSION:

- 1. AUTHORITY is the most important lesson to observe in pleasing God!
- 2. Does the Bible authorize what you are doing?

Traditions Of Men Regarding "Anti-ism"

Part One Caring For The Needy

Gilbert Gough

In nearly every age of the church, if not in every age, teachings have arisen which have caused considerable confusion and division in the church. Much of this has been caused by a failure to recognize how Scriptural authority is established, and as a

result "one-cuppers," "Anti-Sunday school," "located preachers," and a number of these things have arisen. Much of the confusion existing in the church has been and now is being caused by those opposing church cooperation and orphan homes, etc.

1. It will be our purpose in this study to consider:
 - a. What the Bible teaches about the poor and needy.
 - b. What the Bible teaches about churches cooperating.
 - c. What the Bible teaches about caring for widows and orphans.
 - d. What the Bible teaches in view of objections offered to churches cooperating.
2. Some objections to the orphan homes considered: The true meaning of James 1:27 and Galatians 6:10, as well as 1 Timothy 5:16 and 2 Corinthians 9:13.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHO ARE THE NEEDY? WHO ARE THOSE THAT CANNOT SUPPORT THEMSELVES ESPECIALLY AT CERTAIN PERIODS OF LIFE?

- A. Millions of little children who are too small to work and provide their own living.
- B. Thirteen million in our country above 65, many of whom are laid on the shelf, diseased and enfeebled and unable to earn a living.
- C. Widows left with little children without the essential provisions of life.
- D. Those physically handicapped who depend on a part of their support from others.
- E. Orphans who need the care of a Christian hand.
- F. Those in deep poverty without the essentials of life.

II. WHO ARE TO CARE FOR THE NEEDY?

- A. "Under normal conditions there are certain ones who are charged with the responsibility of caring for those dependent upon them." (Nichol).
 1. Parents are to care for their own children (1 Tim. 5:8; 2 Cor. 12:14).
 2. Children or grandchildren are to care for their widows (1 Tim. 5:4).
 3. Children are to care for their aged parents, if needed. "Honor" means more than just showing respect (Eph. 6:2). Those that use methods (like the Jews) to avoid caring for their parents make the word of God of none effect (Mark 7:10-13).

4. Christians are to care for widows among their relatives (1 Tim. 5:16).
- B. "But some of those charged with the responsibility of caring for their own will fail to do so."
 1. Some will not have enough respect for the Bible to do so.
 2. Some will not be able to care for others besides their own immediate family.
 3. Because of famine, and such like, even able-bodied men may become objects of charity (Acts 11:29,30).
 4. In some cases there will be no living relative to take care of widows and orphans, and some that could; but won't.
 5. So there will always be the poor and needy among us — orphans, widows and others "whom we must not allow to suffer and die for the lack of assistance."

III. WHAT DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT TEACH ABOUT CARING FOR THE NEEDY?

- A. *"Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble"* (Psa. 41:1).
- B. *"How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah. Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy"* (Psa. 82:2,3).
- C. *"He that despiseth his neighbor sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he"* (Prov. 14:21).
- D. *"He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again"* (Prov. 14:21).
- E. *"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard"* (Prov. 21:13).
- F. *"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse"* (Prov. 28:27).
- G. *"The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: but the wicked regardeth not to know it"* (Prov. 29:7).
- H. *"Learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow"* (Isa. 1:17).
- I. *"He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me? saith the Lord"* (Jer. 22:16).
- J. *"And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart"* (Zech. 7:10).

IV. WHAT DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACH ABOUT CARING FOR THE NEEDY?

- A. "Unless Judaism is better than Christianity we shall expect to find the same principles of caring for the needy in the new covenant."
- B. Jesus taught:
 - 1. Mark 14:7 – Help the poor who are with us always.
 - 2. Luke 14:13,14 – Call the poor and maimed, lame and blind to our feast.
 - 3. Matt. 25:41-46 – In the judgment Jesus will condemn those that help not the needy.
 - 4. Matt. 7:12 – Greatest principle in the Bible on this subject.
- C. Paul taught:
 - 1. To the elders from Ephesus (Acts 20:35).
 - 2. To the church at Rome (Rom. 12:13).
 - 3. To the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 9:13).
 - 4. Gal. 2:10; 6:10; Eph. 4:28
- D. John taught (1 John 3:17,18).
- E. James taught (James 1:27).
- F. The saints of Antioch sent relief to the brethren in Judea (Acts 11:27-30).
- G. The church at Jerusalem had a daily ministration (Acts 6:1; 2:44,45).
- H. Paul went to Jerusalem to carry the contribution of Achaia and Macedonia for the poor saints (Rom. 15:25,26).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. God has always been a friend to the poor and needy. He is the same God in all ages, and in His nature He changes not (Malachi 3:6). To deny that we are our brother's keeper is to breathe the very spirit of Cain (Gen. 4:9). We dare not shirk our responsibility unto others. Both the Old Testament and New teach our responsibility to the needy. Fifty years after the apostles finished the New Testament, Polycarp wrote a letter in which he said, "And let the presbyters also be compassionate, merciful to all, bringing back those that have wandered, caring for all the weak, neglecting neither widow, nor orphan, nor poor, but ever providing that which is good before God and men."
- 2. Anti-ism cannot be lumped off and simply regarded as irrelevant ramblings. When these "chickens come home to roost" it will be too late and useless to say, "I didn't know."

3. It has divided churches, homes and families. It has destroyed many Gospel preachers, and has brought shame on the cause of Jesus Christ.

PART TWO

James 1:27

1. The subject we are presently discussing is a controversial subject in some quarters "but in every locale it is a vital subject."
2. "Christianity demands the whole of its subjects. It demands dedication of head, heart and hands. The Christian religion is a head religion, a heart religion, and a hands religion. Head religion without the heart and hands is knowledge without zeal. The heart without the hands is empty sentimentality. And the hands without the heart is mere formality. All must combine head, heart, and hands, in helping the needy" (Lawrence).
3. In our present study we propose to notice the meaning of James 1:27.

I. JAMES 1:27

A. What it teaches.

1. It tells us what "pure and undefiled religion" is.
 - a. *"To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."*
 - 1) Visit means "to provide for, to look after, to care for."
 - 2) R. C. H. Lenski: "To look in upon, to visit with comfort and help, orphans and widows in their affliction."
 - b. *"To keep himself unspotted from the world."*

2. It definitely establishes our responsibility to provide for the fatherless and widows.

B. What it does not teach:

1. The method or procedure by which early Christians carried out this obligation.
2. It does not teach against, or exclude the church caring for orphans (i.e. providing for their needs).

C. A consideration of what those opposing the church support of orphan homes say the verse teaches.

1. "The context of James 1:27 demands that it be applied to individuals (vs.23-26). The use of the pronouns 'he,' 'his,'

- 'himself,' and the term 'man' is used several times to identify those under consideration."
- a. Those opposing church support of homes say that we make 'he,' 'his,' 'himself,' and 'man' in James 1:23-27 mean churches.
 - b. Thus, by taking the verse out of context we have church support of the homes.
2. First, we do not say that 'her,' 'himself,' and 'man' means churches. We say:
- a. James 1:27 "includes the individual, but it does not exclude the church."
 - b. "This responsibility toward the care of the needy extends to the church."
3. Second, if James 1:27 "refers to the work that is exclusively the work of individuals, not only would the care of orphans be an exclusive individual work but also the visiting of widows would be the exclusive work of the individual."
- a. But 1 Tim. 5:16 clearly shows it is the responsibility of the church (not just the individual) to take care of widows.
 - b. Inasmuch then as James 1:27 clearly shows that both "widows and orphans are to be provided for; and since it is expressly declared to be the duty of the church to care for some widows, it follows that it is also the duty of the church to care for some orphans."
4. Third, sometimes "a command may be given to an individual with reference to congregational activity."
- a. Paul said to the Galatians, "*Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things*" (Gal. 6:6).
 - 1) This means "Let him pay the preacher."
 - 2) "Him" in this verse does not mean the church. "But we all know that such support of Gospel preachers is a congregational activity."
 - 3) Paul said to the Philippians "*No church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving but ye only*" (Phil. 4:15).
 - b. This clearly shows that sometimes a command given to an individual may include congregational activity.
5. Fourth, the church is as much in the context of James 1:27 as the individual.

- a. James 2:1,2 – *“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly...”* (Keep in mind that the chapter and verse divisions were inventions of a later day.)
- 1) Thayer says of the original word for assembly: “The name is transferred to an assembly of Christians formally gathered for religious purposes, James 2:2.”
 - 2) Bagster’s Analytical Lexicon says, “A Christian assembly, or congregation, James 2:2.”
 - 3) James 2:2 suggests church activity and continues a “discussion of people poor in this world’s goods, suggested perhaps by the writer’s reference to the fatherless and widows of the section immediately preceding.”
- b. It was not James’ intention, in this verse, to deal with the manner or procedure in providing for the needy, but merely to emphasize the duty. (A duty of individuals and churches.)

CONCLUSION:

“James 1:27 establishes our responsibility to provide for the fatherless and widows. The passage, itself, designates neither the method or manner of procedure. The method or manner of procedure, of the care of orphans is not detailed anywhere in the sacred writings. I Timothy 5:16 reveals that the church, as such, is to provide for widows in need. Inasmuch then, as both widows and orphans are to be provided for; and since it is expressly declared to be the duty of the church to care for widows, it follows that it is also the duty of the church to care for orphans.”

PART THREE

Galatians 6:10; I Timothy 5:16

I. GALATIANS 6:10

- A. What those that oppose the church supporting orphan homes say the verse teaches.
1. “The context of Galatians 6:10 likewise demands that application be made to individuals and not to churches....”

2. This application leads them to make such statements as: "The church is not authorized to visit orphans, or widows who are not saints; the church is not authorized to act in general benevolence" (Gene Frost, Bible Facts, Dec. 1960).
- B. Does the context of Galatians 6:10 demand that application be made to individuals and not to churches?
1. "Statements made concerning individuals may be made with reference to their congregational activities without abstracting (withdrawing; separating) them from the church."
 - a. Gal. 6:2, This may be congregational as well as individual.
 - 1) 1 Cor. 12:25, Speaking of the body (church), "The members should have the same care one for another."
 - 2) Acts 4:32-34 reveals that the members bare one another's burdens, and had the same care one for another by contributing into the common treasury and then distributing "according as any man had need."
 - b. Consider Acts 8:1-3. What happened to individuals happened to the church.
 - c. Thus to say that statements made to individuals and their activities can never have reference to their congregational activities as well, is unscriptural.
 2. Gal. 6:6 clearly refers to congregational activity.
 - a. Communicate carries with it the idea of sharing our possessions.
 - b. How were the early Christians taught to communicate?
 - 1) To communicate to the saints (Rom. 12:13).
 - a) 2 Cor. 9; 1 Cor. 16:1,2 prove that such was done from the "treasuries of the churches."
 - b) "The churches of Galatia" were given the same order as the church at Corinth regarding "communicating to the necessities of saints" (1 Cor. 16:1,2).
 - 2) The Philippians evidently communicated unto Paul by giving their means together and out of that given, supporting Paul (Phil. 4:15).
 - 3) From the beginning, such "communicating" had been done by the church contributing into a

common fund from which distribution was made as any man had need.

3. The context clearly demands that Galatians 6:10 be applied to the church as to the individual.
 - a. The letter was addressed to “the churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2). (Some would take that which is addressed to the church and exclude the church completely.)
 - 1) Immediately after charging that they “do good unto all men” Paul says “See how large a letter I have written unto you...”
 - 2) Written to whom? “The churches of Galatia” (Gal. 1:2).
 - b. The pronoun “we” of Galatians 6:10 does not exclude the church. Note these verses:
 - 1) Heb. 3:6, “*Whose house are we...*”
 - 2) 1 Cor. 10:17, “*We being many are one bread, and one body...*”
 - c. The argument for the verse being exclusively individual, contradicts an express statement of Scripture.
4. Gal. 6:10 also teaches we can help others other than saints.
 - a. There are many today who contend that the church can help only the saints.
 - 1) “The church is limited to the poor saints in her help...” (W.O. Flatt, tract, “God Hath Spoken,” p.31).
 - 2) “...No where is the church required as the church to expend her means to relieve people generally...” (Preceptor, Feb. 1953).
 - 3) “There is no record that the church ever used its treasury to care for those who were not members of the church.” (George T. Jones, tract, “The Work of the Church,” p.9).
 - b. We are “*to do good unto all men*” (KJV); “*Work that which is good toward all men*” (ASV) especially “*unto them who are of the household of faith.*”
 - 1) “Them who are of the household of faith” means those who are saints.
 - 2) The “all men” would mean someone other than saints, or would, at least, include more.
 - 3) 2 Cor. 9:13 says that which was contributed by the church (1 Cor. 16:1,2) was distributed “unto them” and “unto all men.”

- a) "Them" refers to the saints.
 - b) "Unto all men" or "unto all" (ASV) (same expression as in Gal. 6:10) would refer to those not saints.
- 4) Here are five passages with the word "all." "These passages of scripture are exactly parallel in construction (Preposition used with Greek substantive '*pantas*') and that in each case saints and "all" (*pantas*) are mentioned." (Deaver, GA, Oct. 1963, p.630).
- a) Acts 5:11, "fear came upon all the church and upon as many (*epi pantas*) as heard these things."
 - b) Gal. 6:10, "do good unto all men (*pros pantas*) and especially unto them who are of the household of faith."
 - c) 1 Thess. 3:12, "Abound in love one toward another and toward all men" (*eis pantas*).
 - d) 1 Thess. 5:15, "follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men" (*eis pantas*).
 - e) 2 Cor. 9:13, "For your liberal distribution unto them (saints) and unto all men" (*eis pantas*).
 - f) The substantive "*pantas*" is exactly the same and the construction (preposition with *pantas*) is the same in all five passages.
- c. Christ did not limit his relief merely to his immediate followers but "*went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil*" (Acts 10:38).
 - d. "*And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others?*" (Matt. 5:47)
 - e. The priest and Levite had the right idea if we can help only saints (Luke 10:25-37).
5. And so, to argue that Galatians 6:10 is exclusively individual because of its context (that is, Galatians 6 is talking exclusively about individual duties) leads to the following untenable conclusions:
- a. "The church has no responsibility to fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).
 - b. The church has no responsibility to prove its own work (Gal. 6:4).
 - c. The church has no responsibility to communicate unto (support) teachers (preachers) (Gal. 6:6).

- d. The church has no responsibility in benevolence, either to “all men” or to “the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10).
- e. The church is not involved in the application of the rule that glorying is to be in the cross (Gal. 6:14-16).
- f. The church is not responsible to the law of sowing and reaping (Gal. 6:7-9). (Ed Sanders, G.A., Jan. 25, 1962, p.58)

II. 1 TIMOTHY 5:16

- A. The first part of verse 16 says, *“If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged.”*
 - 1. Paul places an obligation upon a man or woman (who is a Christian) to supply the needs of their widowed mother (or grandmother).
 - 2. What would they supply? A home.
- B. The last part of the verse says, *“that it (that is, the church) may relieve them that are widows indeed.”*
 - 1. A Christian is to supply his or her widowed mother a home.
 - 2. The church is to supply “widows indeed” the same thing a Christian supplies his or her widowed mother, i.e. a home.
- C. The church is definitely required to supply a home for widows indeed, and since James 1:27 does not exclude the church, it follows that it is also the duty of the church to care for orphans, i.e. supply them a home.

PART FOUR

Can churches cooperate in the work of caring for the needy and other works?

- 1. The Bible plainly teaches our responsibility toward the needy.
- 2. Most will agree that each local congregation can take care of its own in private homes or in a home built and supported by one congregation.
- 3. But many say the church cannot send money to orphan homes and that churches cannot cooperate in this work or any other work. (Possibly under certain circumstances and they name the circumstances.)

4. It will be our purpose in this study to consider the following two points:
 - a. Are the objections offered against churches cooperating valid?
 - b. Did churches cooperate in the first century?

I. ARE THE OBJECTIONS TO CHURCHES COOPERATING WITH EACH OTHER VALID?

- A. "A church should undertake only what it can do by itself. Each congregation should do its own work with its own money."
 1. This is saying that one church could not send funds to, or receive funds from, another church.
 2. This would forbid:
 - a. Asking anyone from another congregation to help us in our Vacation Bible School or Gospel meeting.
 - b. Loaning chairs to another congregation.
 - c. Sending New Testaments to another church to help in teaching the Word.
 3. One church can help another church only when its own work exceeds its own ability, but its own work must never exceed its ability.
 4. The end of this is anti-cooperation.
- B. "Churches cannot cooperate in evangelism."
 1. The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas (an evangelist) to help the church at Antioch (Acts 11:22-26). If it were right for one church to send an evangelist to help another church would it not be right for a church to send money so that church could hire its own preacher?
 2. Churches cooperated so Paul could do the Corinthians service (2 Cor. 11:8).
- C. "There is danger in churches cooperating in radio work, benevolence work, etc."
 1. There is danger in a radio program sponsored by one congregation.
 2. There is danger in our weekly church bulletin.
 3. There is danger that one's marriage will end in divorce.
- D. "Congregational cooperation destroys the autonomy of the church for it loses control of its money."
 1. The church in Antioch lost control of its money when it sent help to the churches in Judea, but not its autonomy (Acts 11:29,30).

2. If a tornado were to destroy our church building and sister congregations sent money to help rebuild, they would lose control of their money, but not their autonomy.
 3. The churches supporting Paul still had the authority to stop his wages had he begun to teach false doctrine.
 4. "If the mere transfer of funds necessitated loss of autonomy, don't you see there could be no cooperation at all?" (Thomas Warren).
- E. "Churches can't give to anything they didn't start."
1. The church in Antioch did not start the churches of Judea, but still sent money to the elders (Acts 11:29, 30).
- F. "Should give up congregational cooperation for the sake of unity."
1. Some brethren say we should give up the located preacher for the sake of unity.
 2. Others say we should give up Bible classes, individual cups, etc.
 3. And since some "forbid marriage," maybe we ought to give it up for the sake of unity.

II. DID CHURCHES COOPERATE IN THE FIRST CENTURY? WAS THERE A SET OR EXCLUSIVE PATTERN?

A. Acts 11:27-30

1. Disciples, to elders, by hands of Barnabas and Saul.
2. What does sent to the elders mean?
 - a. Does it mean the elders of the several congregations in Judea?
 - b. Or does it mean the elders of the church in Jerusalem?
 - c. If the money was sent to the elders of the several churches, then Barnabas and Saul traveled through Judea and gave a portion to each group of elders.
 - d. If the money was sent to the elders of the Jerusalem church, then they in turn sent portions to the other churches?
3. Is this the exclusive pattern of church cooperation? If so, then in every case:
 - a. Disciples must determine to send relief according to their ability.
 - b. They must send it to the elders.
 - c. They must send it by two messengers and no more. (Rules out sending a check by mail, etc.)

4. This is not an exclusive pattern, but merely one way it was done in the first century.
- B. Acts 15:22-32
1. What does this passage say?
 - a. "First, it tells us that the Jerusalem church chose men to be sent to Antioch" (v.22).
 - b. "Second, it tells that the Jerusalem church prepared an epistle to be sent to the brethren of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia" (v.23).
 - c. "Third, it tells us that Judas and Silas, brethren sent by Jerusalem, were to tell by word of mouth the brethren of Antioch the same things as those contained in the epistle" (v.27).
 - d. "Fourth, it tells us that the brethren, Paul and Barnabas, Judas and Silas, went to Antioch. There, they gathered the multitude, the church, together and delivered to them the epistle" (v.30).
 - e. "Fifth, Judas and Silas exhorted the brethren at Antioch" (v.32).
 - f. "Sixth, 'they wrote thus by them' (*dia cheiros*) (v.23). This is the same as in Acts 11:30, 'by the hand of Barnabas and Paul'."
 2. What does this passage show?
 - a. "First, this passage shows that one church can scripturally send some of its own men to render assistance to another church. A church has the right to support those whom it sends out. In fact, a church should do this, unless in a particular case there is some good reason for not doing it."
 - b. "Second, this passage shows that the assistance which one church may give another church may involve spiritual matters."
 - c. "Third, this passage shows that one church may send a writing to another church. This writing may involve spiritual matters. This shows that a church may send a tract to another church. If a church may send one tract to another church, it may send a number of tracts to another church, as long as it is expedient to the cause of Christ to do so."
 - d. "Fourth, this passage shows then, in the light of the fact that a church may send a number of tracts to another church, that church may send funds to another church so that the receiving church may use

those funds in the purchase of writings which involve spiritual matters. This simply means that one church may send funds to another church may purchase tracts.”

- e. “Fifth, this passage shows that, in the light of point number four, if a church may send funds so that tracts may be purchased, the same principle which allows this would also allow radio time to be purchased.”
 - f. “Sixth, this passage shows that Bible teachings on this matter in general – the church sending men as well as writing. There is no ‘single pattern’ no ‘exclusive pattern’ in the matter of one church helping another church.”
 - g. “Seventh, this passage shows that a church may act ‘through the hand of’ a number of men.”
 - h. Here is all the proof one needs for church cooperation. If there were no other verse in the Bible we would have scriptural authority for church cooperation. (Thomas Warren).
- C. 1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 15:24-32
1. Those of Macedonia, Achaia, and Galatia (1 Cor. 16:1) sent to the poor “among the saints” in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25,26 ASV).
 2. Here we have CHURCHES SENDING TO SAINTS. Notice this pattern is different from the one in Acts 11:29,30.
 3. If this is an exclusive pattern, why the difference? If this is an exclusive pattern, then churches must send to saints every time.
- D. 2 Cor. 11:8. Churches cooperate in evangelism.
1. No details are given as to how these wages were sent to Paul.
 - a. They may have been sent to him directly.
 - b. They may have been sent to the churches at Corinth and then given to Paul.
 - c. The verse would read the same in either case.
 2. Here we have CHURCHES SENDING TO AN INDIVIDUAL OR TO ANOTHER CHURCH.
 3. This pattern is different.
- E. 2 Cor. 8:13,14

1. Some contend that the only pattern of cooperation is for the receiving church to be in worse circumstances than the sending church.
 2. The churches of Macedonia ("in deep poverty," 2 Cor. 8:2) sent to the saints in Jerusalem who were not in deep poverty.
 - a. Rom. 15:25,26 (ASV) says "the poor among the saints" showing that all were not poor.
 - b. One does not need to pray that individuals in destitute circumstances receive help (Rom. 15:30,31).
- F. Brethren (plural) were selected by the churches (plural) to gather funds for the poor in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:18-19,22-23). These brethren were "chosen of the churches" and are described as "messengers of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:19,23). They were selected by the churches to travel among the congregations of Macedonia and Achaia in order to collect the contributions which Paul had earlier urged to be set aside for the poor saints in Jerusalem.
1. Deductions:
 - a. These churches cooperated in choosing men to travel to gather for the purpose announced.
 - b. These churches cooperated in pooling their resources in the hands of those thus designated.
 - c. These churches cooperated in the work of providing for the poor in Jerusalem.
 2. Questions:
 - a. What did this group of men constitute who were thus selected?
 - b. When the churches put their funds in the hands of this group, did they surrender their autonomy?
 - c. Did the group chosen in the foregoing manner constitute an organization?
 - d. To what single congregation did they belong while thus engaged? And, to what eldership were they answerable?
 - e. If it be alleged that when Paul arrived in Jerusalem with these funds that he gave them to the elders, where is the proof?
 - f. If he gave them to the elders, then how does one explain Romans 15:28?
 - g. May churches (plural) today select representatives, messengers, if you please, to perform any function obligatory upon the church?

- h. Assuming that it cannot be wrong to do what was right in the apostolic age, what sort of organization would such an arrangement entail?

PART FIVE

- 1. In our previous studies concerning "Traditions of Men: Anti-ism," we have established our responsibility to care for the needy, noted the objections to churches cooperating in doing this and similar works, and discussed James 1:27; Gal. 6:10; and 1 Tim. 5:16.
- 2. In the present study, we propose to notice the objections offered to orphan homes and see if they are valid.
- 1. **"I OBJECT TO THE ORPHAN HOMES AMONG US BECAUSE THEIR VERY EXISTENCE IS A DENIAL OF THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE CHURCH TO DO HER OWN WORK."**
 - A. Before the home could be a denial of the all-sufficiency of the church it would have to be doing some work God instructs the church to do.
 - 1. Did God ever instruct the church to function as a home?
 - 2. Does God intend for the church to do the work of the home and the home to do the work of the church?
 - B. There are three divine institutions, each with its own work:

HOME Gen. 2:18	GOVERNMENT Rom. 13:1-7	CHURCH Matt. 16:18
Food, clothing, shelter, education, family relations	protection, correction	spiritual activity, preaching, edify- ing, benevolence

- 1. Each of these institutions is all-sufficient to do the work which God intends and instructs.
- 2. But the church is not a civil government nor the home a church nor the church a home.
- 3. The church and the home do not have the same work. Even after the church has contributed funds, the home still has its own work.

e.g. "Let us suppose that instead of me spending my life working with a church, as I am now doing, my wife and I decided to spend our lives in caring for orphan children, whose parents were dead, diseased, had deserted them, and so forth. Suppose we decided to take a large number of such children into our home and care for them, seeing that they received food, clothing, shelter, medical care, discipline, custody, love, guidance, secular education, religious education. Suppose further that we received funds from churches and individuals so that the needs of those children might be adequately supplied. Suppose further that officials of the state tell me, 'If you are going to operate a child-care agency, a home, there are certain standards which you must meet. You will have to be licensed, you will have to have a charter.' Some states would even require my home to be incorporated. Others would recommend such. Would there be anything wrong with me incorporating my home? Anything wrong with getting a license, or in being chartered? Suppose I name my home Warren Home. In fact, it is already named that! Is there anything wrong with that?" (Thomas Warren, Lectures, p. 177-178).

4. The above is exactly what orphan homes are. They receive funds from churches and individuals to take care of children. They are doing the work of the home and not the church.

C. If the existence and support of the orphan home is a denial of the all-sufficiency of the church, then the support of the private home would be too. Why? It is doing the same work as the orphan home.

II. "I OBJECT TO THE ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE INDIVIDUALS CANNOT ADOPT JUST ANY OF THE CHILDREN FROM THE HOME. ONCE THE CHILDREN ARE THERE, THEY MUST STAY UNTIL A CERTAIN AGE."

A. The latter part of this objection could be made against the private home. On the same basis one could not take children into their home.

B. It would be fine for individuals to adopt children, but this will not solve the problem.

1. Most childless couples desire BABIES, and will not adopt children 10 to 15 years of age.

2. Those who already have children don't want to bring in orphans whose background and habits may not be desirable.
 3. Where there are several brothers and sisters in one family they may not be able to stay since one family might not be able to adopt all, but in the homes they could stay together.
 4. Some children are orphans because father is in jail and mother is in T.B. hospital. The home may some day be restored. They are not ADOPTIVE but need a home now.
- C. Furthermore, if the adoption of orphans or taking them into one's home is the only way to practice pure and undefiled religion, then some could never practice it.
1. Some would never meet State adoptive requirements.
 2. Some not qualified from other standpoints.

III. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE THEY ARE SEPARATE INSTITUTIONS FROM THE CHURCH."

- A. Another congregation is a separate institution. True, congregations are alike, but they are also separate and independent. Thus one congregation could not help another.
- B. The church could not even help her own needy members in their own homes because they are another institution.

IV. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE THE ORPHAN HOMES ARE NOT THE ORIGINAL HOMES."

- A. No, and the adoptive home is not the original home either, but most anti-brethren agree it is alright for orphans to be adopted.
- B. A man marries again after his wife dies and his children have a home, but it is not the original home. Could the church support it if there was a need?
- C. If a private home were to take seven children and care for them, could the church help them? If the home has to be the original home, the answer would be no. But this is saying too much even for the anti-brethren.

V. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE IT IS NOT A GOD-ORDAINED HOME. THERE IS NOT THE NATURAL PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND HUSBAND AND WIFE RELATIONSHIP."

- A. In other words the orphan home was not established by marriage. There is not the natural husband/wife, parent/child relationship, therefore wrong.
- B. Does a home have to have a natural husband/wife relationship before it is a home?
 - 1. If so, then a widow does not have a home?
 - 2. If so, then Mary, Martha and Lazarus did not have a home, yet Jesus endorsed it.
 - 3. If so, then members of the church in the same circumstances as Mary, Martha and Lazarus, could not care for orphan children, because they have no home.
- C. Must there be a natural relationship among parents and children in order to have a home?
 - 1. If so, then Jesus didn't have a home because Joseph was not his natural father. He was his legal father (Luke 2:41,48).
 - 2. A home then can have legal relationships — a legal relationship between the children and those who stand in place of their parents.
- D. If there then must be a natural parent/child, husband/wife relationship in a home before the church can supply its needs, then the church could not have helped the home in which Jesus grew up.

VI. "OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE THEY HAVE A BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND ARE INCORPORATED. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CORPORATION STAND BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND THE HOME."

- A. The Bible teaches that we are to obey the laws of the land, so long as no law of God is violated (Rom. 13:1-4; 1 Peter 2:13,14; Matt. 22:21).
- B. "A corporation is an artificial being, invisible, intangible, and existing only in contemplation of law" (Dartmouth College Case 17 U.S. 518, 636). (Webster's Inter. Una. Dic. — From Thomas Warren, p.181)
 "A corporation affords advantages in business and legal matters, enabling the group to act as a unit with legal recognition." Those that oppose orphan homes being incorporated agree the church, publishing houses, etc., can be.
- C. The board of directors does not stand between the church and the home.
 - 1. Suppose we have two churches, both incorporated. Suppose one church sends funds to the other church to

help indigent saints in the receiving church. All agree it's Scriptural. Would there be an organization in between because both churches are incorporated? No! If there is no "in between organization" between two churches that are incorporated, why do brethren cry an "in between organization" between the church and the home?

VII. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE THE CHURCH CANNOT SUPPORT PRIVATE HOMES, THEREFORE IT CANNOT SUPPORT ORPHAN HOMES."

- A. "But strange as it may seem, nowhere, yes, nowhere, in the New Testament do we read where any church ever made any contribution to anybody's home..." (James Cope, Tract, "Parents and Children – Natural and Substitute.")
- B. The church did support private homes (Acts 6:1ff). The only way one could conclude the church did not support private homes is to conclude that these widows did not have homes.

VIII. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE EVERYTHING IS NOT RUN 100% RIGHT AND THEREFORE THE CHURCH CANNOT SUPPORT THEM."

- A. If the church cannot support them because everything is not 100% right, then an individual could not for the same reason.
- B. If your family were to get into dire circumstances, would you expect the church to help you?
- C. Is everything 100% right in your home? If not, then on the above argument, the church could not help you.

IX. "I OBJECT TO ORPHAN HOMES BECAUSE THEY ARE PARALLEL TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY."

- A. Similarity does not prove identity, and one or two points of similarity does not prove that because one is wrong the other one is wrong.
- B. What is the missionary society and what is its function? "The missionary society is an ecclesiasticism that assumes to itself legislative powers which belong only to the churches."
- C. The component parts which make the Missionary Society sinful are not part of the Orphan Homes. Observe:

MISSIONARY SOCIETY	ORPHAN HOMES
Is an ecclesiasticism, with delegates from member churches, empowered to bind laws on the churches.	Has no delegates, and no laws are made for churches. All churches are as free as they would be without them.
Destroys the autonomy of the churches, for the delegates legislate for all member churches.	Does not interfere with autonomy of the giving churches (nor others) no more than any family of church by receiving funds from church.
Usurps the work of the church, which is to be its own missionary society.	Doesn't perform a function of the church, for the church is not its own home.
Does the work of the church.	Doesn't do the work of the church, but work of a home. It simply is not the work of the church to be a Home.
Is a spiritual organization and is in the same category with the church.	Is a physical and material organization, and as such is in a different category from the church.
Is sinful! No individual Christian can give to it, nor be any part of it.	Is not sinful! All of us agree that individual Christians CAN give financial help to a home, and can rightfully be part of a home.
None of us in churches of Christ are in the missionary society.	All of us in the church are part and contribute to, some home, whether established by marriage or restored home.

<p>Can force a "NO" vote on a church which authorized its delegate to vote "YES."</p>	<p>Has no delegates, and no votes are taken which relates to churches. Churches are not under the home, nor in anyway are they subject to the home.</p>
<p>Is above the elders of churches which sends delegates (Acts 20:28).</p>	<p>Is not above (over) the elders nor in any way in competition with the church or its elders – no more than my home is, nor yours.</p>
<p>Is in between the churches and the work being done, and establishes churches and orphan homes.</p>	<p>Is not between the church and its work; a home – the same in principle as a private home.</p>
<p>Is like a denomination, composed of churches.</p>	<p>Is not like a church, but like a home. It is not composed of churches, and is no integral part of churches.</p>
<p>Is an ecclesiastical institution, larger than a local congregation, and smaller than the church in the "general sense."</p>	<p>Is like my home, or yours – is no part of the church as such. Orphan home is temporal and material, just as any other home is.</p>
<p>Is an adjunct of the church to do the work of the church.</p>	<p>Is (like my home) not an adjunct of the church at all – and does not do the work of the church. It does the work of destroyed homes.</p>
<p>Is a religious organization to function in the realm of the church.</p>	<p>Is not a religious organization, no part of or no more than any PRIVATE Christian home is a religious institution.</p>
<p>Functions on behalf of the church.</p>	<p>Functions on behalf of children whose homes are lost or destroyed.</p>

Traditions Of Men Regarding Baptism

Ferrell Hester

1. Because of religious division and denominationalism, no wonder so many honest souls are confused and frustrated.
2. Many have the idea that the Bible is a book of confusion because on radio, TV and in the pulpit they hear so many conflicting doctrines.
3. God is not the author of confusion (1 Cor. 14:33).
4. The confusion in the religious world comes not from the Bible but from the traditions of men.
5. The primary cause of confusion and division is that so many have not learned to properly distinguish between what the Bible actually teaches and the traditions of men.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE WORD "TRADITION?"

- A. The word for tradition, in the original Greek New Testament is *paradosis*, and is used in two distinct senses.
 1. Jesus strongly rebuked the Scribes and the Pharisees for making the word of God void by their traditions.
 - a. *"Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition"* (Matt. 15:6).
 - b. *"But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"* (Matt. 15:9).
 - c. He gave a lengthy discourse in Mark 7 how that they had perverted the truth of God in this manner.
 2. Paul made reference to his former life as a Pharisee and how he had defended the same human traditions when he was a persecutor of Christians (Gal. 1:14).
 3. Then Paul warned Christians against letting men make spoil of them through philosophies and traditions of men (Col. 2:8).
- B. There is another sense in which the word tradition is used that is in no way negative or harmful but pertaining to the apostolic teaching given orally before the New Testament was written.
 1. *"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle"* (2 Thess. 2:15).

2. *“Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances [hold fast the traditions, ASV], as I delivered them to you”* (1 Cor. 11:2).

II. DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE TRADITION OF MEN TODAY AND DIVINE TRUTH REGARDING BAPTISM.

A. The tradition of *sprinkling* and *pouring* for baptism.

1. The Greek word for baptism has always meant “submerge, to bury, to plant, to immerse.”
2. The New Testament clearly describes baptism as a burial (Rom. 6:3-6; Col. 2:12; 3:1).
3. The practice of sprinkling and pouring for baptism are human substitutes for Bible baptism.
 - a. Though widely practiced today, it is without divine authority (Col. 3:17).
 - b. Not one time is sprinkling or pouring mentioned in the Holy Scriptures with reference to baptism.

B. The tradition that baptism is “because of the remission of sins.”

1. Tradition: “Baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace.”
2. Bible: *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”* (Acts 2:38).
3. Men argue that “for” in this passage means “because of” – they should be baptized because their sins had already been remitted or forgiven.
 - a. Suppose a man’s wife tells him to stop by the store on his way home for a loaf of bread. He gets home and his wife asks, “Did you stop at the store?” He replies, “Yes, I stopped at the store.” She then asks, “Where is the bread I told you to go to the store for?” He says, “Honey I stopped at the store because you already have a loaf of bread, don’t you know that for means because of?”
 - b. As ridiculous as this is, it makes just as much sense as arguing that “for the remission of sins” in Acts 2:38 means “because of” the remission of sins.
4. Can one be saved without being in Christ?
 - a. Baptized into Christ. *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* (Gal. 3:27).

- b. Baptized into His death. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"* (Rom. 6:3-4).
 - c. *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:16).
 - d. *"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us"* (1 Peter 3:21).
- C. The tradition of baptizing infants.
- 1. Tradition of man, not of God.
 - 2. Why not baptize infants?
 - a. In the Scriptures, God has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).
 - 1) No authorization for infant baptism therein.
 - 2) Therefore, it does not pertain to life and godliness.
 - b. Paul declared "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).
 - 1) He did not declare infant baptism.
 - 2) It is not the counsel of God, but of men.
 - c. The Scriptures "thoroughly" furnish us "unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 1) Not in Scriptures, therefore not a good work.
 - d. Without faith cannot please God (Heb. 11:6), and faith comes by hearing the word of God.
 - 1) Cannot be done by faith – cannot please God.
 - e. Baptism is for believers (Mark 16:15-16).
 - 1) Infants cannot believe the Gospel.
 - f. Baptism is for those who repent of their sins (Acts 2:38).
 - 1) Infants have no sins.
 - g. Baptism is for those who confess Christ (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10).
 - 1) Infants are incapable of confessing.
 - h. Infants are safe, not lost (Luke 19:10).
 - 1) "Of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. We have presented just a few of the traditions of men regarding baptism in love of truth and the souls of men, not for the sake merely differing from others.

2. All accountable beings must believe and obey from the heart, or understanding, the form of doctrine to be freed from sin (Rom. 6:17-18).
 3. May God help us to all to love, teach and obey the exact truth, as it is revealed in His Word, on all matters.
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The Traditions Of Men Regarding The Role Of Women

Wayne Cox

1. So often in life, we are prone to be guided, not by what we know is right, but by what we want to do.
 - a. This is basically an attitude of selfishness.
 - b. Of placing our wants above our own best interests and that of others.
2. This self-centered attitude has permeated our relationship with God.
 - a. Biblical examples:
 - 1) David knew the law condemned adultery, but because he wanted Bathsheba for his own, he dismissed God's will and followed his own.
 - 2) Jonah knew it was right to preach to Nineveh, but since he wanted the Assyrians destroyed, he at first ran from his assigned duty.
 - b. Modern examples. Being guided by what "I want" instead of what "God says" has led to all sorts of deviations from the truth, including:
 - 1) The very existence of denominationalism.
 - 2) Erroneous innovations in worship.
 - 3) Lack of dedication and commitment among professed followers of God.
 - 4) The substitution of unauthorized growth tactics versus the simple proclamation of the Gospel.
 - 5) And, of course, this same attitude has a direct bearing on our assignment in this lecture.

- c. In essence, what has happened is a substitution of man's authority for God's.
3. Our topic concerns the traditions of men regarding the role of women. Our assignment is to:
 - a. Discuss in general the role of women in the church.
 - b. Point out different errors taught and/or practiced in this area:
 - 1) By the denominational world.
 - 2) By our own brethren.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE INFLUENCE OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT.

A. Society in any era is influenced to a great degree by movements within it.

1. The feminist agenda has had a profound impact upon our culture, especially during the past twenty-five years.
 - a. For the most part, this impact has been negative.
 - b. Especially as pertains to religion and God-given roles to women.
2. Consider what Gloria Steinem, a leading proponent of feminism, said: *"By the year 2000 we will raise our children to believe in human potential, not God."*

B. Feminism can be divided into various categories:

1. Secular feminism.
 - a. Also called "radical" feminism.
 - b. Attacks the traditional family structure.
 - c. Promotes acceptance of homosexual lifestyles.
 - d. Generally rejects the Bible as anti-feminist.
2. Liberal feminism.
 - a. Has a religious aspect.
 - b. But does not regard the Bible as the inspired and authoritative word of God.
 - c. One of their principal goals in the church is for women to fill any role that men fill.
 - d. If Scripture contradicts their position, they:
 - 1) Renounce it.
 - 2) Claim it is an interpolation.
 - 3) Label it prejudicial toward women.
 - 4) Aver it is outdated and has no bearing upon women's role today.
3. Evangelical feminism.
 - a. Also called "Biblical" or "conservative" feminism.
 - b. Claim to accept the Bible as inspired and authoritative.

- c. View female restricting texts as if they merely “describe cultural conditions in the first century without necessarily prescribing what is required for churches today.”
- C. Feminist views have obviously infiltrated the thinking and practice of many in the denominational world, as well as members of the church in some areas. In fact, this will be one of the major battles we are currently beginning to fight and will continue to wage in the church in the next few years.

II. WHAT SOME ARE SAYING.

A. Among denominationalists.

1. The Roman Catholic Church has been under pressure to allow women to become priests, though the current Pope considers the matter closed.
2. An article in our local paper, *The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*, 9/2/95 was titled, “Ordained women face challenges.”
 - a. Several women “reverends” were interviewed, all claiming to be called by God to the ministry, but giving no support from Scripture to verify their claim.
 - b. Thankfully, one denominational preacher interviewed had the courage to say: “Southern Baptists as a whole do not ordain women as pastors or deacons simply because there is no scriptural basis for it.”

B. Among our own.

1. There are those among us today who are attempting to redefine what the Bible says about women.
 - a. They are demanding a wider role for them in the leadership of the church.
 - b. For instance, in 1990 Robert Randolph, a preacher of Brookline, MA, and Lyon Mitchell, an elder from Houston, TX, in a debate forum at Freed-Hardeman University, asserted that they had no objection to women serving as elders in the church of the Lord.
2. “We need to be progressive.”
3. “We are driving women out of the church by the position we have taken.”
4. “We are too narrow-minded.”
5. Gal. 3:28 has been perverted to teach that Paul abolished sexual differences so that men and women may function in identical capacities in public church activity.

III. WHAT SOME ARE DOING.

A. Among denominationalists.

1. Some are rewriting the Bible to suit their agenda. *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version* was published in 1995 by the Oxford University Press.
 - a. This Bible refers to God as "Father-Mother."
 - b. It counsels wives to be merely "committed" to their husbands.
2. Some are elevating women to leadership roles in their respective religious circles.
 - a. In 1993, Mary Adelia McLeod was the first woman chosen to lead an Episcopal diocese in the United States.
 - 1) Applause thundered from the audience upon her installation.
 - 2) Mrs. McLeod said her consecration "is a sign of hope" for women.
 - b. In 1987, there was considerable controversy when the Murray-Calloway County (KY) Ministerial Association stipulated that only male "pastors" could participate in a Thanksgiving Day ecumenical service.
 - 1) This excluded one female pastor, and raised the ire of many in the community.
 - 2) One, in response to the situation, argued that what the apostle Paul had to say about women keeping silent was "a random remark" of his and "is simply not sufficient to override justice in God's kingdom, even if it upsets people."

B. Among our own.

1. In 1989, the Bering Drive church of Christ in Houston, Texas announced that the women of that congregation would henceforth be used for leadership roles in the public assemblies — directing singing, prayer, and serving communion.
2. In the November 1992 issue of the *Christian Chronicle*, an announcement was made regarding the first public prayer led by a woman at Pepperdine University: "*D'Esta Love, dean of students at Pepperdine University, gave the first prayer by a woman in a convocation ceremony on August 31. According to the Graphic, Pepperdine student newspaper, the university decided earlier this year to utilize women fully in all the institution's public assemblies.*"

3. In a church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, the audience was subjected to a band containing women singers, accompanied by the use of instrumental music, etc.
4. "...Kathy J. Pulley, a teacher at Southwest Missouri State University...was invited to speak at the Christians Scholar's Conference at Pepperdine University on July 19-21, 1989. Pulley recounted her days at the Brookline, MA, congregation, where Robert Randolph preaches. She indicated that, since 1987, 'Brookline has allowed the full participation of women in every aspect of its fellowship' She listed the various positions which had been assumed by women as follows: 'Early on, women served on the steering committee and read Scripture, later they led prayers and singing, and served communion. Finally, they taught adult classes and preached.'

IV. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL ON THIS MATTER?

A. A discussion of Galatians 3:28.

1. Keeping this verse in its proper context reveals that in Christ:
 - a. All stand at the same level before God.
 - b. All who are saved are saved the same way.
2. Baptism into Christ does not change one's relationship to each other, rather, it changes one's relationship to God.

B. A discussion of 1 Timothy 2.

1. In verse 11, women are charged to "*learn in silence with all subjection.*"
 - a. Not absolute silence, but quietness (ASV), gentleness, peacefulness.
 - b. A disposition of submission regarding the manner of the woman's learning.
2. In verse 12, women are charged not to "*usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*"
 - a. "*usurp*" — "to have" (ASV).
 - b. Though not prohibited from teaching altogether, women are forbidden in any way to teach over the man.
 - c. "Any type of leadership act or teaching done over the man is what is prohibited."
3. Some argue this passage has no bearing on the church today because our culture today is different from theirs then.

- a. However, the subordination of women to men was not tied to culture, but to creation!
- b. *"Adam was first formed, then Eve"* (v.13).

V. WHAT ROLE DO WOMEN HAVE IN THE CHURCH TODAY?

- A. Not only should we discuss the negative—what role women do not have in the church today, we should also discuss the positive—the work women can perform for the body of Christ.
- B. Such limitations notwithstanding, the early church benefited greatly by the contributions of many women.
 - 1. Rom. 16
 - 2. Public assemblies are actually a small part of the overall work of a congregation.
- C. Note the contribution women can make in:
 - 1. Benevolence
 - a. An important work (James 1:27; Matt. 25:40).
 - b. Women are well-suited—many times better suited than men for this work.
 - 1) They bring grace and beauty.
 - 2) Mercy and compassion almost second nature to them.
 - 3) Possess skills that men often don't have (Acts 9:36-39).
 - 2. Edification.
 - a. An essential work (Eph. 4:15-16; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:11,14).
 - b. Ways in which women may edify saints:
 - 1) Through teaching others:
 - a) Grandmothers and mothers teaching children, as did Lois and Eunice (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).
 - b) Older women teaching younger women (Titus 2:3-5).
 - 2) Through informal words of encouragement.
 - 3. Evangelism.
 - a. An imperative work.
 - 1) The Great Commission given by the Lord to His church, made up of male and female (Matt. 28:19-20).
 - 2) Before the Gospel can save, it must be spread (Rom. 1:16).
 - b. Ways in which women may evangelize:

- 1) Support those who preach:
 - a) The example of Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna (Luke 8:1-3).
 - b) Providing hospitality, as did Lydia (Acts 16:15).
- 2) Tell others about Christ.
 - a) The example of the Samaritan woman (John 4).
 - b) The example of Priscilla (Acts 18).
- 3) Lead non-believing husbands to Christ (1 Peter 3:1-2).

D. Thus, women do have a vital role in the on-going work of the church. In fact, in many instances, women are the spiritual backbone of congregations!

CONCLUSION:

1. May we never lose sight of what God's will is on any subject, including the role of women in the church.
2. May we never become so pressured by society that we begin to compromise His will in any area.
3. May we never lose our perspective of what this life is all about —of living a life that brings glory to God and ultimately leads to eternal glory with Him forever!

SOURCES CONSULTED

The following is a list of some of the sources consulted and quoted in research for this outline and lecture. There are a number of excellent articles and books pertaining to this subject—these are just a selected few:

Women to the Glory of God, 19th Annual Spiritual Sword Lectureship Book, 1994.

The Spiritual Sword, "A Review of Feminist Theology" Vol. 27, No. 2, January 1996.

The Spiritual Sword, "The Role of Women in the Church" Vol. 24, No. 1, October, 1992.

The Lord's Church: Past, Present, Future, "Role of Women in the Lord's Church", Tracy Dugger, 1999 Power Lectureship Book, Southaven church of Christ.

Shall We Have Women Preachers? Tract by Wayne Jackson. Brother Jackson has a number of excellent tracts and articles concerning the role of women in the Lord's church.

Traditions Of Men Regarding Divorce, Remarriage

Tom House

1. The subject presently under consideration is certainly a most timely theme.
 - a. It has been the subject of countless discussions and debates.
 - b. The nature of the subject matter incites such discussions, simply because it remains to be relevant to every generation.
2. It is a subject matter in which each particular aspect invokes a wide range of emotions.
 - a. Marriage ceremonies are usually characterized by moments of great happiness.
 - b. While those involved in divorce proceedings are usually experiencing despondency, uncertainty, or even hatred.
3. It is helpful in any discussion such as this to define the terms under consideration.
 - a. "Marriage" is defined as; "the state of being married; a legal contract, entered into a man and a woman, to live together as husband and wife."
 - 1) The noun form of the word in the Greek language is *gamos*; meaning, a marriage, or wedding; used to denote the ceremony; used literally of joining man and woman in marriage; figuratively used to describe the relation between Christ and the church.
 - 2) The verb forms are, *gameo* and *gamizo*, meaning "to marry," or "to give in marriage." Matt. 5:32; 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:9,10,36,38,39
 - b. The word divorce is from the Greek words:
 - 1) *apoluo*, the verb form, meaning; "to let loose from," "let go free," and is translated, "to put away."
 - 2) The noun form is *apostasion*, which is "a defection," or "a writing of or bill of divorcement."
4. Since our discussion is concerning man's traditions as they pertain to this matter, it may also be beneficial to have some understanding concerning the present trends which reflect man's thinking on the subject of marriage, divorce, and remarriage.
 - a. Our society has practically dismissed God's instructions on this matter, and the cost to our society has been devastating mentally, economically, physically, and most importantly, spiritually.

- b. Statistics relate the damage in shocking detail.
 - 1) 2,362,000 couples married in 1994, while 1,191,000 couples divorced.
 - 2) It is estimated that 60%+ of couples living together are not married, resulting from their liberal view of marriage and divorce.
 - 3) The divorce rate has quadrupled from 4.3 million in 1970, to 18.3 million in 1990.
 - 4) The marriage rate has fallen nearly 30% since 1970, while the divorce rate has increased 40%.
- c. Consequently, our society is functionally hampered by masses of people with marital and emotional distress; while looking for answers, but not willing to accept God's way.
5. Our study is designed to examine man's tendencies and practices, both past and present, regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage, and then review these tendencies in light of the Scriptures.

DISCUSSION:

I. TRADITIONS OF MEN REGARDING MARRIAGE AS FOUND IN THE BIBLE.

- A. The word tradition is defined as, "the knowledge, doctrines, customs, practices, etc., which are transmitted from generation to generation."
- B. It is certainly obvious that the practices and customs regarding marriage had a beginning; but those customs have evolved in various ways with the various cultures which have developed through the centuries.
- C. It is established in the Scriptures that marriage had its origin with God. Gen.2
- D. However, from the beginning, man's practices regarding marriage and the marriage relationship, have taken a course far from God's original pattern.
- E. Observe some of the biblical and historical evidence regarding man's marriage traditions.
 1. The practice of polygamy was seemingly introduced by Lamech, the descendant of Cain. Gen. 4:17-19
 - a. His practice led to others to disregard God's original plan for man's marriage relation, and thus into deeper wickedness. Gen. 6:1,2
 - b. Several among the patriarchs, judges, and kings had more than one wife.

- 1) Abraham had Sarah and Hagar, who was Sarah's handmaid. Gen. 16
- 2) Gideon, one of the judges, had seventy sons by "many wives." Judges 8:30
- 3) Elkanah, Samuel's father, had two wives; Hannah and Peninnah. 1 Sam. 1:3
- 4) However, the most remembered among these ranks is Solomon, who had 700 wives and 300 concubines. 1 Kings 11:1-3
- c. While God tolerated the practice of polygamy, He never sanctioned it.
- d. Some, very likely, found reasons to justify their practice of polygamy; such as:
 - 1) The desire to have a great progeny,
 - 2) The first wife was barren,
 - 3) The political alliances which could be formed,
 - 4) Using the women as wives who were the spoils of war,
 - 5) And slavery.
- e. There were efforts made on different occasions to stymie the practice of polygamy.
 - 1) There was the prohibition against taking as a wife the sister of one's present wife (Lev. 18:17,18); or taking the mother of one's present wife (Lev. 20:14).
 - 2) God, through Hosea the prophet, illustrated His intent on this matter when He condemned Israel for their spiritual adultery. (Hos. 2) [note particularly vs.19-23].
- f. Under the covenant of Christ, such practices as polygamy or polyandry (a woman having more than one husband), is strictly condemned. 1 Cor. 7:2-5; Eph. 5:22,23
2. One of the customs of some of the Jews was the type of marriage where the husband is incorporated into the tribe of his wife.
 - a. Jacob's relation with his wives was after this manner. Gen. 31
 - b. Moses also became under the authority of his father-in-law, Jethro. Exo. 2:21; 4:18
3. One of the primary traditions of the ancients, involved the betrothal of a man and woman.

- a. Many of the marriages would be arranged by the parents, but not all parties would be consenting. Gen 24:8
- b. And while some involved a clear romantic interest, not all marriages consisted of a partner which reciprocated that interest. Jacob & Leah, Gen. 29
- c. It is interesting to note, that to the Jews, the betrothal was considered as much or more important than the wedding.
 - 1) In fact, the engagement was considered to be as binding as the marriage itself. Deut. 22:23,24; Matt. 1:19
 - 2) Under Jewish custom, the engagement was so binding, that if the marriage should for some reason not take place because one of the parties wished to breach the engagement, then the other party could not marry another until there was a writing of divorcement.
4. The Jewish traditions regarding the wedding ceremony offer some interesting details which are worth our consideration in this study; although much of what information is available from the Scriptures on this subject is usually in allegory.
 - a. The bride would be taken by friends of the bridegroom, along with her attendants, to the home of the groom.
 - b. The groom would remain at a friends house until usually late in the evening; sometimes as late as midnight, until he decided it was time to go.
 - c. On the approach of the groom, those waiting would hear the cry; "the bridegroom cometh," and then light his approach with torches and lamps.
 - d. Jesus used this allegory to illustrate his return. Matt. 25:1-13
5. There have been some cultures which have traditionally practiced "endogamy."
 - a. This practice limits marriage to those of the same tribe, family, religious order, or social class.
 - b. The greatest problem with such a practice was the obvious problem with incest.
6. Other cultures have practiced "exogamy."
 - a. This practice encouraged the marriage outside a particular group or family, yet within the race.

- b. This was to protect the race against extinction, as well as a means to avoid incest.
 - 7. There have been some strange customs regarding widows and widowers, particularly with Orientals and Hindus.
 - a. Before a widow or widower could remarry, they must wear "mourning clothes," and then perform the ceremonial duties owed to the dead.
 - b. A rather extreme custom, which was finally outlawed in India, was called "suttee," which required a widow to sacrifice herself on her husband's funeral pyre.
- F. It may be of some interest as well, to note some of the more modern traditions of marriage, aside from the arrangement which the Scriptures authorize.
 - 1. Common-law marriages have been accepted in certain areas, even in certain regions of the U.S. (This is simply a continuous cohabitation without the benefit of a legal ceremony.)
 - 2. We are now seeing greater numbers accepting, or seeking to accept homosexual unions as legal marriages.
- G. It is clearly apparent, that many, or most of man's traditions regarding marriage, come into being without giving any regard to God's instruction on the proper elements to establish a proper and acceptable marriage.

II. WHAT SOME TEACH CONCERNING MARRIAGE (AND REMARRIAGE).

- A. One of the most prevalent errors of our day regarding this subject has been advocated by James D. Bales.
 - 1. In short, his position concerning Matt. 5:32 and Matt. 19:9, is that these texts are "covenant" passages; i.e., they would apply only to the Christian.
 - 2. He, consequently, argued that the non-Christian is not subject to Jesus' teaching on marriage in these texts, and are therefore, not bound to the law concerning divorce or remarriage.
 - 3. He bases his argument upon his interpretation of 1 Cor. 7:10-15.
 - a. Bales advocates that the text in 1 Corinthians is divided into two parts.
 - b. He suggests that in verses 10-11, Paul spoke of Christians who were married to Christians.

- c. Then in verses 12-15, he argues that “Paul legislated for mixed marriages and revealed the divorce law aliens are under.”
 - d. He concludes then, that 1 Corinthians 7:10-11 is referring to what the Lord was teaching in Matt. 19:9, and since the Lord did not speak about mixed marriages (believer to a non-believer), that it was left up to Paul to reveal that in a mixed marriage, the Christian must continue in the marriage relation, unless the unbeliever wished to divorce; in which case even the believer is supposedly free of the marriage bond, and would be free to remarry.
- B. Note also, some of the errors advocated by some regarding remarriage.
1. There is the position advocated by Olan Hicks, and others, claiming that those who were unscripturally divorced, and remarried, then were purported to become Christians, their alleged obedience in baptism cleansed their sin, and hence are approved of God!
 2. There are also those who, with a misapplication of 1 Cor. 7:15, allege that if a Christian spouse is deserted by an unbelieving spouse, then the believer is free to marry again.
 3. Then there are those who advocate that an unfaithful marriage partner, i.e., the fornicator, has the scriptural right to remarry.
 4. As well, there are those who errantly claim that any one who is the innocent party, i.e., one who has Scriptural right to put away a mate for fornication, cannot remarry.
- C. Briefly examine these errors in the light of the Scriptures.
1. The Hicks error is based upon a misapplication of 1 Cor. 7:20,24.
 - a. The idea that every man should “abide” in his calling, is assumed by these false teachers, to mean that one may continue in a practice which is condemned by God simply because they have been supposedly cleansed by the blood of Christ.
 - b. However, this position clearly eliminates the Lord’s instruction regarding repentance!
 - c. One cannot willfully continue in sin and expect the blood of Christ to cleanse him!
 2. Next, consider the error regarding the deserted Christian spouse.

- a. This position is based upon a misapplication of the phrase, "not under bondage" in 1 Cor. 7:15.
 - b. This position basically alleges that desertion is grounds for divorce, which is in direct contradiction to Jesus' instruction in Matthew 19:9, which gives fornication as the only means, other than death, by which a marriage may be dissolved.
 - c. The idea of the phrase, "not under bondage," is that if an unbelieving mate threatens to leave if the believer does not abandon his/her faith, then the believer, being devoted to Christ, is not under bondage to the mate to such extent as to abandon his/her faith. Luke 14:26-33; Acts 5:29
3. The teaching that the "guilty party" has a right to remarry, is clearly absurd, for it likewise, contradicts the Lord's teaching Matthew 19:9. (*..and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*)
 4. Those who advocate the idea that any one who has been divorced, even scripturally, cannot be remarried, fall into the same trap of contradiction as the previously mentioned error.
 - a. The subject matter in Matthew 19, was initiated by a question on the subject of divorce. Matt. 19:3
 - b. The implication is clear, why would these people ask about divorce, if they were not looking for justification for remarriage? (Else what need is there to divorce?)
 - c. In Jesus' answer in verse 9, he clearly speaks of remarriage.
 - 1) The one who divorces a mate for some cause other than fornication, cannot remarry without committing adultery.
 - 2) Also, one who has been "put away" because of fornication, is specifically prohibited from remarriage.
 - 3) And yet, if the innocent cannot remarry, why did not the Lord so state?
 - d. This position is obviously based upon a complete misapplication of Paul's teaching on marriage in 1 Cor. 7.
 - 1) The "departed" mate of verse 11, is not one divorced, it is one who is merely living separately from his/her mate.

- 2) Much of the confusion in this regard may be based upon a statement found in verse 27; *“art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife.”*
- 3) Yet the next verse obviously alludes to one who has been “loosed” Scripturally, i.e., is the innocent one; and is stated of this one: *“But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned...”*

III. TRADITIONS OF MEN REGARDING DIVORCE.

- A. One of the greatest tragedies of our society, is the present escalating plague of divorce.
 1. Thousands of families are thrown into disarray each year because of man’s unwillingness to abide in, and respect their marital responsibility.
 2. Countless numbers of children are victimized by this societal disease, as they are cast into the abyss future uncertainty, and become pawns in their parent’s struggle.
- B. In order to understand the Bible’s teaching on the subject of divorce, it was necessary that we first have an understanding of the Bible’s teaching of marriage.
- C. Be it understood, that God never intended that man breach that we He had joined. Matt.19:6
- D. Yet man has decided to ignore God’s intent and law, and has determined that one may divorce for any cause; and sadly this has become the accepted norm.
- E. Much of the tradition among the Jews regarding the divorce question, stems from the record found in Deuteronomy 24:1,2.
 1. It is clear that the “uncleanness” is not adultery, for such was punished with death. Lev. 20:10
 2. Yet whatever it was, it permitted the man to put her away, and evidently allowed both parties to remarry.
 3. The Jews thought this provision was a command, but Jesus clearly nixed that idea. Matt. 19:8
 - a. Jesus explains that Moses “suffered” or allowed such to occur because of the hardness of their hearts, i.e., their evident lack of willingness to abide by God’s law on this matter.
 - b. Hence, this was a temporary concession on God’s part, but not His original intention.

4. Jesus further notes in the context of Matthew 19, that God's original intention regarding the marriage relation was that it was to last as long their lifetime.
 - a. Yet if one died, then the remaining mate was free to marry again. Rom. 7:2
 - b. This provision is given, provided the one whom is to be married, is Scripturally marriageable.
 5. The Lord will then emphasize that the only authorized provision for the "putting away" of a mate, will be the act of fornication upon the part of one of the mates. *"Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication..."*
- F. Hence, God's law stands firm regarding the marriage relation; one man, for one woman, for life!

CONCLUSION:

1. Regardless of man's attempt to undermine the Lord's authority, or the attempt to destroy it, His word will remain as the guide and rule for man until time is no more. Matt. 24:35
2. Since God speaks to us today through His Son (Heb. 1:2), His word will be the authority by which we shall be judged. John 12:48
3. Man's response to the Lord's teaching on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage, will not be ignored in judgement.

Sayings Heard Today #1

**"It really doesn't matter what you believe
as long as you're sincere."**

"So many people cannot be wrong."

**"Jesus is the vine and the denominations
are the branches."**

Gary McDade

It is a distinguished honor to be invited to speak on the annual **Seek the Old Paths** Lectureship. Garland Robinson continues to do an outstanding work in both editing the paper and directing the lectureship. The eldership of the East Corinth church of Christ is

to be commended for its oversight of this good work. The congregation is recognized for its commitment to the eternal truth of God and the continual presentation of the spoken and written material in its defense and declaration.

The timely theme this year of "Traditions of Men — Vain Religion" will be developed in this present lesson through pursuing the "Sayings Heard Today," in particular the sayings: "It really doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're sincere," "So many people cannot be wrong," and "Jesus is the vine and the denominations are the branches." Two additional lessons during this lectureship on the topic of "Sayings Heard Today" will explore more of the commonly heard sayings tied to the traditions of men and constituting vain religion.

In the eighth century B.C., the prophet Hosea exposed the sins of Israel and Judah and announced the basis for the controversy God had with his people. Hosea charged:

"Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another: for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:1-6).

As clearly as crystal, Hosea pinpointed the problem as resting with the people who had removed themselves and their beliefs and practices so far away from the word of God that they could not even be recognized as being connected with God. Hosea wrote, "*I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing*" (Hosea 8:12).

Today, when men speak of faith they speak of *feeling*. "I know I'm saved because I feel it in my heart." Yet, the Bible presents faith as emerging from the written word of God. "*So then faith*

cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Foundational facts are associated with faith in the New Testament (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Faith is not defined as feeling but as trust and confidence which rests on substance and evidence from the revealed will of God (Heb. 11:1).

Today, when men speak of salvation they speak of something you *get*. "I got saved." Yet, the Bible presents salvation as something you do. The penitent multitude on Pentecost asked, "What shall we do" (Acts 2:37c)? Saul as the persecutor of the church asked the Savior, "*What wilt thou have me to do*" (Acts 9:6b)? Today, when obedience to the Gospel plan of salvation is preached, it is a great thing from the law of God but to men it is "counted as a strange thing." The setting of Hosea's day is the setting of today.

"It Really Doesn't Matter What You Believe As Long As You're Sincere."

The Bible is replete with examples of men who were sincere, yet they were sincerely wrong. First, reason demands that when men are engaged in a day-long, heathen worship activity which involved screaming and slicing of the flesh causing the blood to flow, they were nothing if not sincere. The four hundred-fifty prophets of Baal were slain for their ignorance (1 Kings 18:22,40). Second, when Naaman the leper thought Elisha would come out and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God and strike his hand over the place bringing about the healing of his leprosy, he risked his cleansing. He was so sincere about his feelings on the matter that he was angry, and his anger intensified into a full-blown rage. But, when he acted "according to the saying of the man of God" "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (2 Kings 5:11-14). Third, the Jewish council sincerely believed the death of Jesus would preserve their nation (John 11:47-54). But, the truth was that their actions guaranteed the destruction of their nation (Matt. 21:33-46). Fourth, Paul made an interesting affirmation that he had "*lived in all good conscience before God until this day*" (Acts 23:1). But, by his own admission he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious (1 Tim. 1:13). He had done so through ignorance. Therefore, his conscience was taught error, and he remained true to his conscience. He made no claim to have been acceptable to God while persecuting the church but just to have been acting consistently with his conscience. He obtained mercy when he arose and was baptized (Acts 9:6b; 22:16). Fifth, the persecution of the early church was prophesied by Jesus Christ when

he said, *“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service”* (John 16:2). An example of what Jesus was talking about appears in the defense of Stephen before the Jewish council and his subsequent death by stoning (Acts 7:54-60). They were sincere about thinking they were doing God service, but they were wrong. In view of these five Bible examples, the saying heard today cannot be true.

The position challenged is not the sincerity of man but that sincerity alone will suffice to satisfy God. Paul taught, *“Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen”* (Eph. 6:24). Titus was told, *“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity”* (Titus 2:7). The sincerity of serious seekers of salvation is essential, but salvation requires additional qualities. For example, Joshua said God required more than sincerity. He wrote, *“Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD”* (Josh. 24:14). Fear of God and service to him were to be performed in sincerity, yes, but also in truth. The salvation of the soul requires an application of the truth. The truth of God is found in his word, for God’s word is truth (John 17:17). The salvation of the soul requires an understanding and application of the word of God. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17). So, the salvation of the soul necessitates the benefit of the grace of God. Paul taught, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God”* (Eph. 2:8). The salvation of the soul comes through faith. James wrote, *“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”* (James 2:24). And, Paul penned the perspective, *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost”* (Titus 3:5). The salvation of the soul requires that faith be demonstrated through divinely declared works. Therefore, salvation demands sincerity and truth, the word of God, grace, faith and works, mercy, and baptism.

Again, the saying heard today cannot be true.

“So Many People Cannot Be Wrong.”

The Bible is filled with specific passages and illustrative examples that show the will of the majority does not constitute the standard of acceptance for God. In most locations today a sprawling

denominational mega-church facility attracts people interested in social activities for their children and family, a broad range of business networking opportunities, an extremely low level of commitment requirement, the finest and most luxurious, high-profile facilities, and a readily recognizable name. The masses of people find comfort in being associated with such large groups. They find strength in numbers. There is never a budget crunch requiring personal sacrifice to meet financial obligations. There is never a weight of responsibility placed on any one individual to insure that the doors are open and the services are going to be conducted according to plan. There is never the disappointment of seeing an empty seat if someone decided to skip a service or two. And, there is always pride of accomplishment in being a part of a thriving concern. But, there can also be a grand façade. Like the mouse riding on the elephant's back that said after he crossed the swinging bridge, "We really shook that bridge!" Many times the masses mirror a grand illusion.

The final tally tells where the teeming millions, yeah, billions of earth's long illustrious history will stand. Jesus expressed the value of both knowing and doing the will of God. He then said, "*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*" (Matt. 7:22-23). Earlier in the same chapter he said, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it*" (Matt. 7:13-14). So much for the argument, "So many people cannot be wrong."

The lesson of Scripture that should be learned is "*Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets*" (Luke 6:26). The few of Noah's day were saved (1 Peter 3:20-21). The few of Joshua's day were saved from among the children of Israel who were released from Egyptian bondage (Num. 32:11-12). The few of Israel's remnant were saved following the captivity (Isa. 1:9; 2 Kings 21:10-16; Rom. 9:27; 11:5). The few of Christ's disciples remained once his teaching became too hard for them (John 6:66-69). The apostle Paul presented the premier argument against expecting the many to be loyal followers of the Lord, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to

confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

The mentality of many ministers today is that of the "market-driven" multitude. Find out what the people want and give it to them. Target those who have the most to offer the church and reach out to them. Manipulate the Master's message to maintain the masses and their money. Such constitutes "*perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself*" (1 Tim. 6:5). In former years, preachers passionately pleaded and persuaded people to obey the Gospel of Christ. More men of conviction and courage are needed in the church of Christ today who will think not of compromise but of converts, who will think not of substitution but of salvation, and who are not deceived by Satan but are devoted to the Savior of the scriptures.

"Jesus Is The Vine And The Denominations Are The Branches"

The Bible condemns denominationalism in no uncertain terms. Jesus prayed that all his followers should be united. He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (John 17:20-23).

First Corinthians chapters one through four condemns division among God's people. In chapter one Paul wrote, "*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment*" (v.10). No divisions are acceptable among those claiming to be Christians, yet denominationalism represents hundreds of diverse bodies, all claiming to be Christians. All Christians are in the same body (Eph. 3:6), walk by the same rule (Phil. 3:16), have

the same promise (Heb. 11:8-10), are partakers in the same sufferings (2 Cor. 1:6; 1 Peter 5:9), have the same spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13), have the same standard (2 Tim. 2:2; John 12:48), and serve the same Savior (Acts 1:11; 2:36). If they do not, they will suffer the same condemnation (Luke 23:40; Rom. 2:1-3).

Denominationalism and those involved in it and supportive of it are deceived and being deceived. The Lord's teaching on the unity of the believers as set forth above and his atoning death that made it possible are trodden under the feet of those who uphold denominational doctrines. Jesus Christ stated, "*For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*" (Matt. 26:28). Since the New Testament carries no reference to a Baptist, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, a Catholic, a Lutheran, and so forth, then such denominations are not able to benefit their adherents with the blood of Christ or the remission of their sins. Desperate to derive authority for their existence from the sacred Scriptures, denominational devotees do violence to the doctrine of Christ by twisting the scriptures (2 Peter 3:16). Their efforts to establish their own righteousness, places them in the same category of ignorance as those mentioned by Paul (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 10:3), Peter (2 Peter 2:12) and Jude (Jude 10).

Down through the years denominational people have labored in vain to suggest that in John 15:1-10, mention of the vine and the branches refers to Jesus Christ as the vine and denominations as the branches. First, read what Jesus said,

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

Next, observe that the false view that Jesus is the vine and denominations are the branches cannot be true. Here is why: Christ is the true vine and his Father is the husbandman. God and Christ are one (John 10:30), therefore, all true believers are one (John 17:20-23; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-6; Col. 3:15-16). A study of the passages referenced will prove that true unity is required, and just giving lip service to unity will not be acceptable unto God. Again, here is why: Abiding in Christ can only be accomplished by abiding in his word (John 15:5-7). No denomination has the support and backing of the Word of God. The names, creeds, organizations, worship, and practices of denominationalism cannot be found in the word of God. Manuals, such as the **Standard Baptist Manual**, disciplines, such as the **Methodist Discipline**, catechisms, such as the **Confession of Faith**, all exist in flagrant violation of the Word of God (Rev. 22:18-19). Therefore, denominations are not abiding in the Word of Christ. Again, here is why: The branches bear fruit from the vine, yet the vine, Jesus Christ, established only one church (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). Most denominational people would be surprised to learn that their church is not more than five hundred years old. All modern denominations sprang out of the "Protestant Reformation" movement that had its beginning on October 31, 1517, when a Roman Catholic priest named Martin Luther nailed his now famous ninety-five theses to the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany. The Roman Catholic Church which preceded Protestantism is described by Paul as the falling away from the faith that was headed by "*the man of sin, the son of perdition*" (2 Thess. 2:3-12). Therefore, denominations do not emerge from the true vine but from a corrupt vine such as the one mentioned by Moses in Deuteronomy 32:32-33, "*For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.*"

Again, here is why: One vine and many branches representing a variety of divisions would incorporate division into the kingdom of Christ. Yet, Matthew wrote, "*And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand*" (Matt. 12:25). The kingdom of Christ is an unmovable, eternal kingdom (Heb. 12:28; Dan. 2:44). Therefore, the kingdom of Christ or church of Christ is not divided against itself. Again, here is why: In order to get into Christ one must be baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27). Denominations do not baptize a candidate into Christ as the New Testament teaches, for example,

for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16), by immersion in water (John 3:3-5; Col. 2:12), in the name of the sacred three (Matt. 28:18-20), upon confession of faith in Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10), to be added to the church (Acts 2:47), and to be saved (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21). Therefore, since denominations are not in Christ, then they cannot begin to argue whether or not they are the branches. The fate of the individuals who make up denominationalism is mentioned in John 15:6, *"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."*

In closing, the sayings of men heard today should be rejected (Matt. 15:9), and the sayings of Christ should be revered (Mark 8:38; John 12:48). The apostle John wrote, *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works"* (Rev. 20:12).

Traditions Of Men Regarding Catholicism

Ronald Choate

1. When the word "Tradition(s)" is used in relation to religion, one must ask certain simple questions, first, we must ask:
 - a. How do we define "tradition?" Webster defines the word as "The handing down of opinions, stories, etc., from father to son, by oral communication; a statement so handed down."
 - b. Second, we ask, is the word tradition a Scriptural word or practice? The word tradition is used in Scripture in both approved and unapproved contexts.
2. Notice, in Mark 7:9, Jesus said unto the Scribes and the Pharisees, *"full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own traditions."* Therefore, we see men can hand down traditions from father to son that Christ will reject.
3. On the other hand; there are examples in Scripture where traditions (handed down words, and doctrines, etc.) are not only approved but also encouraged. For example; in 2 Thess. 2:15,

Paul admonishes the church by saying, “...stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

4. Therefore, we see a tradition is considered either good or evil according to its basis in Holy Scripture. Our study is simply this; to examine the doctrines and traditions of Catholicism and determine from Scripture if they are from God or man.
5. Let us now examine some of the traditions, doctrines and attitudes of the Catholic Church.

DISCUSSION:

I. CATHOLICS DISREGARD THE WORD OF GOD.

A. The Catechism states that, “The Bible is a dead letter and unable to interpret itself.”

1. The Bible speaks. Heb. 4:12; John 6:63; 12:48; 1 Cor. 2:13

B. The Catechism states, “we Catholics do not in any wise presuppose that the books of the New Testament are inspired, but rather they are only genuine, authentic documents written by honest men.”

1. John said his instructions came from heaven (Rev. 14:13).

2. Paul said a true spokesman of God would agree with what he said (1 Cor. 14:37).

3. The attitude of the Catholic church is like Diotrephes “*who loveth the preeminence among men...*” (3 John 9).

4. The Bible is not a dead letter (2 Tim. 3:16,17).

II. CATHOLICS CLAIM THE NEW TESTAMENT IS UNINSPIRED.

A. This is why the Catholic church negates the teaching of the Apostles by the decrees of their Romanish councils.

1. The Bible claims its words are binding (Heb. 2:2-3; Acts 1:21,22,25).

B. God’s directions are fixed and not flexible (Gal. 1:6-12; 2 John 9; Rev. 22:18,19; Matt. 24:36).

C. The honest Bible student soon finds he cannot agree with both Peter and the pope, and to stand with Paul is to argue with the so called “holy papa” (1 Tim. 4:1).

III. THE WORD OF GOD IS RESENTED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

A. One brother once told of a young Catholic lady who was helping the American Bible Society. She went to confession.

While there, the priest asked where she was working, she told him. He said, "you'll have to stop that." She asked why? His answer was that, "such furthers Protestantism."

B. Our brother converted and baptized her into Christ.

IV. CATHOLICS TEACH THE DEPRAVITY OF INFANTS. THINK ABOUT IT, (BAD, BAD BABIES).

A. Jesus did not view little children as do Catholics (Matt. 19:14).

B. Philip said proper faith is a must for any person to come to Christ.

1. Acts 8:35,36. When the eunuch asked to be baptized, Philip, by inspiration of God, laid down a provision to be met; "*If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.*"

The reverse of Philip's statement would of course be, "If thou believest not with all thine heart thou mayest not."

2. Heb. 11:6, "one must believe that He is...." Can a baby qualify?

3. Look at Acts 2:41. "*They that gladly received his word....*" Can babies gladly receive God's Word?

4. Mark 16:16, describes the proper candidate for baptism. The word "and" is a co-ordinating conjunction, it connects words of equal importance, therefore, belief is just as essential to your salvation as baptism and vice-versa. It is the case that two-plus-two-equals-four. It takes everything on the lefthand side of the equation sign to equal that which is on the right-hand side. We are not saved by faith only, nor by baptism only.

V. CATHOLICS PRACTICE SPRINKLING FOR BAPTISM.

A. The Catholic church ordered sprinkling or pouring about 1311 A.D., 1300 years after God gave His order to bury one in baptism.

1. Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3,4

VI. GOD HAS ALWAYS TAKEN GREAT STOCK IN NAMES.

A. There is something in a name. The Bible says:

1. God changed Abram's name to Abraham, Sarai's name to Sarah, Jacob's name to Israel.

2. God named both Jesus and John before they were born.

B. Yet, some contend that the name by which the church is called in the New Testament makes no difference.

- a. I maintain that the name being wrong is, in itself, sufficient error.

VII. CATHOLICS CLAIM THE CHURCH IS AUTHORITY.

- A. When I speak of examining the church in the light of the Word, the Catholic Church will immediately contend that the church is authority for the Word and not the Word for the church.
- B. What does the Bible say?
 1. The church is not the head. It is the body (Col. 1:18).
 2. John 12:48; 1 Tim 3:15; Eph. 3:21; 1 Cor. 2:13; Matt. 28:18

VIII. CATHOLICS CLAIM TO HAVE GIVEN US THE BIBLE.

- A. Friends, the Lord is responsible for the preservation of His Word.
 1. Matt. 24:26; Mark 13:31
 2. But would it matter if the Catholic church did help preserve the Bible for a season, what would it signify? Further, if the Bible was handed to us, in a sense by the Catholic church, I would not have to believe in the Catholic church in order to accept the Bible.
- B. The Bible speaks for itself (2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:15).
- C. We must do as the Berean's did in Acts 17:11.

IX. THE ORIGIN OF CATHOLICISM: ONE-MAN RULE.

- A. Hardly a century had passed before men began to put one man over a congregation and designating that man as a priest.
- B. All Christians are priests (1 Peter 2:5,9).
- C. Elders are to rule (1 Tim. 5:17).
 1. To what extent do elders rule? They are only over their own congregation (Acts 14:23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Peter 5:2).

X. THE ORIGIN OF BISHOP, ARCH-BISHOP, CARDINAL AND POPE.

- A. Bishop — over many congregations.
 1. Though the word bishop is a New Testament word, it is only used of a plurality of men overseeing one congregation.
 2. No bishop ever ruled alone, whether over one congregation or many. No such office is authorized.
- B. Arch Bishop — all districts in a state or province.

1. Both name and office is not authorized in the Bible.
- C. Cardinal -- all states and provinces in a continent.
 1. Both name and office is not authorized in the Bible.
- D. Pope -- in 606 A.D. emperor Phocas, who himself was a murderer and an adulterer, appointed Boniface III as the first Pope.

Note: Romanism proposes a certain lineage from the time of Peter. This is answered by the fact that for the first six centuries there was no ecumenical council called, but what was called by an emperor, never a pope.

XI. THE POPE IN PROPHECY.

- A. Read 2 Thess. 2:3,4. Who is the man of sin? He is one who, as God, sits in the temple of God.
- B. Read 2 Thess. 2:5-12.
 1. Notice Paul states something would restrain.
 2. To see what would restrain turn to Rev. 13:1, 6-8, 11-16.
- C. Now, after reading these passages notice the facts. Out of paganism grew the papacy.

Note: The example of pagan Rome like unto a cruel beast, truly wore the name of blasphemy. It was called the Holy Roman Empire. Can an empire be holy which killed the saints and supported idolatry?

1. The intolerance of Catholicism.
2. Further, the second beast is described as this, "*he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon*" (v.11).
 - a. Her outward appearance presents the meekness of a lamb, but her papal bulls (laws and decisions) and edicts disclose the voice of the dragon.
3. Think of the slaughter of the Huguenats.
4. Consider the inquisition.

XII. CATHOLICISM CRAVES POLITICAL SUPREMACY.

Don't be deceived, the Catholic church still entertains that hope. Listen to a quote from Cardinal Gibbons. "For our part we have every confidence that ere long the clouds which now overshadow the civil throne of the Pope will be removed by the breath of a righteous God, and that his temporal power will be re-established on a more permanent basis."

- A. Paul said evil men and seducers would wax worse and worse (2 Tim. 3:13).
- B. God promised to send "strong delusion" (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

XIII. CATHOLICISM OPPOSES SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

- A. Jesus himself forever separated church and state (Matt. 22:21).
- B. The period known as “The Dark Ages” was the awful result of the merger of church and state.

XIV. CATHOLIC HOLY WATER.

- A. This is probably the first departure from simple New Testament teaching.
 - 1. Where “pray tell” is Holy Water found in the Scripture?
 - 2. God “*has given us all things...*” (2 Peter 1:3).
 - 3. Therefore, Holy Water is no part of “life and godliness” (Col. 3:17; 2 John 9).
- B. A little Holy Water becomes a violation of a great principle.

XV. WHAT ABOUT “LATIN MASS?”

- A. Wherever you go on earth, the mass is in Latin.
 - 1. Listen to Paul (1 Cor. 14:14-19).
 - 2. The Roman church will say the Latin Mass is a sign of her cohesion and universality — the truth remains that it is a flat violation of the teaching of the Apostle Paul.

XVI. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

This teaches that when men sin they incur the wrath of God, and when they repent and receive the Sacrament of Absolution, they are forgiven but not altogether!

- A. The Council of Trent sets forth: “If any man should say that the whole penalty is always remitted by God, together with the guilt, and that the only satisfaction of penitents is faith whereby they embrace that Christ has made satisfaction for them: let them be accursed!”
 - 1. Thus the Catholic church teaches there are two punishments for sin, the eternal and the temporal. That man must do something to appease the wrath of God regarding the temporal punishment.
 - 2. The priest determines what is sufficient to satisfy God, such as: fasting, rising earlier, enduring cold, praying, reciting litanies, reading and penitential Psalms, wearing sackcloth, etc..
- B. What is wrong with this doctrine?
 - 1. It makes God’s forgiveness incomplete (Isa. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:5).

2. It makes Christ only a partial Savior (Heb. 7:25).
3. It makes the priest an absolutely necessary mediator and tries to bind the people to herself through her system of priest and sacraments which they alone can administer (1 Tim. 2:5).

XVII. THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY.

A. History of Purgatory.

1. The first mention of the doctrine is the Council of Florence in 1438 A.D. "If any true penitents shall depart this life in the love of God, before they have made satisfaction by worthy fruits of penance for faults...their souls are purified after death, by the pains of Purgatory."

B. What is Purgatory?

1. "A place of punishment in the other life where souls suffer for a time, before they can go to heaven."
2. Purgatory punishment is material fire.
3. Damien teaches that "the inhabitants of purgatory pass rapidly and painfully in baths ranging from freezing to boiling."

C. Where is Purgatory?

1. Gregory the Great taught it to be in the Earth's Center.
2. Bellarmine taught it between heaven and earth with the demons of the air.
3. The truth is there is no such place. The Bible teaches that our destiny is sealed at the time of death.
 - a. 2 Cor. 5:10, judged for things done in the body.
 - b. James 2:26, body without the spirit is dead.
 - c. Therefore, when we die in the body, our eternal judgment and destiny are sealed.
4. After death there is a great gulf fixed (Luke 16:22-26).

D. Indulgences are the key to Purgatory.

After the Catholic Church invented Purgatory, it devised a fake key (mainly indulgences) to unlock the door of that fictitious prison called Purgatory.

Example of indulgence allowed by Pope.

1. To say "Sweet heart of Mary, save me" gives 300 days indulgence every time it is repeated.
2. From the "infallible" book of the Scapular we read: "To those who wear the scapular during life, Mary makes this promise: "I, their glorious mother, on the Saturday after death, will descend to purgatory and deliver those

whom I shall find there, and take them up to the holy mountain of eternal life.”

3. Since 1948 more than 10 million dollars are expended yearly in North America to help souls out of Purgatory.

XVIII. THE DOCTRINE OF EXTREME UNCTION.

This is the anointing of holy oil and prayer by the priest in order to impart grace to the sick. It increases sanctifying grace; it remits venial sins (sins that are light, or committed without full consent or knowledge). Venial means forgivable, pardonable.

- A. The Bible says all sin bring death (Rom. 6:23).
- B. The bible says sin is a transgression of the law (1 John 3:3).

XIX. CATHOLICISM IS THE ONLY AUTHORITY FOR INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

If you are a member of a religious group using mechanical instruments of music in worship, it has no higher authority for the use than the Roman Catholic Church.

- A. What does the Bible say?
 1. Eph. 5:19, make melody in our heart.
 2. Heb. 13: 15, with the fruit of our lips.
- B. Read your New Testament carefully, but you will find no hint of authority for the use of them.
 1. We must not go beyond what is written (1 Cor. 4:6; 2 John 9).
 2. When Pope Vitalian II introduced instrumental music into worship in 666 A.D. it created such a commotion it was removed for about 100 years.
 3. Division has always followed its induction.

XX. CONFESSING SINS TO PRIESTS, AURICULAR CONFESSION).

- A. Auricular means “made in the ear.”
 1. Adopted by Council of Lateran in 1215 A.D. by Pope Innocent II of the Inquisition.
- B. Here is God’s way.
 1. Acts 2:37, “*What shall we do?*”
 2. Acts 2:38, “*Repent and be baptized.*”
 3. No command there to confess to any priest.
- C. God’s way for those in the church is as follows:

1. Simon the Sorcerer was to "*repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*" (Acts 8:21-23).
2. James 5:16 says to confess your faults "one to another." It doesn't say confess them to a priest.

XXI. CATHOLIC TITLES.

A. Calling a priest father.

1. Matt. 23:8,9; Psalm 111:9; 1 Tim. 6:15 — forbid it.

XXII. LORD'S SUPPER BECOMES THE LITERAL BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST, CALLED TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

A. Bible: Jesus broke the bread and said "this is my body and blood."

1. The Lord's blood was in His veins in Him at that time (1 Cor. 11:23,24).
2. This is a figure of speech called a "metonymy."
 - a. Example: Jesus also said "I am the door" (John 10:9) and "I am the vine" (John 15:5). We understand that He was not a literal door or vine.
 - b. Note: Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of Me." Now can Jesus be the Memorial and the thing memorialized at the same time? Of course not.

B. Usually the Catholics will turn to John 6:53,55.

1. But the Lord's supper is not mentioned there.

XXIII. DOCTRINE OF CELIBACY.

A. The Bible says.

1. "*Marriage is honorable in all*" (Heb. 13:4).
2. "*It is not good that man should be alone*" (Gen. 2:18).
3. "*I will therefore that the younger women marry*" (1 Tim. 5:14).

B. Concubinage in the priesthood.

1. If a priest marries he is excommunicated, but if he commits fornication with a concubine, he is only fined.
2. 1 Tim. 4:1-3 says differently.

XXIV. IMAGES IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

- A. In 601 A.D., Gregory decreed that "images were to be retained and given honor and respect as those whose likeness they bare."

- B. Every statue of Christ has long hair, yet Paul said that nature itself teaches that it is a shame for a man to have long hair (1 Cor. 11:14).
 - 1. Do you think Jesus would have violated the declaration which He moved Paul to record?
 - 2. They portray Christ as beautiful in body. But this violates Isaiah 53:2.
- C. Life Magazine, June 1947, reports that devout people knelt and kissed the foot of the giant statue of Mary “until the paint wore off its toes.”
- D. In Naples, Catholics in an Italian newspaper show that devout Catholics continue to crawl at full length on their stomachs before the images of their Madonnas and lick the ground with their tongues on their way to the statue.
 - 1. Some years ago, the New York Health Department was compelled to put a stop to this practice among the Italian people of the Bronx because it resulted in so many cases of tetanus.

- 2. Compare Exodus 20:4-5

XXV. THE WORSHIP OF MARY.

- A. Catholics pray to Mary.
 - 1. Proof: Archbishop of New York says “sinners receive pardon only through the intercession of Mary.”
 - 2. Proof: In the rosary, Catholics call on our Father some 14 times and on Mary some 53 times.
 - 3. Col. 3:17; Matt. 6:9,12 refute this doctrine.
- B. Catholics call Mary “the mother of God.”
 - 1. The first four words of the Bible refutes this.
 - 2. Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-5
- C. Catholics pray repetitiously.
 - 1. They pray sometimes using “Five Hail Mary’s and Five Our Fathers.”
 - 2. Matt. 6:7; Luke 11:27,28
- D. Only Jesus can give us “Joy and Mary cannot make us merry.”

CONCLUSION:

- 1. How does the Catholic Church gain adherents?
 - a. Immigration: Those who come to our shores. (Illiterate)
 - b. Offspring of Catholics.
 - c. The offspring born to a Catholic and a non-Catholic union.
- 2. No one can embrace Catholicism without rejecting the Bible.

Traditions of the Pharisees

James Boyd

1. Define the scope of our study.
 - a. Consider these two Jewish parties; some of their beliefs, practices, good and bad.
 - b. Note their relationship one to the other, many contrasts between them.
 - c. Consider their historical background and how they were at the time of Christ.
 - d. The relationship of these two parties with Christ and His religion.
2. Tradition: that which is taught and handed down; neither good nor evil of itself.
 - a. Some traditions are purely personal.
 - 1) Having a cup of coffee upon arising each morning.
 - 2) Winding the clocks each Saturday morning, family reunions, etc.
 - 3) Neither good nor evil — by human authority.
 - b. Some are secular, national in nature.
 - 1) Celebration on the Fourth of July.
 - 2) Date for voting, Valentine's Day.
 - 3) Neither good nor evil — by human authority.
 - c. Some are religious in nature.
 - 1) Lord's supper every first day of the week.
 - 2) Immersion in water for the remission of sins.
 - 3) Meet for worship at ten o'clock on Sunday morning.
 - 4) By divine authority (Col. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:6); others human authority (Matt. 15: 9; Col. 2:8).
 - 5) Some binding; some optional.
 - a) Lord's supper, baptism, worship on first day of week — binding.
 - b) The hour of worship on first day — optional.
 - 6) Some are contrary to the Word of God.
 - a) Sprinkling, rosary, papacy, denominationalism.
 - b) Of human origin that violates the truth.
 - d. Problems arise when traditions of human authority or optional are bound; or those of divine authority and binding are made optional.
 - 1) Elevating human traditions to the level of divine traditions.
 - 2) Forbidding all human traditions whatsoever.

- 3) Reducing divinely given traditions to optional level.
- e. This brings us to the traditions of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
 - 1) Some were neither right nor wrong of themselves. Many Jewish traditions existed, then and now, of this sort, same as other people.
 - 2) Some elevated to the level equal with divinely given law.
 - 3) Some were made obligatory and binding without divine authority.
 - 4) Some were contradictory to divine law.
 - 5) Some were in harmony with divine law.
- f. To label someone a “Pharisee” requires knowledge of what is being considered.
 - 1) Some may be offensive and sinful before the Lord.
 - 2) It may be just what the Lord wants and with His approval.
- g. We shall focus attention primarily on the religious traditions of the Pharisees and Sadducees, primarily on those revealed in the New Testament, with some mention of traditions of which we read from other sources; Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, Talmud, books of the Maccabean Period and others.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHO WERE THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES?

- A. Jewish religious and political parties in the time of Jesus.
- B. Their origins go back many years before Christ; known by other names; became significant influences in the days of the Maccabees.
- C. Pharisees very patriotic, more orthodox, “straitest sect,” from middle and lower class socially and economically; frugality, not luxury.
 1. Violently opposed to Roman occupation.
 2. Wanted independence for the Jews.
 3. Looked with contempt on every nation but their own.
 4. Opposed of all who opposed the Jews.
 5. Very zealous for the Law; legalistic to the excess.
 6. Somewhat aloof from the ways of the world.
 7. Hedged themselves apart from the heathen world and rest of the Jews.
 8. Gained entrance into the party by oath of fidelity.
 9. Strove to keep Grecian influence out of Judaism, idolatry, worldliness.
10. Generally equated among the people as godly, saints, considered most righteous, respectable, responsible.

11. Public opinion was not the Lord's evaluation.
 12. Name derives from a word meaning "separation"; Separatists; no mingling with that which was foreign (some exceptions).
 13. Two schools of thought among Pharisees.
 - a. Hillel; Shammai (in some ways the strictest of the two depending on the subject).
 - b. Gamaliel, teacher of Saul of Tarsus, was the grandson of Hillel.
 - c. Both schools looked with contempt upon Jesus.
 - d. When Jesus was asked about marriage, while His teaching more consistent with the Shammai school, He did not cite either school as authority, but Moses, confounding the purposes of the questioners.
 14. They were the main body of the Jews that looked for a Messiah; restoration of physical and earthly kingdom of Israel.
 15. They were the ones with whom Paul had ongoing conflicts in taking the Gospel to the Gentiles.
 16. Some were converted, but attempted to bind circumcision on all.
 17. Of the two parties, Pharisees were more religious, gradually became political as well.
 18. In Jesus' day Pharisees had a strong, not dominant, voice in Sanhedrin.
- D. Sadducees were aristocratic, liberal, free-thinkers, wealthy, "modernists."
1. Priestly descendants; took name from Zadok; they furnished the high priests.
 2. Accepted only the Pentateuch while Pharisees took the entire Old Testament plus their traditions.
 3. More secular motives and spirit than Pharisees; worldly.
 4. More concerned with riches and political power than Pharisees.
 5. Religious motives far less than Pharisees.
 6. Compromised with Grecian influence (Hellenism); with Romans.
 7. Controlled the office of high priest.
- II. JESUS WARNED HIS DISCIPLES AGAINST BOTH, Matt. 16: 6,11.
- A. Condemned their ways, Matt. 15:9; 23:1-39.

- B. John the Baptist called both of them “generation of vipers” (Matt. 3:7).
 - C. Christ’s teaching often antagonistic to both of them.
 - 1. But not always.
 - 2. There were commendable things said.
 - 3. This if often overlooked in haste to label someone a Pharisee.
 - D. Both were very critical of Jesus; watched His every word and action.
 - E. The conflict with Jesus was often over doctrine but more over His identity and mission, their hypocrisy and self-righteousness.
 - F. Not all hostile to Jesus; some followed and ate with Him; Nicodemus, Saul.
 - G. Many of the priests were converted after Pentecost.
- III. CLOSE AFFINITY BETWEEN SCRIBES AND PHARISEES, MORE THAN BETWEEN SCRIBES AND SADDUCEES.**
- A. While all Pharisees were not scribes, nearly all the scribes were Pharisees.
 - B. This gave the Pharisees a big edge in the knowledge of the Law.
- IV. TENSIONS BETWEEN PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES REACH BACK INTO THE DAYS OF THE MACCABEES.**
- A. Wars between them prior to Jesus’ day.
 - B. Conflict of Jesus with Sadducees came more intense toward the later part of His life, especially when He cleansed the temple the second time; trials.
 - C. Conflict with Pharisees was ongoing from the start.
 - D. In Christ, these two enemies found a common foe.
 - E. Both aggressive against the apostles after Jesus ascended.
- V. THE PHARISEES CONTENDED FOR THE WRITTEN LAW, BUT ALSO AN ORAL LAW.**
- A. The written law was considered to be a summary of principles.
 - B. The oral law was considered necessary to apply the written law which was considered insufficient; something more specific was needful.
 - 1. They contended some oral law was given to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

2. The Pentateuch had 613 laws (248 commands; 365 prohibitions).
 - a. There was no illusion to prayer and future life.
 - b. Therefore, Pharisees justified more law than what was written.
 3. Law contained much about sacrifices, ceremonies, morals, offerings.
 4. Like liberals today, they wanted more than what was written.
 5. Some oral laws also came through the prophets and interpretations of the written law.
 6. They did not contend all the traditions to have come from Jehovah.
 7. Some were admitted uninspired opinions, but must be obeyed anyway.
- C. Allowance of oral law opened the floodgates of interpretations, opinions that went further and more detailed than the written law; subjective.
1. Once a decree was passed, it became binding and irreversible.
 2. Oral law provided minute "refinements" of the written law.
 3. Allowed great latitude to meaning, creativity, flexibility.
 4. First portion of the Talmud is oral law presented in writing.
 5. They were considered even more binding than divinely given law.
 6. They were to keep these rules even if God's law was violated (Mark 7:7-12).
- D. Pharisaic slavishness to oral law made them bigots, formalists, traditionalists in the worst sense (Matt. 23:4).
- E. Sadducees denied these oral laws.

VI. THERE WAS GOOD AND BAD ABOUT THE PHARISEES. THE BAD OFTEN OUTWEIGHED THE GOOD.

- A. In New Testament, usually presented in bad light; certainly true today.
- B. In many ways they were as Christians are to be; in other ways, they were very contradictory to Christianity.
 1. Gave emphasis to external religion.
 2. Christianity has external activities; not wrong to show Christianity.
 3. Difference was the motive and quality of the heart.

4. Example: Immersion – but for what purpose and understanding?
 5. Outwardly, may appear correct; inwardly unacceptable to God.
 6. To the Pharisee, the externals were the whole thing.
 7. Stress on fasting; conspicuous garments.
 8. Intense formalists, heavy on ceremony; endless rituals.
 9. Christianity has some forms, rituals also.
 10. Many times, what they did, they did in good faith and honesty; often in ignorance of just what they were really doing; sincere.
- C. Pharisees believed many things happened according to uncontrolled fate.
1. Many things result of man's power of choice.
 2. Essenes believed everything controlled by fate.
 3. Sadducees believed everything controlled by human choice.
 4. Fate was identified by the Pharisee as the work of God; not always understood how God worked; like providence.
 5. Pharisaic view, much like that of a Christian in this respect.

VII. SOME COMMENDABLE BELIEFS OF THE PHARISEES; CANNOT CONDEMN THE GOOD ABOUT THEM; MENTION SOME OF THEIR VIEWS; SOME IN BIBLE/SOME NOT/SOME SINCE BIBLE.

- A. Had respect for the aged.
1. Did not always show it properly.
 2. Corban, Mark 7:9-13.
- B. Believed in the soul or spirit of man; angels, resurrection, life after physical death, judgment, reward, punishment.
1. Great odds with Sadducees on these matters; they denied these things.
 2. Paul used his belief, in common with Pharisees, to his advantage when he was before the Jewish council, Acts 23:6.
- C. They were eager to make proselytes; labored to propagate their faith.
1. Their success was not beneficial, Matt. 23:15.
 2. Missionary minded as Christians must be.
 3. Pharisees wished to embrace all Jews through education.
 4. Christianity is a taught religion; spread through education.

5. Great respect for learning; operated schools.
- D. Had respect for the dead.
 1. Keep the tombs, Matt. 23:29.
 2. But they did it for outward appearance.
- E. Pray at widows' houses but it was pretense, Matt. 23:14.
- F. They were rule keepers; law keepers; many were upright; moral; given to holiness; some today ridicule "rule keeping and law keeping."
 1. Anyone that is obedient to God does the same thing.
 2. Obedience to law is not being a Pharisee in a bad sense.
 3. Pharisees thought obedience would earn their blessings, however,
 4. On this point they widely vary from Christianity.
- G. Well organized; nothing bad about that; the church is organized; government.
- H. Included both men and women; Christ includes men and women, Gal. 3:28.
- I. Their religion included almsgiving, held to expectation of the Messiah.
- J. Christianity includes giving, helping others, 2 Cor. 9; Gal. 6:9.

VIII. WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE PHARISEES? Matt. 5:20; 16:6,11,12.

- A. Basically without submission; hypocritical; self-centered; self-righteous.
 1. As a class, their hypocrisy was condemned.
 2. Their showiness of their religion for praises of men condemned.
 3. Guilty of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel, Matt. 23:24.
 4. Long on theory; short on practice.
 5. Christ taught us to do as they say, but not as they do, Matt. 23:2.
- B. Made the word of God of none effect by their traditions, Matt. 15:3-6.
- C. Treated men like children with minute, precise ceremonies; For example:
 1. Must repeat Deut. 6:4-6 twice every 24 hours.
 2. Endless washing of cups, hands (Matt. 15:1), clothes, vessels; what to eat.
 3. Laws governing what was clean, unclean; more than written law.

4. Anything slaughtered by a heathen was unclean.
5. Precise regulations regarding tithing.
 - a. Demand tithing of whatever they grew, bought or sold.
 - b. Pay tithes only to a priest friendly to Pharisees.
 - c. Require tithing of spices (mint, anise, cummin).
6. Laws about what kind of wick and oil of the candles of the Sabbath.
7. Could not eat a fowl; could not eat an egg laid days around a festival.
8. Could not pay a heathen your debt three days before a heathen feast.
9. Jewish midwife prohibited from assisting a heathen mother give birth.
10. They were extreme and inconsistent in venerating the Sabbath.
 - a. Actually practiced what we call situation ethics.
 - b. Must not work their animal, but could ride him on Sabbath.
 - c. Could not carry a stick to urge the beast along on Sabbath.
 - d. Could give to a beggar who extended his hand but not to one where you had to extend your hand.
 - e. Could exceed day's journey limits if you felt you must.
 - f. Plowing forbidden on Sabbath as work; even dragging a chair if its legs made a rut in the dirt.
 - g. Could walk on crutch or wooden leg, but not stilts.
 - h. Could not wear false teeth, or unnecessary garments.
 - i. A tailor could not carry his needle.
 - j. Could not harvest, even pluck grain, Matt. 12:1,2.
 - k. Even found fault with Jesus for healing on the Sabbath.
11. Could not eat with a man, even a Jew, whose wife was a heathen.
 - a. Guilt by association to the extreme.
 - b. Guilt by association has validity; also has limits.
12. Drew a sharp distinction between a Jew and Samaritan.
 - a. Explains much of their contention with Jesus.
 - b. Jesus used Samaritans often in more favorable light.
 - c. Tendency to despise those with whom they held differences.
 - d. Any association with a heathen proved faithlessness.

- e. Another extreme and abuse of guilt by association.
 - f. Religiously elite; superior (Remind you of some today?)
13. They were guilty of binding human doctrines as if they were of God.
 14. Attempt to tell others how to live but they would not follow their own rules for themselves.
 15. Did what they did to be seen of men, Matt. 23:27.
 - a. Blew horns to attract attention to their deeds, Matt. 6:1,2.
 - b. Sounded off when they obeyed.
 - c. In times of persecution it is the duty of men of faith to not hide, but Pharisees continued it when not persecuted to be seen.
 16. They would wear titles of distinction (Rabbi, Father-Doctor?) Matt. 23:9
 17. White without; black within – no reference to skin color.
 18. Mark Twain – they were good men in the worst sense of the word.
 19. Like both antis and liberals today, assumed the right to bind man's ways even if contrary to and called for the loosing of the Lord's ways.
 20. Substituted partial obedience for full obedience.
 - a. Like doctrine of "faith only."
 - b. Like being immersed regardless of purpose, understanding.
 21. Trusted themselves and set all others at naught.
 22. Claimed first seats at feasts, in the synagogue.
 23. They were guilty of covering their dishonesty, greed for gain, power, by using religion as a cloak to over.

IX. WHAT PHARISEEISM IS NOT.

- A. Many have labeled things as Pharisaic which are perfectly acceptable, and shown themselves more like Pharisees in the process.
- B. It is not Pharisaic to oppose missionary societies, instrumental music, women preachers, choruses, quartets, clapping, etc., Eph. 3:21; 5:19; 1 Tim. 3:11-15.
- C. Contending for law and obeying the law is not Pharisaic, James 1:10; Heb. 5:9.
- D. It is not proving all things and holding fast to that which is good, 1 Thess. 5:21.

- E. It is not forbidding what is unauthorized by the Word of God, Col. 3:17.
- F. It is not insisting that we build on the rock of truth, Matt. 7:24-27.
- G. It is not the same as the Puritanism that called for morality; reverence; 1 Tim. 5:22; Eccl. 12:13 (fear).
- H. It is not having Biblically based convictions, 1 Cor. 4:6.
- I. It is not defending the truth, Phil. 1:17.
- J. It is not calling names or marking with labels, 2 Tim. 4:14; Rom. 16:17.
- K. Not singing two songs, having a prayer, etc., 1 Cor. 14:40.
- L. Not withdrawing from certain ones under certain conditions, 2 Thess. 3:6.
- M. Not condemning false teachers; exposing false doctrine, Gal. 1:6-9.
- N. Not being against worldliness; works of the flesh, Gal. 5:19-21; 1 John 2:15-17.
- O. It is not many of the things liberals try to attach to those who are determined to stand in the old paths and resist their human departures from truth.
- P. Calling someone a Pharisee is often nothing more than a smear tactic against those who will not go along with digression.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Jewish sects have long ago been absorbed with the passing of time.
 - a. Many of their attitudes and actions, good and bad, still exist today.
 - b. They are often evident in the church.
 - c. We should neither imitate, nor shun the Pharisee; they are not our standard.
 - d. What the Lord teaches is how we must be.
 - e. We cannot glibly brand as Pharisaic anything until we know just what particular we have in mind and whether it harmonizes with truth or not.
 - f. We should want to be like the Pharisees in some things; not in others.
 - g. We must studiously avoid the evil attitudes, habits, sins of their way.
 - h. Must studiously strive to imitate Christ; follow His Word.

True Worship Pleases The Father

John 4:24

Charles Blair

1. Man has a unique relationship to God that no other creature enjoys (Gen. 1:26).
2. The world around man declares the existence of God (Psalm 19:1-3).
3. Yet for all of that evidence which stares men in the face, we cannot, on the basis of such evidence, know how God desires us to worship Him.
4. We must turn to the written revelation from God to discover what it is that pleases God. Eph. 4:13; 1 John 3:22

DISCUSSION:

- I. **TO DECLARE THAT TRUE WORSHIP PLEASURES GOD IMPLIES THERE IS A WORSHIP WHICH DOES NOT PLEASE GOD. IN THE FACE OF THIS, THERE IS THE IDEA THAT GOD EXPECTS US TO KNOW HIS WILL IN THE MATTER OF WORSHIP:**
 - A. Man cannot direct the steps of his life without knowledge from God. Jer. 10:23
 - B. Man, when left to his own devices, will always turn toward the physical world and things which satisfy him. Rom. 1:17,23
 - C. Men without God are lifted up in pride and thereby stop thinking about what pleases God. Rom. 1:21
 - D. By way of example, consider Israel and the golden calf while Moses was up in the mount getting the law from God.
 1. After Aaron shaped the golden calf, he told Israel that the next day they would have a feast unto the Lord. Exodus 32:5
 2. The next day was a day of worship unto the Lord. Exodus 32:6
 3. By the end of the day they were playing, dancing and had lost their clothes. Exodus 32:19,25
- II. **GOD HAS ALWAYS DEMANDED THAT THE HEAVENLY HOST WORSHIP HIM: WE KNOW THAT SUCH PLEASURES GOD:**
 - A. The creatures in heaven continually praise God by saying Holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts. Isaiah 1:1-3

- B. The angel stopped John from worshipping him, by telling John to worship God. Rev. 19:10
- C. Paul warned against the idea of worshipping angels. Col. 2:18

III. JESUS, IN HIS GREAT CONFRONTATION WITH SATAN, SHOWED THAT WORSHIP IS TO BE DIRECTED TOWARD GOD:

- A. The third trial is the one for our consideration. Matt. 4:8-10
- B. Satan showed to the Lord all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory (v.8).
- C. Satan then wanted Jesus to bow down and worship him, which if he did, Satan would give Jesus all these kingdoms (v.9).
- D. The reply of the Lord was that God was the One to be worshipped and served (v.10).

IV. JESUS, IN JOHN 4, MEETS THE WOMAN AT THE WELL AND BEGINS THE EFFORT TO REACH HER SOUL:

- A. First of all, He had to deal with the existing prejudice between the Samaritans and the Jews (John 4:9).
- B. Jesus then proceeds to look at her life and move her from the physical to the spiritual (John 4:10-19).
- C. She knew Jesus was a prophet and raised the key issue for her as a Samaritan; that is, where is the proper place of worship (John 4:19,20)?
- D. By telling her that salvation was of the Jews, Jesus let her know her worship was wrong (John 4:22).

V. JESUS NOW POINTS TO A DIFFERENCE THAT IS SOON TO COME REGARDING WORSHIP:

- A. The time was coming when neither the mountain in Samaria nor Jerusalem would be the place for acceptable worship (John 4:21).
 - 1. Worship would not be authorized based on a location (mountain in Samaria or the city of Jerusalem).
- B. In order for this to change, there would have to be a change in the law (Heb. 7:12).
 - 1. Concerning the change of the law which allowed a new priesthood, Jesus said it would cause an unchangeable priesthood (Heb. 7:24).
- C. The Lord then was telling this woman that a change was coming in the law, the priesthood and thereby worship, itself.

VI. JESUS THUS INTRODUCES INTO OUR MINDS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE IDEA THAT NOT A PLACE, BUT RATHER THE CONDITION OF THE HUMAN HEART, IS WHAT MATTERS:

- A. Abraham went toward a mountain in the land of Moriah in order to worship God at a selected place (Gen. 22:5).
- B. Daniel faced toward Jerusalem in his daily prayers in the nation of Babylon (Daniel 6:10).
- C. Again, the case of the woman in John 4 stating the mountain in Samaria as the proper place for acceptable worship.
- D. We read about the true worshiper.
 - 1. There had been true worship under the Old Testament period.
 - 2. This then refers to what is a true worshiper under the new law which Christ would establish (Heb. 8:10).
- E. The true worshiper under the new law would worship God in spirit (John 4:23).
 - 1. The word "spirit" here refers to "mental disposition" (Strong's concordance).
 - 2. Under the new law, man would worship God with the proper attitude or mind-set.
 - a. Note the contrast of unacceptable worship during the time of the old law (Isaiah 1:12).
 - 3. One must bring the idea of heart that they want to worship God, that is their heart is willing (Isaiah 1:19).
 - 4. Man has always been plagued by trying to worship God without the heart being involved (Matt. 15:8).
- F. Under the new law of Christ, man must likewise worship God in truth.
 - 1. By this we mean there is a standard to which men must appeal to determine what it is, that pleases God in worship (Rev. 11:1).
 - 2. Looking at the standard of the New Testament, what we find is that the New Testament church worshiped God in five key areas. These were singing, praying, partaking of the Lord's supper and in giving of their means for the work of Christ.
 - a. The church in Ephesus and Colosse were taught that all Christians in worship were to engage in singing unto God (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
 - b. The church in Troas engaged in public teaching and in partaking of the Lord's supper (Acts 20:7).

- c. The church in Jerusalem engaged in public prayers (Acts 2:42).
- d. The church in Corinth engaged in giving of their means (1 Cor. 16:1,2).
- e. If we abide in the truth, then these are the acts we participate in, so that we may please God with our worship.

VII. EVERY ACT MUST HAVE THE PROPER ATTITUDE OF HEART ON THE PART OF THE WORSHIPER IN ORDER TO PLEASE GOD:

- A. We sing and make the melody in our heart as we touch the instrument of our heart because the Word of Christ is dwelling in our hearts (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
- B. We bring our petitions to God in proper attitude (James 1:5; 1 John 3:22; 5:14).
- C. We eat the Lord's supper by remembering what He did for us as we partake of it (1 Cor. 11:24-27).
- D. When we publicly teach, we do so using the Word of God (2 Tim. 4:2).
- E. When we give, we do so from cheerful hearts (2 Cor. 9:6,7).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Our songs reflect the concept of worship.
- 2. Our worship is geared toward God, Who is worthy.
- 3. No follower of Christ should ever be begged to do that which pleases God.
- 4. Let us worship Him, in spirit and in truth.

Traditions of Men Regarding The Lord's Supper

Mark Lindley

- 1. "Tradition" is defined as "the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one

generation to another without written instruction" (Webster's, p.1251).

2. There were some in the time of Christ who held to religious traditions (Matt. 15:9).
3. Following the traditions of men results in vain worship.
4. The Lord's supper is often abused by those who cling to man-made traditions.
5. There are problems in and out of the Lord's church.
6. This lesson will deal with the institution of the Lord's supper, traditions of men outside the church, and traditions of men in the church.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

- A. The Lord's supper was instituted by Christ during the Passover feast (Matt.26:17, 26-28).
 1. The Israelites were to observe the Passover to commemorate their deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 13:8-9).
 2. The passover lamb was typical of Christ (Exodus 12:5; John 1:29; 1 Peter 2:22).
 3. Jesus told the apostles to go into the city to prepare for the observance of the Passover (Mark 14:13-16).
- B. The elements of the Lord's supper are revealed in Scripture.
 1. Jesus used unleavened bread in instituting the Lord's supper.
 - a. Only unleavened bread was used in observing the Passover (Matt. 26:17).
 - b. The bread represents Jesus' body (Matt. 26:26).
 - c. Leaven is symbolic of corruption (Matt. 16:6; Gal. 5:9).
 - d. Thus, unleavened bread is a picture of Jesus' sinlessness (Heb. 4:15).
 2. The other element of the Lord's supper is "the cup" or "the fruit of the vine."
 - a. The word "wine," which can mean fermented or unfermented wine depending on the context, is never used to apply to the Lord's supper.
 - b. The fruit of the vine represents the blood of Christ (Matt. 26:27-28).
- C. The purpose of the Lord's supper is revealed in Scripture.
 1. The Lord's supper is to be observed in memory of Jesus (Luke 22:19).

- a. Those who observe the Lord's supper proclaim His death (1 Cor. 11:26).
- b. Participants are also to discern the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11:29).
- c. The body of Christ was offered as a sacrifice, and His blood was shed for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28).
2. The Lord's supper is also a "communion" (1 Cor. 10:16-17).
 - a. There is communion with Christ (Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25).
 - b. There is communion with brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Cor. 10:17).
- D. Those who are to partake of the Lord's supper are identified in Scripture.
 1. Is there any restriction? Should all be encouraged to observe the Lord's supper?
 2. It is called the "Lord's supper" because Jesus is the Originator, Master, and Host of it; therefore, one has no right to invite those whom the Lord has not invited.
 3. Jesus gave it to the "disciples" (Matt. 26:26). It was not given to unbelievers.
 4. The Corinthians did not partake uninvited.
 - a. They had obeyed the Gospel (Acts 18:8).
 - b. They had been washed, sanctified, and justified (1 Cor. 6:11).
 - c. They were in the kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24), which is where the Lord's supper is to be eaten (Luke 22:29-30).
 5. Who is to eat the Lord's supper?
 - a. The church (1 Cor. 1:2; 11:17ff.).
 - b. Members of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:17).
 - c. Brethren (1 Cor. 11:33).
- II. The duration of the Lord's supper is revealed in Scripture (1 Cor. 11:26).
 1. The Lord's supper is to continue "till He comes."
 2. Until Jesus comes again, there will always be the need to remind ourselves of what He has accomplished for us through His death.
- III. **THERE ARE TRADITIONS OF MEN CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.**
 - A. *Transubstantiation* is a tradition of men.

1. The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and his holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called TRANSUBSTANTIATION" ("Catechism of the Catholic Church" website).
 2. This change allegedly occurs during the consecration (i.e., when the priest blesses the bread and fruit of the vine).
 3. Jesus was simply saying that the bread represents His body, and the fruit of the vine represents His blood (Matt. 26:26-28).
 - a. When the disciples ate the bread were they eating the physical body of Christ? If so, Christ had two bodies!
 - b. If the disciples literally drank the blood of Christ, what was flowing through Jesus' veins during that time?
 4. Jesus often used figures of speech in His teaching (cf. John 10:9; 15:1).
- B. *Observing the Lord's supper quarterly, annually, or semi-annually is a tradition of men.*
1. One may argue that it is appropriate to observe the Lord's supper on Thursday, since that is the day Christ instituted it.
 - a. But Jesus said He would not eat it again until He ate it in the kingdom (Matt. 26:29).
 - b. Paul affirmed that the Lord's supper should be observed "as it was delivered" (1 Cor.11:23). Therefore, the Lord's supper today should be observed as often as those in the early church (the kingdom) observed it.
 2. Note the denominational practices concerning the frequency with which the Lord's supper is observed. The following quotations are from denominational tracts:
 - a. "Baptists believe that baptized persons should periodically express their love for, and faith in, Jesus Christ

- through the ordinance of the Lord's supper. How frequently it is observed is to be determined by the will of the congregation" ("Truths We Hold," The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, TN).
- b. "The Lord's Supper is to be observed repeatedly and periodically. It should neither be so often that it loses its meaning..." ("In Remembrance of Me," Broadman Press, Nashville, TN).
3. The church at Corinth observed the Lord's supper upon the first day of the week.
 - a. They assembled themselves together to eat the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:20,33).
 - b. The words "as often as" in 1 Cor. 11:26 indicate frequency.
 - c. The Lord had delivered information to Paul concerning the Lord's supper, and Paul had delivered the information to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:23).
 - d. They assembled "upon the first day of the week" (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Question: Why do denominations not argue that giving loses its meaning when practiced so frequently?
 4. The church at Troas observed the Lord's supper upon the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
 - a. The disciples "came together."
 - b. They came together "upon the first day of the week."
 - c. They came together upon the first day of the week "to break bread."
 5. If one observes the Lord's supper "upon the first day of the week," he will observe it weekly (cf. Acts 2:42; Rev. 1:10).
 6. One might as well change the elements of the Lord's supper as to change the time of the Lord's supper (Col. 3:17).
- C. *Observing the Lord's supper on "special occasions" such as Easter, Christmas, and weddings is a tradition of men.*
1. There is no authority for observing the Lord's supper at any time other than "the first day of the week" (Col. 3:17).
 2. The Lord's supper should be observed on the Lord's Day (Rev.1:10). The first day of the week is the Lord's Day because:
 - a. It is the day of His resurrection (Luke 24:1).

- b. It is the day the Lord's church was established (Acts 2:1,47).
 - c. Thus, it is fitting that the Lord's people assemble around the Lord's table (1 Cor.10:21), to observe the Lord's supper, on the Lord's Day.
 - d. To observe the Lord's supper any other time is to follow the tradition of men (Matt. 15:9).
3. The Lord's supper is to be observed by the church (1 Cor. 11:20), not by friends and families gathered for a wedding!
- D. *Calling the Lord's supper by unscriptural names is a tradition of men.*
- 1. Scripturally, it is called:
 - a. The Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:20).
 - b. The Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:21).
 - c. Communion (1 Cor. 10:16).
 - 2. Unscripturally, it is called:
 - a. The "Eucharist" which means "thanksgiving." This term is used because the priest offers thanks for the elements of the Lord's supper.
 - b. A "sacrament." Through sacraments it is believed that there is a mysterious impartation of grace. However, the Lord's people observe the Lord's supper, not to be forgiven, but because they are forgiven.

IV. **THERE ARE TRADITIONS OF MEN CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE CHURCH.**

- A. *Exalting the Lord's supper over other acts of worship is a tradition of men.*
- 1. Some, by their actions, seem to believe that the Lord's supper is more important than other acts of worship.
 - a. There are five acts of worship, and each is important.
 - b. Where is it implied in the Scriptures that the Lord's supper is more important than any other act of worship?
 - 2. The following is evidence that some exalt the Lord's supper over other acts of worship.
 - a. Some eat the Lord's supper, then leave.
 - b. The Lord's supper is sometimes taken to those who were unable to attend services, but the other items of worship are neglected.
 - c. Some forsake the assembly Sunday morning but attend to eat the Lord's supper Sunday evening.

3. The Lord's supper is important, but it is not all-important!
- B. *Women serving communion is a tradition of men.*
1. Some congregations are allowing women to serve communion.
 2. The change agents realize that if they can persuade brethren to allow this practice, it will open the flood gates to use women in other leadership roles in worship.
 3. 1 Timothy 2:8-13 teaches that women are not to usurp authority over men in worship.
 - a. One may contend that this instruction is not relevant today because it only applied to that culture.
 - b. But gender roles are tied to creation, not culture!
1 Tim. 2:13
- C. *Neglecting the purpose of the Lord's supper is a tradition of men.*
1. This was a problem in Corinth (1 Cor. 11:17-29).
 - a. They were coming together for the worse (v.17).
 - b. They were coming together in a divided state (v.18).
 - c. They were not remembering the significance of the Supper (v.20).
 - d. They were making a common meal of the Lord's supper (vs.21-22).
 - e. They were not discerning the Lord's body (vs.27-29).
 2. One may abuse the purpose of the Lord's supper by not worshiping in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
 - a. If one does not discern the Lord's body, he is not worshiping in spirit and in truth.
 - b. It is not a time for whispering, balancing a check book, playing with children, putting on makeup, etc.
- D. *Singing during the Lord's supper is a tradition of men.*
1. This is an innovation of those who seek to change the worship of the church.
 2. Observing the Lord's supper and singing are two distinct acts of worship.
 - a. Did Paul teach the church at Corinth to sing during the Lord's supper? No, he taught them to discern the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11:29).
 - b. Jesus and His disciples sang a song after they had eaten the passover meal (Matt. 26:30).
- E. *The One Cup Doctrine is a tradition of men.*

1. Some argue that only one container should be used for the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:27). Note the words "the cup."
2. "Cup" has reference to the contents of the cup.
 - a. Jesus gave thanks for the cup (Matt. 26:27). Was He giving thanks for the container?
 - b. Paul instructed the Corinthians to drink the cup (1 Cor. 11:26). Was he telling them to drink the container?
 - c. "The cup" does not mean one container any more than "the fruit of the vine" means one fruit (Mark 14:25).
3. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "The cup of blessing which we bless..." (1 Cor. 10:16).
 - a. Paul wrote from Ephesus.
 - b. Were the Corinthians and the Ephesians sharing the same cup?
 - c. They were divided by the Aegean Sea!
4. Brethren may use one cup if they choose; however, they should never bind what God has not bound.

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus once asked, "The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?" Matt. 21:25
2. Every doctrine had its origin in heaven or with men.
3. Let us never allow the Lord's supper to be corrupted by the traditions of men.

Traditions of Men Regarding Man's Existence

Alan Adams

1. Good tradition; bad tradition.
 - a. *paradosis, patroparadotos*
 - 1) Active sense it means a handing down or over;
 - 2) In the New Testament, used in a passive sense.

- a) Teachings about ways of doing things that are handed down from generation to generation.
 - b) It is used both in reference to human ideas ["doctrines ...precepts"] (Matt. 15:2, 9); or,
 - c) Christian teaching, instruction, tradition (2 Thess. 2:15). [Friberg, Bible Works Version]
- b. With a negative connotation.
 - 1) Matt. 15:2, "*tradition of the elders*"
 - 2) Matt. 15:3, "*transgress the commandment of God by your tradition*"
 - 3) Matt. 15:6, "*commandment of God of none effect by your tradition*"
 - 4) Mark 7:8, "*laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men*"
 - 5) Mark 7:9, "*reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition*"
 - 6) Mark 7:13, "*your tradition*"
 - 7) Col. 2:8, "*Beware lest any man spoil you...after the tradition of men...not after Christ*"
 - 8) 1 Peter 1:18, "*vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers*"
 - c. With a positive connotation
 - 1) 2 Thess. 2:15, "*hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle*"
 - 2) 2 Thess. 3:6, "*withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us*"
 - d. Any time human beings presume to produce, pontificate about, and promote ideas or doctrines in contrast to, in deviation from, or an alteration of those revealed by God; or, when they presume to speak with authority about that which God has not spoken, such is a "tradition of men" which must be rejected by those who seek to please God.
2. The question as to the origin of man.
 - a. Inextricably linked to value, oughtness and destiny.
 - b. A matter about which God has spoken (Gen. 1-2; 5:1,2; 6:7; Isa. 45:12; Mal. 2:10; Mark 10:6; Rom. 1:25; 1 Cor. 11:9).
 - c. A matter that is properly a historical question.
 - 1) It is an event that self-evidently belongs to the past.
 - 2) Facts as to that event could only proceed from a credible witness as to its occurrence.

- 3) The only one there to "witness" said event would have to be the cause of all save Himself; in other words, God (Gen. 1:1).
3. Evolution: The #1 "tradition of men" regarding human origin and purpose.
 - a. Its claim
 - 1) Origin and variation of all life by purely natural processes.
 - 2) Natural forces acting upon matter is the "creator."
 - 3) Continued influence of the same forces has caused all variation of life.
 - b. It meets all the criteria of a "tradition of men" (as per above).
 - 1) It is held to be fact: "as factual as digestion."
 - 2) It negates objective views of value, oughtness, and destiny.
 - 3) It has spawned its own philosophy or religion: Humanism.
 - 4) It claims an aura of authority: Science.
 - 5) It has its vehicle of promotion/enforcement: Public Education.
 - c. It makes "the word of God of none effect" (Mark 7:13).
4. This "tradition of men," like those confronted by Jesus, can be shown to be shoddy, self-serving, and beset with insuperable problems.

DISCUSSION:

I. INTRINSIC PROBLEMS OF THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

Adherents want to just jump to pictures and diagrams without investigating the prerequisites of the theory itself.

A. Proof.

1. Claims of adherents as to the present.
 - a. Origin and variation of all life proved by the present.
 - b. "One-way, irreversible process in time..." [Huxley]
 - c. "Fully natural process, inherent in the physical properties of the universe..." [Simpson]
2. Where's the proof?
 - a. Natural; random; one-way; irreversible; inherent in the physical properties of the universe: Proof should be all around.
 - b. The present says, "life comes only from prior life and that of its own kind."
 - c. Evolution 1) implies that the same process that brought life into existence, and accounts for all of the variations of life, should be presently observable; 2) it

- is false that such a process is presently observable;
 3) therefore, evolution is false.
3. Claims of adherents as to the past.
 - a. No proof in the present; one must look to the past: The testimony of the fossil record.
 - 1) The only presumed record of what has happened.
 - 2) Evolution must be proved in terms of history.
 - 3) The fossil record must show a record of the"
 - a) "gradual" emergence of life from matter.
 - b) "gradual transition" from "kind" of organism into another.
 - b. Does it?
 - 1) As to the first point.
 - a) Fossil record a hostile witness.
 - b) Its testimony shows abrupt emergence of life.
 - c) "So all kinds of life, when you see them in geological strata, appear suddenly and then they all appear complete...When you see it in the geological record, there it is just the same as you see it today." [Criswell]
 - 2) As to the second point, the fossil record shows:
 - a) No transitions from one kind to another.
 - b) No non-life to life; no non-human to human.
 - c) Distinctiveness of "kinds" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:39).
 - d) So, "...if the General Theory of Evolution ever has any empirical basis, such a gradual transition of fossils must be found" [Moore].
 4. Neither the present nor the past offer proof of Evolution.
- B. Mechanism. What propels one-way evolutionary advancement? Mutations, or quantum transition; natural selection.
1. Mutations are both rare and destructive. Evolution implies advancement and advantage.
 - a. "No mutation is on record which would make an animal or plant better organized or place it in a higher category than its ancestors...Such 'transmutation' simply does not and cannot occur." [Tinkle]
 - b. Desirable traits from mutation (not desirable to the mutant), left alone disappear.
 - c. Evolution affirms a climb toward complexity, mutations do not.
 2. Quantum advancement.
 - a. Popularized by Stephen J. Gould.
 - b. Evolution by "fits and spurts."

- c. What is the difference between this and osculation making a prince of a frog?
- 3. Natural selection.
 - a. Once here, natural selection helps define and refine the new organism until the next change.
 - b. Yet, natural selection is going the wrong way.
 - 1) Evolution moves from the narrow to the diverse; natural selection moves from the diverse to the narrow.
 - 2) "Organic evolution is up from nothing; natural selection is down from something. One might just as well argue that he can prove that people grow young by observing them as they grow old, as to say that natural selection proves organic evolution." [Camp]
 - c. What evolution holds regarding natural selection is anything but natural.
 - d. Evolution must look beyond nature for its mechanism; but, that would be surrender.
- C. Coherence.
 - 1. As "factual as digestion," Evolution is surely concise and uniform as to fundamentals. Not so.
 - 2. Abrupt fossil gaps have moved the theory away from Darwin's transitions and links, to Quantum Evolution."
 - 3. This then is a betrayal of uniformitarianism: the heart and soul of Evolution.
 - 4. Talk about your "blind faith."

"At the same time that biologists accept descent with modification (that is, evolution) as an actual occurrence in nature, they are most skeptical and reserved about what may be called the driving force behind descent)... Because biologists have not as yet discovered how evolution has taken place is no reason for denying evolution itself." [Parker]
 - 5. Evolutionists do agree on one thing: They reject creation.
- D. Assumption.
 - 1. If "facts" and "assumptions" were the same thing, they wouldn't be different.
 - 2. If Evolution is not a "fact," then it is an assumption.
 - a. Listen to Mr. Darwin [Origin...],

"...gradations in the perfection of any organ or instinct, which we may consider, either do now exist or could have [emp. AA] existed, each good of its kind

that all organs and instincts are, in ever so slight a degree variable and, lastly that there is a struggle for existence leading to the preservation of each profitable deviation of structure or instinct.”

- b. Listen to Mr. Flew [Debate...],
 “I appreciate that Dr. Warren will not agree with me that the theory of evolution by natural selection constitutes a true account of the origin of species. I do not at this moment ask him to believe that it does. But it does seem to me that if once you allow that it is a true account...”
- c. Listen to Mr. Kerut [Implications Of Evolution], who speaks of seven assumptions of evolution, none of which are “capable of experimental verification.”
 - 1) Non-living things gave rise to living (spontaneous generation).
 - 2) Spontaneous generation occurred only once.
 - 3) Viruses, bacteria, plants and animals are all interrelated.
 - 4) The Protozoa gave rise to the Metazoa.
 - 5) The various invertebrate phyla are interrelated.
 - 6) The invertebrates gave rise to the vertebrates.
 - 7) Within the vertebrates the fish gave rise to the amphibia, the amphibia to the reptiles, and the reptiles to the birds and mammals.
- d. Listen to Mr. Wald,
 - 1) “One has only to contemplate the magnitude of this task to concede that the spontaneous generation of living organisms is impossible. Yet, here we are as a result, I believe, of spontaneous generation.”
 - 3. What do Evolutionists not “assume?”
 - 4. This irrational, illogical, intellectually barren “tradition of men” is what the state forces your children to learn.

II. SCIENTIFIC PROBLEMS OF THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

- A. Evolution spawned by science?
 - 1. Though draped in the mantel of science, Evolution runs into the wall of science.
 - 2. Science seeks knowledge about the physical world and attempts to draw conclusions about how things in the physical world work or interact.

3. Evolution is not, cannot be "proved" by science.
- B. Scientific method.
 1. This is all about: observation, delineation, hypothesis, deduction, prediction, experimentation, theory, and then "law."
 2. A hypothesis that can't be tested is not science.
- C. Biogenesis.
 1. Life from prior life, and that of its own kind.
 2. Biogenesis meets all the criteria of the scientific method. It's law.
 3. Yet, it's the natural enemy of Evolution.
- D. Thermodynamics.
 1. Described in terms of two laws:
 - a. First, energy can be converted from one form to another, but total amount remains constant.
 - b. Second, tendency toward randomness, and less usefulness; entropy.
 2. The second law is a problem for Evolution.
 - a. It implies that the physical world is running down and wearing out (cf. Heb. 1:11).
 - b. Evolution implies a tendency toward a higher degree of organization.
 3. "It would hardly be possible to conceive of two more completely opposite principles that this principle of entropy increase and the principle of evolution. Each is precisely the converse of the other. As Huxley defines it, evolution involves a continual increase of order, or organization, of size, of complexity. The entropy principle involves a continual decrease of order, of organization, of size, of complexity. It seems axiomatic that both cannot possibly be true. But there is no question whatever that the second law of thermodynamics is true!" [Morris]
- E. Time.
 1. Early on, evolutionists realized the need for "time," and lots of it.
 - a. Geology answered the call, at first, providing thousands and thousands; then later, millions and millions of years.
 - b. Now, as per Sagan, it is "Billions and billions and billions of years."
 2. "Time is the hero of the plot... Given so much time the impossible becomes possible, the possible, probable and

the probable, virtually certain. One has only to wait: time itself performs miracles.” [Wald]

3. Even if great amounts of time were counterfactually granted, what does this prove?
 - a. Time is not a force or a cause; it is simply a measurement.
 - b. Time doesn't push; it's no mechanism.
 - c. There is no force in Nature that could have jump-started Evolution, and no force in Nature that could be pushing it along. All of the time in the world couldn't create or modify one thing.
4. Is there proof for “billions, and billions?”
 - a. Dating methods are based on the same assumption made by the false teachers in Peter's time (2 Peter 3:5).
 - b. Dating methods are mere present perceptions that ignore many past extraordinary events.
 - 1) The earth was “compacted out of water.”
 - 2) Adam was a one-day-old adult.
 - 3) Heavenly bodies, rather than being where they are due to billions of years of moving away from the center of things, were in a moment “set” there.
 - 4) Full grown trees with annual rings were one day old.
 - 5) The flood.
 - c. Evolutionists postulate “quantum,” one-time occurrences themselves, and then glibly make claims about time which themselves are based on the absence of such.

III. PHILOSOPHIC PROBLEMS OF THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

- A. Human origin and purpose is a philosophical question.
 1. It seeks a “total explanation of reality.”
 2. It's one thing to dig up bones and paint pretty pictures; it's quite another to demonstrate a symmetry between Evolution and the world as it is; and, man as he is.
- B. We start with an empirical fact — a human being.
 1. Said human owes his origin either to matter acted influenced by natural forces (evolution); or
 2. To creation (God).
- C. We start with the nature of the world and man and observe that,

1. For evolution to be true, one must know (but cannot),
 - a. That matter is eternal;
 - b. That life came from rocks and dirt;
 - c. That consciousness came from that which had no consciousness;
 - d. That conscience came from that which had no conscience;
 - e. That intelligence came from that which had no intelligence; and,
 - f. That human beings came from that which was not human.
2. Only creation comports with each of these facts.
- D. Logical. Logic is about correct reasoning; Evolution flies in the face of logic.
 1. The Law of Rationality.
 - a. Reasonable people ought to accept only those conclusions warranted by the evidence.
 - b. Evolution says, "It is impossible, yet it must be."
 - c. There is no "sound argument" that concludes in favor of evolution.
 2. The Law of Contradiction.

Any doctrine that implies a self-contradiction is itself a false doctrine. Evolution implies...

 - a. That "uniformitarianism" is and is not true;
 - b. That the principle of entropy is and is not true;
 - c. That between what is clearly Human and what is clearly non-Human, there must at one time have existed a thing, or things, which both was/were and was/were not human and non-human.
 - d. The Law of Excluded Middle.

Precise propositions are either true or false; and objects are either this or not this. Consider some examples from brother Thomas Warren,

 - 1) A woman was on earth before any human baby;
 - 2) A human baby was on earth before any woman.
 - 3) In the past, a non-human gave birth to a human.
 - 4) In the past, a non-human transformed into a human.
 - 5) Absurdities.
 - a) That which implies absurdity is absurd.
 - b) It is absurd to postulate theories, conclusions, facts and laws about events that antedate all historical records and evidences.

- Only credible historical documentation will suffice as to the origin and nature of man.
- You'll have to read the Book of Genesis for that.

6) The Falsification Principle.

That which cannot theoretically be falsified cannot be demonstrated.

- a) Creationists are chided for believing something that can't be falsified.
- b) Inasmuch as the question of origins deals with time, eternity, infinity; the only way to falsify creation and therefore God, is to hypothesize that nothings exists; but, then, that would end the discussion!
- c) In reality, it is evolution that falls under the weight of falsification. It dies the death of a thousand qualifications.

E. Ethical.

Per evolution, man is nothing more than "matter in motion." Only molecular organization separates him from everything else.

1. Value:

- a. Warren to two renowned atheist/evolutionists: "Value did not exist before the first human being."
 - 1) One said "true," the other "false."
 - 2) Yet, both are men who claim to abhor bad values (like genocide in Nazi Germany).
- b. Evolution implies that the origin of value was concurrent with the origin of the first man; and that there are as many values as there are people.
- c. It implies that moral judgment is impossible.

2. Metaphysical reality:

- a. Evolution must fit with and explain reality.
- b. Man possesses qualities that are not common to the rest of the world, rather are unique only to him.
- c. Such things as the: intellectual, moral, emotional, aesthetic, psychological, spiritual, etc.
- d. Each of these qualities is a part of man, and yet all are separate from his physical person.
- e. One might dissect a human brain, but he will never locate the mind.
- f. He might observe a beating heart, but he will never surgically locate love and compassion.

- g. He might explore the entire human body, but he will never locate the conscience that cries out in pain when violated.
 - h. How does evolution, a completely materialistic philosophy, account for these transcendent and immaterial qualities of man?
3. Oughtness:
- a. Why should matter possess a sense of "oughtness?"
 - b. From whence did matter contrive such?
 - c. Why would matter feel the need to sacrifice and give of himself for the benefit of others?
 - d. What of "right" and "wrong", "beauty" and "justice" and "worship?"
 - e. Not only must evolution have life coming from non-life, and organic from inorganic, he must also have "...the immaterial from the material, the spiritual from the non-spiritual. And, this doesn't make any sense."

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus often showed the traditions of men to be without merit, self-contradictory, and destructive to man. So it is with this tradition of men called Evolution.
2. Eternity and infinity are facts.
 - a. The physical world and man have a beginning.
 - b. Only He who was there in the beginning can speak with authority as to our origin, our purpose and our destiny.
3. He has spoken (Acts 17:24-31).

Traditions Of Men Regarding All Of Life Is Worship

Jerry Joseph

1. *"God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:24).
2. God Desires our worship (Psalm 42:1).

3. God Demands our worship (Matt. 4:10; John 4:24).
4. God Deserves our worship (John 4:23-24; Rev. 4:11; Psalm 86:9-10).
5. God Designed our worship (John 4:24; Col. 3:17).
6. God Designated our worship (John 4:24).
 - a. The DIRECTION of worship — “God.”
 - b. The DISPOSITION in worship — “in spirit.”
 - c. The DIVINE TRUTH in worship — “in truth.”
7. God Delights only in worship that is according to His Directives.
8. God is Displeased with Departures in worship from His Directives (Lev. 10:1-2; Heb. 11:4; Matt. 15:8-9).
9. One such departure from “divinely designed and designated” worship is the distorted doctrine that “everything we do in life is worship.”
10. Our design in this study is to discuss the: 1) **description of this doctrine**; 2) **dangerous and destructive consequences of this doctrine**; 3) **damage done to the divine concept of worship by this doctrine** and 4) **defeating of this doctrine**.

DISCUSSION:

I. DESCRIPTION OF THIS DOCTRINE.

A. As Declared by Some.

1. Jim McGuiggan believes that just as the Lord’s supper is a specific act of worship, so also is every other action in the life of a Christian. To him, house cleaning, bed making, cooking, ditch digging, and providing for one’s family is worship if offered unto God. When one works for God and is doing the will of God that is worship according to McGuiggan. (Book of Romans Commentary pp.132-135).
2. Jack McKinney describes the Christian’s worship as involving and consisting in the whole of one’s life as it is set apart to the service of God. To him, all that we do, even what we eat and drink, if done to the glory of God is worship. (Harding Lectureship, 1978, pp.137-139).
3. What others have declared about worship: 1) It is not confined or limited to a time or place; 2) the assembly is for the purpose of the edification of the saints and not to perform the five acts of worship; 3) all service to God is worship; 4) everything we do, except sin, is worship to God; 5) all of life is worship, but there are different

levels; 6) sacrifice connotes worship, therefore all sacrifice is worship.

B. Is a Distortion of Scripture.

1. Rom. 12:1-2 is distorted to teach that all sacrifice (Christian service) is worship.
 - a. Distinction is made in the Old Testament between "worship" and "service." Exodus 20:5; 23:24; 32:8; Deut. 4:19; 8:19; 17:3; 1 Kings 9:6, 9; 16:31; 2 Kings 21:21; Jer. 8:2; 16:11
 - b. Difference in "worship" and "service" is also seen in the New Testament. Matt. 4:9, 10; Acts 24:11; 26:7; Rom. 1:25
 - c. Demanding that "worship" and "service" are always used synonymously is denying the teaching of the Scripture.
 - 1) Christ came to "minister" or "serve" man. Matt. 20:28. Can He worship man?
 - 2) Christians are to serve man but we cannot worship man. Gal. 6:10; James 1:27; Matt. 4:10
2. John 4:20-24 is distorted to teach that worship is never again to be confined to a place and time but rather it encompasses the worshiper's total life and relationship with God.
 - a. Jesus was not Denying the nature of worship
 - b. Jesus was Declaring that no longer must worship be in a designated holy place.
3. 1 Thess. 5:17 is distorted to teach that worship is continual and constant.
 - a. Worship is a Distinct act and not a continual act or relationship.
 - 1) The word for worship most often used in the New Testament (*proskuneo*) denotes an act of reverence paid.
 - a) "To kiss the hand toward one... to do homage... do obeisance to..." – *Thayers*.
 - b) "An act of homage or reverence to God" – *Vines*
 - 2) It does not mean a continual state.
 - a. Worship has a Definite starting and stopping point.
 - b. The Word of God Declares there is a "going to" worship and also a "coming to" worship. Gen. 22:1-5; Acts 8:27-28; 24:10-11; Luke 2:1-42; Rev.

3:9; Matt. 2:11-12; Judges 7:15; 1 Sam. 1:19;
2 Sam. 12:2; John 12:20

II. DANGEROUS AND DESTRUCTIVE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DOCTRINE. IF IT IS TRUE, THAT “EVERYTHING WE DO IN LIFE IS WORSHIP,” THEN....

- A. Acts or avenues of worship do not exist. Acts 2:42
- B. Belief in God is not essential. Heb. 11:6
- C. Christ’s church is not important because according to this teaching, there is not a designated place (in the church) for acceptable worship. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:18-34
- D. Declaring and Doing the Truth are not essential. Col. 3:17; John 4:24; Acts 2:42
- E. Entertainment and recreation is a “form” of worship. Col. 3:1-3
- F. Forsaking the public worship assemblies are encouraged. Heb. 10:24-25
- G. God is being worshiped when we attend the public worship services but will not participate in the acts of worship. John 4:24; Acts 2:42
- H. Hand clapping would be pleasing to God in our public worship assemblies. Col. 3:17
- I. Ignorant worship would not exist. Acts 17:23
- J. Joining with the denominations and liberal brethren in their activities would honor God. Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11
- K. Killing unborn babies would glorify God. Rom. 13:9
- L. Lord’s supper can be observed on any day of the week with the approval of God. Acts 20:7
- M. Mechanical instruments of music would be acceptable. Col. 3:16-17; Eph. 5:19
- N. Necessity of faithfulness to God is not demanded. Rev. 2:10
- O. One’s attitude in worship is not important. John 4:24; Isa. 1:11-15
- P. Prayers led by women in our worship services would be acceptable. 1 Tim. 2:8-12
- Q. Quitting the “Christian race” is okay. Heb. 12:1-4
- R. Relationships with others have no bearing upon whether or not our worship is acceptable to God. Matt. 5:23-24
- S. Social events and gatherings: weddings, parties, reunions, ball games, etc., would be worship. John 2:1-11
- T. Truth concerning “Fellowship” is not limited and restricted. Eph. 5:11; 2 John 9-11; 2 Thess. 3:6

- U. "Unity in diversity" would be acceptable to God. John 17:20-21; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:1-6
- V. Vain worship would not exist. Matt. 15:9
- W. Will worship would be pleasing to God. Col. 2:23
- X. Examining one's spiritual condition would not be required. 2 Cor. 13:5
- Y. Yielding to the Devil and his desires is permitted. 1 Peter 5:8
- Z. "Zeal of God without knowledge" is acceptable. Rom. 10:1-3

III. DAMAGE DONE TO THE DIVINE CONCEPT OF WORSHIP BY THIS DOCTRINE.

- A. Destroys the Purpose of Worship. John 4:19-24; Psalm 86:9-10
- B. Denies the Pattern for Worship. John 4:24; Col. 3:17
- C. Dishonors the Planner of Worship. John 4:23-24; Eccl. 12:13
- D. Disgraces the Place of Worship. 1 Cor. 11:18-20
- E. Distorts the Plan of Worship. John 4:24; Acts 2:42
- F. Degrades the Priority of Worship. Col. 3:1-3; Heb. 10:25
- G. Discourages the Participants in Worship. Heb. 10:24-25

IV. DEFEATING OF THIS DOCTRINE.

- A. Declaring of the Truth concerning Worship. John 4:24; 2 Tim. 4:2-4
- B. Defending of the Truth concerning Worship. Jude 3; 1 Cor. 16:13
- C. Desire to Worship God only as He has Designated. John 4:24
- D. Delight in Worshiping God as He has Demanded. John 4:24; Psalm 122.1
- E. Devote time in prayer to God. 1 Thess. 5:17
- F. Determine to be able to Discern between Divinely Designated, Designed worship and the Dangerous, Destructive and Damaging doctrine of "Everything we do in life is worship." 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 John 4:1
- G. Direct those in this error back to the Truth. James 5:19-20
- H. Disapprove and Depart from those who will not repent of this doctrine. Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6; Eph. 5:11
- I. Decide no matter what the cost, my words, work, way of life and worship will be Determined by the Bible and the Bible alone. 2 Tim. 3:15-17

CONCLUSION:

1. Traditions of men must not Direct us in our worship. Matt. 15:9
2. "Truth" is the Deciding factor to acceptable worship. John 4:24; Col. 3:17
3. Teaching that "Everything we do in life is worship" is Defying God's Truth.
4. Test your worship by God's Truth to make sure that God Delights in your worship.

Traditions Of Men Regarding Singing/Music

Kenneth Burlison

1. Tradition — giving over, handing down.
 - a. Scribes and Pharisees were transgressing the law of God by following traditions. Matt. 15:3
 - b. They made the commandment of God of none effect by traditions. Matt. 15:6
 - c. In the same context Jesus said, "*In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.*" Matt. 15:9
 - d. Paul practiced this prior to becoming a Christian. Gal. 1:14
2. Men today are making the commandments of God of none effect by following the traditions of men.
3. Isn't it sad that this subject must be dealt with in the church of our Lord?
4. It is necessary because change agents in the church are determined to make the church a denomination.
5. Though some congregations may be infiltrated with denominationalism, yet, the church that Christ built is not a denomination.
6. The problems we are dealing with in this lesson is the result of congregations "aping" denominations.
7. Some congregations have turned to denominationalism. They are denominations.

8. Those who follow the teaching of the Bible are referred to as "traditionalists" by liberals. Liberals are following "traditions" of denominations in their practice.
9. Following the traditions of men is the result of ignoring Biblical authority.

DISCUSSION:

I. MUSIC IS TAUGHT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. We readily admit this, but what kind of music is the question in the religious world.
- B. The Bible teaches **singing**.
 1. *"And when they had **sung** a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives."* Matt. 26:30
 2. *"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and **sang** praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."* Acts 16:25
 3. *"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and **sing** unto thy name."* Rom. 15:9
 4. *"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will **sing** with the spirit, and I will **sing** with the understanding also."* 1 Cor. 14:15
 5. *"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** and making melody in your heart to the Lord."* Eph. 5:19
 6. *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing** with grace in your hearts to the Lord."* Col. 3:16
 7. *"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I **sing** praise unto thee."* Heb. 2:12
 8. *"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him **sing** psalms."* James 5:13

II. ARE CHOIRS AND SOLOS AUTHORIZED IN THE ASSEMBLY?

- A. The key word is "authorized." If they are not authorized, we violate scriptural authority if practiced.
- B. Arguments used for choirs and solos by those who want to use them or are using them.

1. Rubel Shelly said, "The New Testament is actually clearer for solo or small-group singing than for congregational singing." 1 Cor. 14:26-28 (*Lovelines* July 19, 1989). Answer: The passage does not mention singing. A psalm may be read. A psalm may be used for learning without a solo being performed. There is no authority for choirs or solos in worship.
 2. It is argued that choirs and solos are pleasing to God since the Bible is silent on the matter. Answer: Silence means there is no authority for the practice.
 3. They argue that some congregations have used them for years, therefore, we should not oppose them. Answer: This does not prove anything. The practice by some does not authorize it.
 4. "I like it" is often the answer I receive from those who are involved in the practice of such. Answer: I like hamburgers but is that authority for their use in the Lord's supper? No! Just because some like the use of choirs or solos does not authorize the practice.
- C. There is not biblical authority for choirs or solos in the worship.
- D. The Bible authorizes congregational singing.
1. Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16
 2. "Be filled" and "let dwell." "Speaking," "singing," "making melody," "teaching all" suggest the activity of the whole church rather than a part.
 3. "One another" — reciprocal.
When the whole church sings, there is "speaking one to another." One part cannot be active while the other part is passive.

III. WHAT ABOUT THE USE OF MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP.

- A. The history of its use.
1. The American Cyclopaedia: As quoted by M. C. Kurfees in his book *Instrumental Music in the Worship*, p.152. "Pope Vitalian is related to have first introduced organs into some of the churches of Western Europe, about 670; but the earliest trustworthy account is that of the one sent as a present by the Greek emperor Constantine Copronymus to Pepin, king of the Franks, in 755."

2. Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia as quoted by M. C. Kurfees in his book *Instrumental Music in the Worship*, p.152. "In the Greek Church the organ never came into use. But after the eighth century it became more and more common in the Latin Church; not, however, without opposition from the side of the monks. Its misuse, however, raised so great an opposition of it, that, but for the Emperor Ferdinand, it would probably have been abolished by the Council of Trent. The Reformed Church discarded it; and though the church of Basel very early reintroduced it, it was in other places admitted only sparingly, and after long hesitation."
 3. There was a brief flare-up of the issue of mechanical instrumental music in Kentucky in 1851. In 1860 the Midway church in Midway, Kentucky, used instruments of mechanical music in their Sunday morning worship. After this 1860 episode, it died down for about four years. The question came to the forefront again in 1864.
- B. Two kinds of commands.
1. There are *specific* commands and there are *generic* commands.
 - a. Genesis 6:14 is a specific command — "*make thee and ark of gopher wood.*" If God had said, "make an ark of wood," it would have been a generic command.
 - b. Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 is a specific command. Had the Bible said, "make music" that would have been a generic command but the Bible said, "sing" that makes it a specific command.
 - c. There are two types of music: *Vocal* and *Mechanical Instrumental*.
 - 1) Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 specifies vocal music.
 - 2) Therefore, mechanical instrumental music is eliminated.
 2. When God specifies, that eliminates all of like kind.
- C. Does the Greek word "*psallo*" include playing a mechanical instrument?
1. If it does, then we cannot obey God's command to sing unless each of us plays a mechanical instrument.
 2. Who will say that every person who attempts to worship God without playing a mechanical instrument is in rebellion to God's command?
 3. I will say, if one uses a mechanical instrument of music in worship he is in rebellion to God and His command.

- D. "As an aid to a proper appreciation of the argument from the lexicons, we present a summary of their definitions.
1. Radical meaning — to touch, regardless of the particular object touched, the latter not inhering in the word.
 2. Meanings as applied in Greek literature:
 - a. To pluck the hair.
 - b. To twang the bowstring.
 - c. To twitch a carpenter's line.
 - d. To touch the chords of a musical instrument, that is, to make instrumental music.
 - e. To touch the chords of the human heart, that is to sing, to celebrate with hymns of praise.
 3. The Greek word "*psallo*" has carried five different meanings at different times. What then is the meaning in New Testament usage? It is clear that the meaning is "to sing" because the melody was made with the human heart. Eph. 5:19
 4. Thus, the New Testament meaning is not to pluck the hair; twang the bowstring; twitch the carpenter's line; touch the chords of a musical instrument; but is to touch the chords of the human heart, for that is the instrument with which the melody is to be made." (Instrumental Music in the Worship by M. C. Kurfees).
 5. What about singing with mechanical instruments of music in the home?
 - a. What impression does this leave with denominations?
 - b. The same songs are used.
 - c. Why do people think that it is okay to use mechanical instruments of music with songs of praise to God at any time or any place?
 - d. It is wrong anywhere.
- E. What about singing to the accompaniment of what sounds like instruments, sounds which are made with their voices?
1. After the performance of one of the groups that make mechanical instrumental sounds with their voices, Jeff Walling said, "And you thought we didn't have instruments."
 2. Why would we want something to replace what God has commanded — singing? Why substitute something for that which God has not authorized?
 3. Musical sounds do not teach one another as the command to sing is to do. Imitation of mechanical instruments with the voice is not singing.

F. Statements by religious leaders.

1. John Calvin: "musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps."
2. Adam Clarke: "music as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruption's in the worship of the Author of Christianity."
3. John Wesley: "I have no objection to instruments of music in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen."
4. Martin Luther: "called the organ an ensign of Baal."
5. Charles Spurgeon: "Preached for twenty years to thousands of people weekly in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle, London, England, did not have musical instruments in the worship."

Note: By no means am I suggesting that these men are the authority for one to follow. We are to follow the teachings of the Bible. These are mentioned to show, that many denominational leaders rejected the use of mechanical instruments in worship.

CONCLUSION:

1. One must not rely upon the traditions of men.
2. When one follows the traditions of men, he makes the commandments of God of none effect.
3. This is the practice of denominationalism.
4. Some congregations of the Lord's church have begun to practice the same.
5. These congregations have become denominations and must not be fellowshipped by faithful congregations. Withdrawal of fellowship from these congregations is certainly Scriptural. Two examples of congregations that will not be fellowshipped by faithful congregations are: Woodmont Hills in Nashville, Tennessee and Gateway in Pensacola, Florida. Many others could be mentioned.
6. We must take a stand against traditions of men and preach a *"thus saith the Lord."*

Traditions of Man Regarding Millennialism

Randy Kea

1. About 1 out of 25 verses in the New Testament deals with the second coming of Christ and related matters.
2. The cults and denominational groups persist in spreading false doctrine and wild theories concerning this subject.
3. The aim of this lesson is to define and refute several of the points of false doctrine regarding the various millennial theories.

DISCUSSION:

I. SOME GENERAL DEFINITIONS:

- A. *Postmillennialism* the belief that there is yet a golden age of righteousness and peace ahead for the church, after which Christ will return and raise the dead and execute judgment.
- B. *Amillennialism* the belief that the Bible does not predict a “millennium” or period of wide spread righteousness but rather there will be a parallel development of good and evil (God’s kingdom and Satan’s kingdom) until Christ comes to raise the dead and execute judgment.
- C. *Premillennialism* the belief that Christ came to earth to set up a kingdom but was unexpectedly rejected by the Jews. He then postponed the kingdom and set up the church (as an afterthought) instead. Then at his second coming, he will raise only the righteous dead, restore fleshly Israel and sit upon David’s literal throne for a thousand years after which he will raise the wicked dead and execute judgment.

II. PREMILLENNIAL FALLACIES:

- A. Fallacy one: Jesus came the first time to set up an earthly, material, and fleshly kingdom. What does the Bible say?
 1. Psalm 110, “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*” (compare Matthew 22:42-46)
 2. John 18:36, “*My kingdom is not of this world*”
 3. Rom. 14:17, Note the spiritual terms here used to describe the kingdom.
 4. Luke 17:21, kingdom is within
 5. John 6:15, Jesus refuses to be an earthly king

- B. Fallacy two: The kingdom is not now in existence, but is yet to be established in the future. What does the Bible say?
1. Matt. 3:1-2; 4:17; 10:7, "at hand"
 2. Mark 1:15, "time is fulfilled"
 3. Mark 9:1; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, Power would come when the Holy Spirit came. Pentecost is the day of establishment
 4. Col. 1:13; Heb.12:28; Rev. 1:9, people were in the kingdom 2000 years ago.
- C. Fallacy three: The church and the kingdom are different institutions. What does the Bible say?
1. Kingdom = body = church, Col. 1:13; 1:18; 1:24; 3:15
 2. Church = Kingdom, Matt. 16:18-19
 3. Kingdom = church, Rev. 1:4; 1:9
- D. Fallacy four: Misapplication of Old Testament prophecy by a strict literal interpretation or by disregarding New Testament application. What does the Bible say?
1. Isa. 2:1-5, Jesus alludes to this as being the beginning of the church (Luke 24:46-47).
 2. Isa. 11, Paul applies this to the New Testament period, Rom. 15:12.
- E. Fallacy five: The second coming of Christ is imminent. What does the Bible say?
1. The "signs" of Matt. 24:1-35 do not refer to the second coming but rather to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
 - a. Close examination reveals that the signs concern a local event from which one could escape.
 - b. Note the transition verse, Matt. 24:36.
 - c. Beginning with Matt. 24:36 and going through chapter 25 the discussion is about the unexpected (no signs) second coming of Jesus and the final judgment day.
 - 1) Paul teaches that Jesus will come at an unheralded, unexpected time, 1 Thess. 5:1-3.
 - 2) Peter agrees, 2 Peter 3:9-13.
 - d. Fallacy six: The land promises God gave to Israel are yet to be fulfilled. What does the Bible say?
 - 1) Land promise stated, Gen. 12:1-7; 15:13-21.
 - 2) Land promise fulfilled, Josh. 21:43-45; Neh. 9:8.
 - e. Fallacy seven: The resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous will be separated by a period of 1000 years. What does the Bible say?

- 1) John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Matt. 25:31-32
- 2) Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thess. 1:6-10
- f. Fallacy eight: There will be a “rapture.” What does the Bible say?
 - 1) The word rapture comes from a Latin word meaning “to seize, take away, snatch out.”
 - 2) This false doctrine is alleged to be found in 1 Thess. 4:14-18.
 - 3) The word rapture is not in the Bible.
 - 4) This theory has Jesus coming at least three times.
 - 5) This so-called “rapture” theory contradicts 2 Peter 3:9-14; John 5:28-29; 6:39-40; 12:48; 2 Thess. 1:6-10.
- g. Fallacy nine: Jesus is not now on his throne.
 - 1) Christ on David’s throne promised. 2 Sam. 7:12-15; Isa. 9:6-7; Luke 1:32.
 - 2) Fulfilled: Acts 2:30-31; Heb. 1:5; 1 Cor. 15:22-26
 - 3) Christ would be Priest and King at the same time, Zech. 6:13-14.
 - 4) If Christ is not ruling on his throne now, then he is not a priest now — thus no one can be saved today, Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16.
- h. Fallacy ten: The Book of Revelation handled improperly.
 - 1) The Book of Revelation claims to be written in signs and symbols (“signified” Rev. 1:1).
 - 2) Numbers and their multiples have a highly symbolic significance (6, 7, 10, 12, 666, 144,000 etc.)
 - 3) We must interpret Revelation in light of the other 26 books in the New Testament.
 - 4) When we draw a conclusion which contradicts the clear passages in the other 26 books, our conclusion is wrong (example: Rev. 20; 1 Cor. 15:24).

III. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE POSTMILLENNIAL THEORY?

- A. This is clearly just another theory since there is absolutely no evidence for a yet future period of universal peace and righteousness.
- B. Christ has all authority and yet most are traveling the broad way that leads to destruction, Matt. 7:13-14; 28:18-20.
- C. Even Jesus asked, “*When the son of man comes shall he find faith on the earth?*” Luke 18:8

IV. WHAT ABOUT AMILLENNIALISM?

- A. Remember this position advocates that the "thousand years" of Rev. 20 spans the entire New Testament period.
- B. The "thousand years" of Rev. 20 is figurative.
- C. While there is room for disagreement about the exact beginning and the exact ending of this period, the language of the book of Revelation does not allow it to stand for the whole New Testament period.

V. AN ADDITIONAL SPECIAL QUESTION:

Who are the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4 and 14:1-4?

- A. Various views advanced: "Jehovah's Witnesses" view, premillennial view, saved of the Old Testament view, and certain martyrs.
- B. In a book filled with numbers which are symbolic, why should we think this is a literal number?
- C. In chapter 7, these 144,000 are "sealed" and in chapter 14 they learn a "new song" and are the ones who "follow the Lamb" (Christ).
- D. The "Jehovah's Witnesses" teach false doctrine concerning the 144,000. They have two classes of the saved:
 1. The 144,000, "the anointed class" or "heavenly congregation"
 2. The "other sheep," "the Great Company," or "the Great Multitude" — these will live on earth forever (*Let God Be True*, pp. 129, 130, 298).
- E. The "Jehovah's Witnesses" are wrong:
 1. There is "one body" and "one hope." Eph. 4:4-6; 2:14-16
 2. That "hope" is in Heaven for all Christians. 1 Peter 1:3-5; Col. 1:5; Heb. 13:14.
 3. This earth will end. 1 Cor. 15:24; 2 Peter 3:9-15; Matt. 24:35
- F. This is not a literal list from the literal (fleshly) tribes of Israel. This list is not typical of the old Testament listings: Gen. 35, 49; Ex. 1; Num. 1, 2, 13, 26, 34; Deut. 27, 33; Josh. 13:22; Judges 5; 1 Chron. 2-7, 12, 27; Ezek. 48.
 1. Judah heads the Revelation list.
 2. Dan and Epharim are missing
 3. These two are replaced by Levi & Joseph.
- G. The 144,000 and the great multitude are the same group (all the saved) under different circumstances.
- H. Cross examine these verses to prove that these are the same group: Rev. 7:15; 14:3; 11:19; 4:2. They are "before" the

throne and “in his temple” and the “temple” and “throne” are in “heaven.”

CONCLUSION:

1. From Hal Lindsey’s book *“The Late Great Planet Earth”* to the *“Left Behind”* series recently produced, there continues to be a great deal of material out there advocating the false doctrines associated with millennialism.
2. Let us be on our guard and know what the Bible actually teaches with reference to the 2nd coming of Jesus:
 - a. Jesus will come unannounced, 1 Thess. 5:1-3.
 - b. The dead will be raised and the living will be changed, John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:50-58.
 - c. This present created system will end, 2 Peter 3:9-14.
 - d. All will be judged, Acts 17:30-31.
 - e. The righteous will go to heaven and the wicked will be cast into Hell, Matt. 25:46.

Worship Can Be In Vain

Ed Casteel

1. How do we know that worship can be in vain?
 - a. Jesus told the woman at the well of Samaria what true worship involves (John 4:24).
 - 1) Worship must be to the right object.
 - 2) Worship must be with the right attitude.
 - 3) Worship must be with the right actions.
 - 4) Would not a violation of any of these constitute “vain worship,” if compliance with them constitutes “true worship?”
 - b. Futher more, Jesus said, *“but in vain do they worship me teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”* (Matt. 15:9).
2. Thayer says of the word “vain” that it is a “futile attempt, folly, fault.” He refers to Isaiah 29:13,14. W. E. Vine adds to this definition “to no purpose” (W. E. Vine, *Dictionary of New Testament Words*, Vol. 4, p.181).

3. To engage in vain worship would be just a waste of time, for it will accomplish no real purpose or bring no real lasting value.
4. Let's examine how one might make his worship vain.

DISCUSSION:

I. WORSHIP IS VAIN IF GOD IS NOT THE OBJECT OF OUR WORSHIP.

- A. Jesus told the Samaritan woman, "*ye worship ye know not what...*" (John 4:22).
 1. Guy N. Woods writes, "the Samaritans had an imperfect knowledge of God and of worship. They accepted only the first five books of the Old Testament, their rejection of the prophets, major and minor, kept them from knowing many things about the nature of God and his will..." (Guy N. Woods, *New Testament Commentaries*, John, p.83).
 2. The more we worship God the closer we get to Him and the more we know about Him. The closer we get to God and the more we know about God the greater our desire is to worship Him.
- B. Throughout both the Old and the New Testaments, severe warnings have been given concerning worshipping an idol. To worship such would be vain worship.
 1. Read Exodus 20:1-6.
 2. Read Deuteronomy 5:6-10.
 3. The Bible speaks of King Ahab. He, "did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord" (1 Kings 21:25). Ahab took Jezebel to be his wife, "*and went and served Baal, and worshipped him*" (1 Kings 16:30,31). It was not enough to take a wicked woman to be his wife, he allowed her to bring her idol, and then he served it.
 4. As Paul stood on Mar's Hill he addressed the Athenians concerning the "Unknown God." The image to God was erected along with all other idols.
 - a. A. T. Robertson suggest there were 30,000 idols in Athens (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, p.278).
 - b. Wayne Jackson quotes Longnecker as suggesting there were 10,000 people in the city of Athens in Paul's day (*Acts of the Apostles*, p.219).
 - c. If both of these figures are correct, there were three times as many idols in Athens as there were people. Three idols for every person.

5. John, the apostle of love, warns all Christians, “*keep yourself from idols*” (1 John 5:21).
- C. To bow and worship an idol would constitute vain worship.

II. WORSHIP IS VAIN IF I AM NOT AT PEACE WITH MY BROTHER WHEN I COME TO WORSHIP.

- A. Many people have the idea they can run from one congregation to another congregation over any and every petty disagreement and still be right in their worship before God. This happens all the time in places where there are several congregations in a close area.
 1. “He hurt my feelings, I will just go some place else to worship.”
 2. Years ago I knew two brothers who refused to speak to one another over something that had happened 30 years before. They would sit on opposite sides of the building and leave through side doors, lest they should be at the back door at the same time. They both thought they had worshipped God.
 3. Two men that had been in business together, after a dispute they parted company. Both spent a lot of time trying to tear down the reputation of the other. They would go to worship and thought all was right with God.
 4. As preachers who have been dismissed from congregations, for what we believe were unfair and unjust reasons, have to work hard to keep our attitudes right concerning those brethren and elders. If our attitude is not right concerning them we can not worship correctly at our new work.
- B. Notice: Matthew 5:23-24.
 1. It is vain to worship God while at odds with a brother.
 2. This admonition was given right after Jesus discusses being angry with your brother. If you are angry with your brother, you cannot worship God correctly.
 3. Two things are taught in this passage:
 - a. “*Leave there thy gift...*” — this is in anticipation of one’s returning to offer the sacrifice unto God.
 - b. “Go be reconciled with thy brother.”
 - c. We must go be reconciled when:
 - 1) A brother has ought against you (Matt. 5:23,24).
 - 2) When a brother has sinned against you (Matt. 18:15-17).

III. WORSHIP IS VAIN IF I DO NOT ENGAGE IN THE RIGHT AVENUES OF WORSHIP.

- A. There is no doubt that we have from God a divine standard by which we are to worship Him.
- B. Acts 2:42 discusses the worship of the early church. "*And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*" In addition to this we observe the kind of music that God desires when we read Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; or Heb. 2:12.
- C. To alter any of these in our worship would make our worship vain.
 - 1. To add an instrument of music to our singing would change the kind of music that God authorizes and thereby make it vain worship.
 - 2. To preach anything other than "the word" (2 Tim. 4:2) would result in vain worship (Matt. 15:9). Such would bring the wrath of God upon the proclaimer (Gal. 1:6-12).
 - 3. To abuse the Lord's supper is to eat and drink damnation to our souls because we have partaken of this memorial in an unworthily manner (1 Cor. 11:27-29).
- D. Our worship is in vain when we do things not authorized.
 - 1. When we celebrate Christmas as the birthday of Jesus.
 - 2. When we celebrate Easter as the day that Jesus rose from the dead.
 - 3. When we change the music to include the instrument or allow special musical presentations to be preformed.

IV. WORSHIP IS IN VAIN IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS AND DURING WORSHIP.

- A. David said, "*I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord*" (Psa. 122:1).
 - 1. What is your attitude when you know it is time to attend worship: mad, sad or glad?
 - 2. If people were really glad to attend worship:
 - a. Would they be late to every service?
 - b. Would they willfully forsake the assembly (Heb. 10:25)?
- B. As each item of worship is being performed, what is my attitude?
 - 1. We read in Hebrews 2:12, "*in the midst of the church I will sing praise unto thee.*" Also, "*I will sing with the spirit, I will sing with the understanding also*" (1 Cor. 14:15).

- a. If I have the right attitude, would I refuse to sing at all?
- b. If I have the right attitude, would I sing unscriptural songs? Remember, I must have the understanding of the song.
2. If God loves a cheerful giver, why are people giving with a grudging heart (2 Cor. 9:7)?
3. If we are not discerning the Lord's suffering and death when we partake of the Lord's supper, but thinking about the afternoon activities or something else, is God pleased with our actions?
4. Worship is in vain when:
 - a. People are passing notes and talking during the worship.
 - b. People are reading other materials and not paying attention during the worship.
 - c. When parents are more concerned with playing with their children rather than trying to teach them how to conduct themselves properly during worship. And, you can't teach them how to behave during worship if they are never in the worship assembly.
 - d. When we are sitting in the church library, or walking the halls of the church building.

V. WORSHIP IS VAIN WHEN I LEAVE THE ASSEMBLY WITHOUT A DETERMINATION TO LIVE A BETTER LIFE.

- A. It was Isaiah the prophet who wrote, *"forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouths, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me..."* (Isa. 29:13).
1. We often hear people pray, "Lord help us to apply the things presented to our lives, that we might be better people." But, how many leave the building with the determination to start living a better life?
 2. The church at Corinth had those who claimed to be Christians but whose lives were filled with carnality (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Could their worship be acceptable to God?
- B. Amos spoke to Israel how God was displeased with their worship because it failed to change their lives (Amos 5:21-24; 6:1-4).

1. People today enter the worship assembly with worldliness in their hearts and leave to "eat, drink and be merry."
 2. People enter the assembly as one living in adultery. They hear a lesson on "Divorce and Remarriage" and return to their homes to continue in a life of sin.
 3. People enter the assembly having used profanity all the previous week, listen to a lesson on "Pure Speech"; and return to their foul language and taking the name of God in vain come Monday morning.
- C. Their worship has not changed their hearts nor their lives, for they did not really want their heart changed because they were content with their life.

VI. WORSHIP IS VAIN IF WE GO THROUGH ALL THE RIGHT ACTIONS BUT WE ARE NOT AMONG THE REDEEMED OF GOD.

- A. One may sing, "O How I Love Jesus," but if he is not striving to obey the commands of God, there is no real love at all (John 14:15). His words are just lies.
- B. One may sing, "I Love Thy Kingdom Lord," but if he is not working and serving in the kingdom as a faithful servant, the kingdom really means nothing to him.
- C. One may pray, "Our Father which art in heaven...", but if he has not been "born again" (John 3:5; Titus 3:5), his father is not in heaven (John 8:44).
- D. Just entering a church building and sitting among true worshipers and faithful saints does not make one righteous and acceptable before God.

CONCLUSION:

1. Periods of worship are extremely critical. It is here we stand to adore and honor the creator of all the universe.
 2. Let us ever strive to "*worship Him in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:24).
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Traditions Of Men Regarding Masonry

Terry Joe Kee

1. This is not an easy study for several reasons.
 - a. Although there are many books, periodicals, web pages, etc. written by Masons and dedicated to the study of Freemasonry there are none to my knowledge which are accepted by Masons generally.
 - b. Therefore, much of the material discussed in this outline will be denied by Masons as falsely representing them.
 - c. Because this is a “secret” society and they are not allowed to divulge their “secrets” they believe themselves to be within their rights and even their responsibilities to deny or even lie rather than admit to the truthfulness of any discussion which places them in a poor light.
 - d. Masons themselves will not sit down and discuss their beliefs openly with anyone other than another Mason, and therefore information gathered concerning them and their beliefs is restricted to the writings of some Masons.
2. The materials discussed in this study are never intended to be taken out of context or misrepresented in any way. To do this would place one’s soul in jeopardy and no Christian ever desires to do such a thing.
3. It is our desire to inform Christians of the dangers of this organization and to help Christians decide:
 - a. Is membership in the Masonic Lodge Scriptural and should a mason continue his membership?
 - b. Is this an organization I can encourage my children, family, and friends to join?
4. Masons trace their history to the days of Solomon and the building of the temple and the work of Hiram (1 Kings 7:13,14).
 - a. Masonic legend has Hiram, whom they call Hiram Abiff, being the first “Master Mason.”
 - b. Masons believe that the secrets revealed by God to Hiram conveyed upon him the title of “Master Mason,” and the secrets of a Master Mason, along with the Master’s “secret word.”
 - 1) This “secret word” would allow Hiram to travel about in foreign countries, find work, and earn the wages of a “Master Mason.”

- 2) Masonic legend has it that three Masons desired to know the "secret word" and conspired to know it. They laid a trap for Hiram and ultimately killed him with the use of a twenty-four inch gauge, a square, and a setting maul.¹
5. Many of the ideas and rituals of Freemasonry come from the period of cathedral construction from the 900s to the 1600s.
 - a. Stone workers formed guilds in various European cities and towns and as they traveled from town to town only those members of these guilds would be allowed to work on these constructions.
 - b. These organizations became known as "lodges," but as cathedral construction declined in the 1600s these became primarily social organizations.²
 - c. They began to accept non-stone workers into the lodges which then brought about some radical changes in the organization.
 - d. Godfrey W. Steinbrenner, a celebrated Masonic historian said of this time, "The long contemplated separation of the Freemasons from the operative guilds was now speedily carried into effect, and the institution strode swiftly forward to its complete and perfect transformation. From the materials slowly, surely and regularly prepared, deep in the medieval twilight of the middle ages, carefully cherished and handed down to prosperity by the old building associations of Germany and England, arose a new and beautiful creation. Modern Freemasonry was now taught as a spiritualized art, and the fraternity of operative Masons was exalted to a brotherhood of symbolic builders, who in place of visible, perishable temples, are engaged in that one, invisible, eternal temple of the heart and mind, ever henceforth, to be conducted in wisdom, supported in strength, and adorned in beauty."³
 - e. Masons today consider the Grand Lodge of England, established in 1717, to be the beginning of their present society.
 - f. This society has spread and today has about twice as many Masons in the United States as in the rest of the world (between 4.5 and 5 million members worldwide).
6. Although there are several branches or orders of Masonry such as the *Order Of The Eastern Star* for Master Masons and their wives, the *Order Of DeMolay* for boys, the *Order Of Job's Daughters* and the *Order Of Rainbow* for young girls, *Daughters Of The Nile*, *The Tall Cedars Of Lebanon*, *The Mystic Order Of Veiled Prophets Of The Enchanted Realm*, *The Knights Of The Red Cross Of Constantine*, *The Blue Lodge*, and about one

- hundred others, and divisions into the Scottish Rite and the York Rite, we hope to discuss those things which will be true generally.
7. Even though these things shall be quoted from books written by Freemasons such as Albert Pike, a “Grand Commander of the Scottish Rite,” and Albert G. Mackey, a 32nd degree Mason, these matters will be denied as having any validity or as having been stated with any authorization.
 8. These things are presented in order that honest Christians who are members of this organization can see its fallacies, and unsuspecting Christians will not become caught up in these organizations.

DISCUSSION:

I. FREEMASONRY IS A RELIGION.

A. Notice how Masons describe themselves:

1. “It is a fraternal society based on certain moral and religious doctrines: the moral doctrines including Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, and Justice, and the religious doctrines comprising a belief in a supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.”⁴
2. “A belief in God and a belief in the resurrection to a future life is the belief of every true Master Mason. The doctrine of the resurrection is one of the great Landmarks of the Order, and its importance and necessity may be estimated from the fact that almost the whole design of speculative Masonry, from its earliest origin, seems to have been to teach this great doctrine of the resurrection. John 11:25,26.”⁵
3. “A belief in the Existence of God as the Grand Architect of the universe, is one of the most important Landmarks of the Order. It has always been deemed essential that a denial of the existence of a Supreme and Superintending Power, is an absolute disqualification for initiation.”⁶
4. “In ancient times Masons were charged in every country to be of the religion of that country or nation, whatever it was, yet ‘tis now thought more expedient only to oblige them to be of that religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves; that is, to be good men and true, or men of honor and honesty, by whatever denomination or persuasions they may be distinguished; whereby Masons become the center of

union, and the means of conciliating true friendship among persons that must have remained at a perpetual distance."⁷

5. "Masonry, like all the Religions, all the mysteries, Hermeticism, and Alchemy, conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts and Sages, or the Elect, and uses false explanations and misrepresentations of its symbols to mislead those who deserve only to be misled; to conceal the Truth, which it calls Light, from them, and to draw them away from it."⁸
 6. Pike further said, "The oracles of God do not speak from the pulpit alone."⁹
 7. Pike said, "Every Masonic Lodge is a temple of religion, and its teachings are instruction in religion...Here we meet as brethren."¹⁰
 8. Pike says they engage in worship when he says, "Much of the Masonic secret manifests itself, without speech revealing it, to him who even partially comprehends the Degrees in proportion as he receives them; and particularly to those who advance to the highest Degrees of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. That Rite raises a corner of the veil, even in the Degree of Apprenticeship; for it there declares that Masonry is a worship."¹¹
 9. Pike declares, "It is the universal, eternal, immutable religion, such as God planted it in the heart of universal humanity."¹²
 10. "The Master of the lodge is its priest, and the director of its religious ceremonies. His duty is to select the scriptures, prayers, &c., and he should be present at the burial of the dead. A meeting of a Masonic Lodge is a religious ceremony."¹³
- B. Masons present themselves as believers of "pure theism."¹⁴
1. But this is a belief in a God or gods.
 2. Masons are not permitted to discuss their personal religious beliefs among themselves as Masonry is a religion demanding a belief in God as they define it.
 - a. To a Christian, God may refer to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - b. To a Jew, God refers to God the Father.
 - c. To a Muslim, God is the God of the Koran.
 - d. Even to a Buddhist, his god is Buddha.
 3. Robert Morris said, "So broad is the religion of Masonry, and so carefully are all sectarian tenets excluded from

the system, that Christians, the Jews, and the Moham-
medan, in all their numberless sects and divisions, may,
and do harmonio combine in its moral and intellectual
work with the Buddhist, the Parsee, the Confucian, and
the worshiper of Deity under every form."¹⁵

- C. No sober thinking Christian can read, study, and engage in these ceremonies and not recognize that Masonry is a religion. To do otherwise one must be dishonest, lying, or totally blind.
- D. For Masons to say they are not a religion is to misrepresent who they are or to mislead those who are asking.
- E. Freemasonry is a religion designed by man; following the precepts set forth by man; which Masons claim will lead to eternal salvation. How is this not a religion?
- F. Jesus said that no man can serve two masters. Matt. 6:24
- G. Jesus also said one is either with Him or against Him. Matt. 12:30
- H. Any plant not planted by the Father will be rooted up. Matt. 15:13
- I. Jesus said to leave such alone, lest both fall into the ditch. Matt. 15:14
- J. They may draw nigh with their mouths and honor with their lips, but their practice is far from what God has demanded of all men today and their religion is vain. Matt. 15:8,9
- K. The words of Freemasonry are not the Words by which we will be judged. John 12:48; Mark 8:38; Rom. 2:16; Jam. 2:12
- L. There is but one church. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4
 - 1. Jesus is its only head. Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18
 - 2. The New Testament is the only standard of religion today. Heb. 10:9,10; Heb. 9:15-17
 - 3. The plan of salvation, the organization of the church and the worship have all been given by God and no man has the right to rearrange, modify, or in any way change what God has said.
- M. Jesus said there is but one shepherd and one sheepfold and that anyone trying to get in by some other means is a thief and a robber. John 10:7,8
 - 1. Masons are thieves and robbers trying to offer man another way when Jesus is the only way. John 14:6
 - 2. They offer salvation by moral means, when such could not save Cornelius. Acts 10, 11

N. This is a religion and upon this ground alone it should be shunned by Christians.

II. CHRIST IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE LODGE.

A. A charge is given at the opening of the lodge in the First Freemason's Monitor, by Thomas Webb, the following charges are from the scriptures:

1. Masons say, "Now, we command you, brethren, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
2. And they say, "Now them that are such we command and exhort, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."
3. These are given as they are quoted by Ronayne in The Master's Carpet, on page 181, but what is wrong with them?
4. "Right Worshipful Brother" John C. W. Bailey and "Past Grand Master Brother" Robert Morris, LL. D., in 1872 corrected "typographical errors" printed in the First Freemason's Monitor (page 102) as quoted by Ronayne (page 181).
5. Please take your Bible and notice what these "typographical errors" are.
 - a. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "by our Lord Jesus Christ" are removed from 2 Thessalonians 3:6,12.
 - b. Masons do not allow for the use of the name of Jesus even when reading or quoting the Scriptures in the rituals, ceremonies, and initiations.
 - c. Can a Christian become a part of an organization which removes Christ from the Scriptures for fear of offending the Jew? The Muslim? The Buddhist? The Hindu? et.al.
 - d. When Peter and John were told not to preach Jesus any more, how did they respond? Acts 4:19,20
 - e. How did the apostles answer when they were told not to be preaching "in this name?" Acts 5:28,29
 - f. When Philip went into Samaria what did he preach? Acts 8:4,5
 - g. Upon what occasion is it acceptable for a Christian not to use the name of Jesus?

- B. When one is being initiated into the lodge he is told there are three great lights to guide him and that he will need all three lights to rule and guide, to square his actions, to circumscribe, and keep himself in due bounds.
1. The compass, the square, and the Bible are given as the light. The compass and the square are found in the lodge lying on top of the open pages of the Bible.
 2. But the Bible says Jesus is the "light" and by Him alone we are prepared for life here and hereafter. John 8:12; John 12:42; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Peter 2:9
 3. Jesus came into the world to be this light. John 1:4,5
 4. Jesus alone can bring men out of darkness and into the light, giving eternal salvation to every man who will come to Him. John 3:16-21
- C. Any man who rejects Jesus is doomed and will be lost eternally including the most loyal and faithful Masons. John 8:24; John 12:48
- D. What do we do to the great commission? Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16
1. Shall we carry the Gospel to all the world except into Masonic Temples?
 2. Shall we preach the Gospel to every creature except those in Masonic Temples?
- E. For a Mason to uphold the religion of Masonry and the doctrine of Christ is to be guilty of adultery. James 4:4
1. We must not be yoked together with unbelievers. 2 Cor. 6:14
 2. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. 1 Cor. 10:21
 3. We must not fellowship the unfruitful works of darkness. Eph. 5:11
- F. John tells us not to receive someone into our house who does not bring "this doctrine," the doctrine of Christ. 2 John 9-11
1. John also said that one who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. 2 John 9-11
 2. Masons desire to have God without having to take Jesus, this is foreign to the New Testament.
- G. Some will try to argue that this is not the way things are with them.
1. Should a Christian be a part of an organization which discourages or does not allow Christ to be taught openly in every place?

2. What Christian can deny the Son and still have the Father? 1 John 2:23
 3. What happens to the passage, *"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him?"* John 5:23
- H. Someone may say, "But you can confess Christ in the higher degrees of Masonry. A 'Knight Templar' can confess Jesus."
1. Is it then alright for a Christian to go through all these degrees getting up to the "Knight Templar" denying Christ, just so long as he at some point in his rise among the Masons can confess Christ?
 2. Should one be satisfied with being able only to acknowledge "the Great Architect of the Universe?"
 3. What if Jesus returns before one reaches such a degree among the Masons?
 4. In the judgment, will a second or third degree Mason confess Christ? Phil. 2:9-11
- I. Freemasonry teaches that one can be saved without Christ.
1. Mackey said in his book *Lexicon of Freemasonry*, on page 16, "A Mason who is living in strict obedience to the obligations and precepts of the fraternity is free from sin."¹⁶
 - a. Paul said that without the shedding of blood there is no remission. Heb. 9:22
 - b. Why send Christ? Why did He have to die? Why all this if one can be saved without Jesus and the cross?
 - c. The Bible teaches that all sin. Rom. 3:10, 23; Eccl. 7:20
 - d. The Bible teaches that the only remedy for the sins of the world is the blood of Christ. 1 John 1:7; 1 John 2:1,2; Heb. 2:9; Rev. 1:5
 - e. One's sins are washed away in baptism and in no other way. Acts 22:16
 2. Nothing is said in the Scriptures about salvation from sin coming through Masonry, nor is it ever offered for those who only live morally upright lives.
- J. Masonic prayers never reach beyond the roof because Masons do not pray through Jesus.
1. Prayer is a vital part of Masonic ceremonies and initiations, but Masons do not pray through Jesus.
 2. Masonic prayers are concluded simply, "Amen."

3. These prayers are addressed to the Great Architect of the Universe, Most Merciful God, Supreme Architect of heaven and earth, Supreme Architect of the Universe, etc., but Masons cannot and do not conclude these prayers in the name of Jesus.
4. Jesus said no man can come to the Father except by Him. John 14:6
5. We give thanks to the Father "by him." Jesus said whatsoever we ask the Father "in my name." Col. 3:17,18
6. Such prayers are vain and therefore any such worship is vain.

CONCLUSION:

1. There are many other matters concerning the teachings of Freemasonry that could be discussed:
 - a. Masons refer to the Bible as the "Volume of the sacred Law" (sometimes abbreviated V.S.L.) And consider it a vital part of the "furniture" of the Masonic Lodge. However, they only use it in a "Christian Lodge." The Hebrew Pentateuch is used in a Hebrew Lodge, the Koran in a Mohammedan Lodge, the Vedas in a Brahmin Lodge, etc. Masons therefore claim the Bible is not the Great Light, but a Great Light.
 - b. In Masonic funerals, Masons quote Ecclesiastes 12:1-7, bury one with his lambskin apron symbolizing his innocence and bearing witness to his virtues and the sincerity of his professions, and place evergreen in the grave to symbolize their belief in the immortality of the soul, etc. The words they say, the order in which they march to the grave, and these ceremonies would also be of interest and help in understanding that this is a religion.
2. Masons support many good works and do much good in communities.
 - a. They are a society intending to uphold high moral values and a love for their fellow man, but this does not in and of itself save a soul.
 - b. Shriner's Hospitals to help crippled and burned children is a good civic work.
 - c. Catholics, Mormons, and other denominational groups do good works, but this does not justify their religious practices.
3. Many of the great men of history have been Masons such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Ethan Allen, John Hancock, John Paul Jones, Paul Revere,

Robert Livingston, John Quincy Adams, James Madison, Mozart, Henry Ford, Rudyard Kipling, Douglas MacArthur, and many more.

- a. Great historical figures from throughout the ages does not justify any religious sect.
 - b. Again, Catholics and other religious groups may boast great characters of history as being numbered among their members, but this does not justify their existence.
4. Whether one is an Apprentice, Fellow Craft, or a Master Mason, his membership in the Lodge is not justified, if he is seeking to follow Christ and serve Him as a Christian.

ENDNOTES:

¹Edmond Ronayne, *Ronayne's Handbook of Freemasonry*, (Chicago: Azra A. Cook Publications, Inc., 1973), pp.218-223.

²*The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1972 ed., s.v. "Masonry."

³Godfrey W. Steinbrenner, *Origin and Early History of Masonry*, p.127

⁴"What I Would Like My Friends To Know About Freemasonry," *The Scottish Rite Torch*.

⁵C. E. Patterson, *One Hundred and Sixty Questions and Answers*, comp. from the works of Albert G. Mackey, and many other eminent Masonic Authorities, (A. J. Holman Co., 1957), p.24, Part of Kelchner, *The Bible And King Solomon's Temple in Masonry*.

⁶Albert G. Mackey, *Jurisprudence of Freemasonry*, (Chicago: Charles T. Powner Co., 1975), pp.14,15.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp.30,31

⁸Albert Pike, *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, prepared for the Supreme Council of Thirty-third Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States and Published by its Authority, (Charleston: 1950), pp.104, 105.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp.212,213

¹⁰*Ibid.*, pp.212,213

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp.218,219

¹²*Ibid.*, p.219

¹³Thomas Smith Webb, *Freemason's Monitor*, compiled by Robert Morris, LL.D. and John C. W. Bailey, (Chicago: 1872), p.231, As quoted in Edmond Ronayne, *The Master's Carpet*, (Chicago: Ezra A. Cook Publications, Inc., 1970), p.44

¹⁴Mackey, *Jurisprudence of Freemasonry*, p.31

¹⁵Webb, *Freemason's Monitor*, p.280. As quoted in Ronayne, *The Master's Carpet*, p.64

¹⁶As quoted in Ronayne's, *The Master's Carpet*, p.98

Traditions Of Men Regarding Miracles, Faith Healing

Ed Floyd

1. A miracle is "an interference with nature by a supernatural power."
2. A miracle is not surviving a near calamity, something complicated, newly discovered or not fully understood.
3. A child operates a remote control car. Normally, he uses a control box, but occasionally he picks up the car and moves it.
4. God normally operates in nature according to his natural laws, but has at times stepped in and set laws aside in accomplishing his purpose.
5. There are three positions affirmed regarding miracles:
 - a. They never happened (modernists);
 - b. They happened in Bible times, but do not happen presently;
 - c. They have happened and are happening.
6. Do I believe in miracle? Yes.
7. Do I believe they happen today? No.
8. Every miracle the Bible records actually happened.
9. Those speculated today are not to be believed.
10. This lesson is not based on what someone feels, what has always been taught, or what one wishes were the case.
11. Simply, this is a study of what the Bible teaches about the duration of the miraculous age.
12. With this in mind let us notice...

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT BIBLICAL MIRACLES ARE.

- A. The word miracle is used in a very loose way today.

1. A phenomenon of science, while often mysterious, is not a miracle.
 2. A wonderful event, or thing, anything out of the ordinary.
 - a. The "miracle of birth."
 - b. The "miracle of nature."
 3. When someone escapes a life threatening experience it is said to be a miracle.
- B. Biblical definition.
1. "A sign consisting of a wonder or miracle, an event that is contrary to the usual course of nature. A miracle of divine origin, performed by God himself, by Christ, or by men of God."
 2. A Bible miracle is the transcendence, setting aside, overruling or interference of the processes of nature, for the moment, by a force superior to nature, a supernatural power—God.
- C. There are five classes of miracles in the Bible.
1. The Lord showed his power over nature. Mark 4:39; Matt. 21:19
 2. The Lord showed his power over disease. Matt. 8:14,15; Matt. 8:2-4
 3. The Lord showed his power over demons. Matt. 8:16; Matt. 12:22
 4. The Lord showed his power over material things. Matt. 14:15-21; Matt. 17:27
 5. The Lord showed his power over death. John 11:43; Matt. 28:18
- D. Miracles were of a concrete nature.
1. Bible miracles could not be denied.
 - a. Jesus turned water into wine, John 2.
 - b. Jesus healed a man who had been impotent 38 years, John 5.
 - c. Jesus feed 5,000 men with 5 barley loaves and 2 small fish, John 6.
 - d. Jesus healed a man born blind, John 9.
 - e. Jesus raised a man who had been dead for 4 days, John 11.
 - f. Jesus restored an ear which had been cut off, Luke 22:49-51.

II. MIRACLES TODAY ARE TRADITIONS OF MEN.

- A. We are denying that miracles (as set forth in the Bible) and specifically miraculous healings, take place today. They are only traditions of men.
 - 1. God does work in the world today, but it is not through the use of miracles.
 - 2. When we deny miracles today, Pentecostals charge us with denying the power of God.
 - a. The truth is, they deny God's power by claiming that the only way God works today is through miracles.
 - b. They have denied His ability to work providentially.
 - 3. Miracles set aside the laws of nature. In providence, God works in accord with the laws of nature to accomplish His purpose.
- B. Let us notice some of the arguments made for miracles today.
 - 1. God is always the same, he never changes. Mal. 3:6
 - a. Since God is always the same, they argue that he must still be performing miracles.
 - b. This does not mean that God always does the same thing He has previously done.
 - c. Malachi was dealing with God's nature, which does not change. (He is always Holy, righteous, loving, caring, etc.)
 - 2. They argue that God is able to perform miracles. Gen. 18:14
 - a. The denial of present-day miracles is not a denial of God's power to do so.
 - b. Because he is able, does not mean that it is His will do so.
 - c. God was able to destroy the world yesterday, but he did not do so.
 - d. God has the power to perform miracles today, but that does not mean he does.
 - 3. They argue that Christ does not change.
 - a. Jesus worked miracles, he is the same, therefore he still works miracles. Heb.13:8
 - b. Hebrews 13:8 deals with Christ's moral and spiritual nature and not what he did during His personal ministry.
 - 4. They argue that miracles were done by people other than apostles.
 - a. Stephen. Acts 6:8

- b. Philip. Acts 8:6
 - c. The Corinthians. 1 Cor. 12-14
 - d. This does not prove that anyone today can work miracles.
 - e. The only way they could work miracles was by the laying on of the apostles hands. There are no apostles today, therefore no one can work miracles today.
5. They say that Paul worked miracles and instructed others to do as he did. Phil. 4:9
- a. This does not mean they were to work miracles because Paul did.
 - b. He is teaching them to "adopt and practice the principles of Christianity which Paul had taught them."
 - c. Yet, they will not do all that Paul did.
 - 1) They will not strike anyone blind today. Acts 13:9-11
 - 2) They will not try to raise the dead. Acts 20:9-12

III. FAITH HEALING VERSES BIBLICAL HEALING.

A. Miracles of the Bible were real.

1. Today's involve questions that leave one guessing as to whether anything happened.
2. The miracles recorded in the Bible left no doubt they were beyond natural causes.
3. Today's miracle-worker will be very selective in what they try to heal; not so in Bible times.

B. Miracles of the Bible were acknowledged by enemies.

1. Christianity's enemies admitted the miracles.
 - a. Peter and John's healing the lamb man. Acts 4:14,16
 - b. The rulers never tried to deny the miracles of Jesus.
 - 1) Once, they attributed the miracle to the power of Beelzebub. Matt. 12:22-30
 - 2) After raising Lazarus. John 11:47, "*Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.*"
 - c. There is no record as to anyone's questioning whether a miracle had taken place.
2. Today's miracles are clouded with suspicion.
 - a. Consider the debate challenges to demonstrate their power.
 - b. There are books which expose many as frauds for their trickery.

- c. Hollenweger (p.364) in speaking of Oral Roberts writes, "He holds firmly to his teaching, although he is realistic enough to admit that only twenty-five per cent of the people with whom he prays are healed or improved. He says in as many words: 'No one in the whole world has prayed with more sick people who have not been healed than I have'."
- C. Miracles of the Bible were seen by more than one witness.
 1. When pressed for proof, it is usually something that is to far away to check.
 2. Biblical miracles were seen by multitudes. Acts 26:26
 3. Often there were multitudes around. Jesus feeding the 5000 men in John 6.
- D. In the Bible, miracles were for a specific purpose.
 1. What is the purpose for miracles today?
 - a. They are used to excite the fancy. The more emotionally excited people become, the more miracles they can work.
 - b. They are used to make a name for oneself.
 - 1) The greater fame, the more money they can con out of misguided people. Usually those who don't have it in the first place.
 - 2) When Peter and John were asked for alms they healed the man and did not ask him for money. Acts 3:6
- E. So called miracle workers today have false views as to the purpose of miracles.
 1. They believe miracles are for the removing of illness, pain, suffering, and improving the physical condition of people.
 - a. They believe God does not want people to suffer so He heals them.
 - b. They do not realize the value of suffering.
 - c. It gives the proper environment to grow, develop, and mature.
 - d. God promised to be with us during these times. 1 Cor. 10:13
 - e. God will give us grace to endure them. 2 Cor. 12:9
 2. They believe miracles are to show compassion.
 - a. While Jesus did show compassion, that was not the purpose of the miracles.
 - b. If compassion was the purpose, then:

- 1) Jesus would have healed everyone, He would have eliminated sickness, suffering.
 - 2) He would have removed Paul's thorn in the flesh. 2 Cor. 12
 - 3) Paul would have healed Timothy's stomach problems and oft infirmities. 1 Tim. 5:23
 - 4) Paul would have healed Trophimus. 2 Tim. 4:20
 - 5) Jesus would not have said, Matt. 9:12, "*...They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*"
- c. While there was compassion and miracles that did draw a crowd (excite the fancy), that was a by-product of the miracle, not the purpose.
- F. Miracles in the Bible were unrestricted in type. There were never any failures.
1. Today's miracle-worker will not even try most Biblical miracles, they try to heal only certain ailments.
 2. Bible miracles were immediate.
 - a. Bible miracles were always instantaneous. Mark 10:52; Acts 3:7-8; Mark 1:31
 - b. Modern-day miracles are often supposed to take place weeks later.
 3. Bible miracles were complete.
 - a. Often, the so-called healings of today are incomplete or a partial healing.
 - b. Bible miracles were never partial.
 - 1) Jesus healed the blind, they could see just fine.
 - 2) Peter and John healed the man outside the temple. Acts 3:8
 - 3) It was not the case of barely being able to stand and walk like they do today.
 4. Bible miracles were enduring.
 - a. When someone was healed during Bible times, their ailment never returned.
 - b. This is not the case with those who claim to heal today.
 5. With Bible miracles the one healed could be absent or present.
 - a. Distance did not matter in Jesus' healings.
 - 1) When Jesus healed the nobleman's son, he was 20 miles away. John 4:50

- 2) The Syrophenician woman's daughter was not present when Jesus healed her. Matt. 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30
- b. The faith-healers of today must have the person present to get them emotionally excited enough to heal them.
- c. The only ones the faith-healers will try to heal who are not present are those healings which could apply to many, not a specific person.
6. Bible miracles did not require the faith of the recipient.
 - a. Faith healers today demand the person to have enough faith.
 - 1) This is to allow the mind to do the work in healing the psychosomatic illness and temporarily overcoming the pain of many real injuries and pain.
 - 2) The problem is always on the part of the person seeking healing, never upon the "faith-healer."
 - 3) How sad to put this burden on those who are sick or handicapped.
 - b. Faith was not necessary for Biblical healings.
 - 1) Occasionally faith was present on the part of the person seeking to be healed. Mark 9:28-30
 - 2) Many did not and could not have faith, but were healed.
 - a) Those whom Jesus raised from the dead.
 - b) Those who were possessed by demons. Mark 1:23-27; 5:2-13; 7:24-30; Luke 9:42; 11:14-15; Acts 5:16; 10:38
 - 3) Many give no indication of their faith. Luke 6:6-11; 13:11-13; 14:2-4
 - 4) One was healed based upon the faith of someone else. Mark 2:1-5; Luke 7:1-10
 - 5) Some were healed who did not know who Jesus was. John 6:13-14; 9:35-37
7. Bible miracles were done to produce faith. John 20:30,31

IV. TRADITIONS OF MEN REGARDING MIRACLES CANNOT BE TRUE BECAUSE THERE IS NO PURPOSE FOR MIRACLES TODAY.

- A. Miracles served three purposes. One to start each dispensation.
 1. Patriarchal. Gen. 1:1-27 Creation account. Psalms 33:6,9

2. Mosaic. Exodus 7. To get the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage.
3. Christian. Mark 16:20; Luke 24:47-49
- B. Two, to confirm a speaker had God's approval:
 1. Moses. Exodus 4:1-8
 2. Jesus. Matt. 11:2-5; John 20:30-31
 3. Apostles. Mark 16:17-20
 4. Since they had no completed Bible, the Lord promised special power. Acts 1:5,8
- C. Three, to reveal to a messenger unknown truth.
 1. Apostles (preaching). John 14:26; John 16:13
 2. New Testament writers. 1 Cor. 2:10-13
 3. The Spirit revealed to them what they could not and did not know, and guarded them from error in writing what they had witnessed or otherwise knew.
- D. The purpose of miracles was never to relieve the suffering of all those who were hurting or to keep Christians from persecution.
- E. While on earth, Christ did not raise all the dead, give sight to all the blind, hearing to all the deaf, or health to all the diseased.
- F. Jesus did not deliver John from prison or death. Matt. 11:7-11
- G. Paul did not heal Timothy. 1 Tim. 5:23
- H. He did not heal Trophimus. 2 Tim. 4:20
- I. Rather, they performed a relatively small number of miracles to create faith in them as teachers. John 3:2
- J. Miracles serve no Biblical purpose today.
 1. The Christian Dispensation has long been established.
 2. The Word of God has been confirmed. Heb. 2:3
- K. Must Jesus return and raise Lazarus from the dead again in order for us to believe that he is God's son? NO!
- L. Once a court proves a man innocent of a charge, must it convene and re-confirm his innocence every year? NO, that has already been settled.
- M. We now have the evidence in writing. John 20:30,31
- N. It is settled. Faith comes by hearing, not seeing. Rom. 10:17
- O. The written word supplies the man of God completely unto every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17
- P. If a person is not convinced by the Bible, he would not be convinced if one should rise from the dead. Luke 16:27-31
- Q. The New Testament is completed and no new revelation will be given. Jude 3

V. TRADITIONS OF MEN REGARDING MIRACLES CANNOT BE TRUE BECAUSE THERE IS NO POWER AVAILABLE FOR MIRACLES TODAY.

- A. No one questions that God has the power to work miracles today.
- B. The question is not CAN HE? The question is DOES HE?
- C. Miraculous power was bestowed upon men in the N.T. times through two means:
 - 1. Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:4,43
 - 2. Laying on of the Apostles' hands. Acts 8:14-18
- D. There are only two examples of Holy Spirit baptism in the N.T. Acts 2:1-4; Acts 10:44; Acts 11:18
- E. The last occurrence was about A.D. 41.
- F. Twenty-three years later, Paul wrote there is (present tense) one baptism. Eph. 4:5
- G. About the same time Peter taught that it was water baptism. 1 Peter 3:20-21
- H. None today receive Spirit baptism.
- I. The apostles were the only ones in the Jerusalem church who could work miracles, until they imparted the power to the seven deacons. Acts 2:43; Acts 5:12
 - 1. Then Stephen and Philip, two of the seven, performed miracles. Acts 6:8; Acts 8:6
 - 2. It is evident, however, that Philip could not impart miraculous power to others. Acts 8:12,14-21
- J. All the apostles have died.
 - 1. Therefore, it is impossible for them to give power to anyone through the laying on of hands.
 - 2. None today receive power from an apostle.
 - 3. Thus, no one has power today to work miracles.

VI. TRADITIONS OF MEN REGARDING MIRACLES CANNOT BE TRUE BECAUSE THERE IS NO PROOF OF MIRACLES TODAY.

- A. That miracles were performed in NT times is not questioned or questionable. Acts 4:16
 - 1. Peter and Paul raised the dead.
 - a. Peter, in Acts 9:40,41 raised Tabitha from dead.
 - b. Paul in Acts 20:9-12 raised Eutychus after he fell from the window.
 - 2. A deadly viper bit Paul on the hand, but he felt no harm. Acts 28:5
- B. Where is the evidence of real miracles today?

- C. If a person claims to have Holy Spirit baptism, he too should be able to do all miracles.
 - 1. If he cannot do them, he does not have it.
 - 2. We want to see one raised from the dead or an amputee's hand replaced.
- D. The Bible warns of counterfeit miracles. 2 Thess. 2:8-10

CONCLUSION:

1. It is sad that some have been deceived and others would rather believe a lie than the truth.
2 Thess. 2:11-12, *"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*
2. When feelings differ from what the Book says, we must go by the Book.
3. Feelings can be wrong.
Jer. 17:9, *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"*
Acts 23:1, *"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."*
4. Let's all unite upon what the Bible teaches about miracles and all other subjects.
5. May we obey and follow the words of Jesus.

Traditions Of Men Regarding Special Days: Christmas/Easter

Earl B. Claud

1. Special Days and events have been kept throughout the history of man. As they were passed from generation to generation they became traditions.
2. Traditions that originated with God are good and should be observed. 2 Thess. 2:6,15

3. Religious traditions that originated with man were condemned by God. Mark 7:3,5-9,13; Col. 2:8
4. In our study of special days, we shall notice the following:
 - a. The background out of which Christmas grew.
 - b. The background out of which Easter and other related holidays grew.
 - c. Feasts that were kept by the Jews in the Old Testament.
 - d. A study of the birth, death and resurrection of Christ.
 - e. The will of Christ for keeping days, months, times and years.
 - f. May Christians observe holidays?

DISCUSSION:

I. THE BACKGROUND OUT OF WHICH CHRISTMAS GREW.

- A. "The concept of the Mass is embedded in the English term Christmas, its etymology being traced to Old English words *Christes maesse*, meaning the mass or festival of Christ." [*Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary Oxford*: Oxford University Press, 1971. Vol. 1, p.408]
- B. The New Catholic Encyclopedia says: "the birth of Christ was assigned the date of the winter solstice December 25 in the Julian calendar, January 6 in the Egyptian) because on this day, as the sun began its return to the northern skies, the pagan devotees of Mithra celebrated the *Dies Natalis Solis Invicti* (birthday of the invincible sun)."
- C. "25 December was a particularly good date for a Christian festival celebrating new life, because there were several pagan festivals all doing much the same thing. The Romans honored their god Saturn between 17 and 23 December. Saturnalia was a festival in celebration of Rome's Golden Age, which all hoped one day would return. Many of its festivities became part of the traditional Christmas... When Christianity became the official religion of the Emperor Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century AD, the pagan celebrations of the 25th stayed to become part of Christmas." [Muir, Frank and Jamie. *A Treasury of Christmas*. Glasgow: William Collins, 1981. p.14]
- D. "Christianity thus replaced a pagan holiday with a Christian one, while keeping the same symbolism—the birthday of Christ corresponds to the birth of a new year. Many of the pagan customs became part of Christmas celebration." [New Standard Encyclopedia. Chicago: Standard Educational, 1991. p.320]

- E. "The ancient Romans held year-end celebrations to honor Saturn, their harvest god; and Mithra, the god of light. Various people in northern Europe held festivals in mid-December to celebrate the end of the harvest season. As part of all these celebrations, the people prepared special foods, decorated their homes with greenery, and joined in singing and gift giving. These customs gradually became part of the Christmas celebrations." [The World Book Encyclopedia. Chicago: World Book, 1995. p.528]
- F. "The Christmas tree is the symbol of the spirit of the Yuletide in many homes. The custom came from Germany and dates to long ago when primitive people revered trees—particularly evergreens." [The New Book of Knowledge. New York: Grolier, 1979. p.291]
- G. Concerning Santa Claus, "He is patron of storm-beset sailors (for miraculously saving doomed mariners off the coast of Lycia), of prisoners, of children...which led to the practice of children giving presents at Christmas in his name and the metamorphosis of his name, St. Nicholas, into Sint Klaes, or Santa Claus, by the Dutch. It should be noted though that the figure of Santa Claus is really non-Christian and is based on the Germanic god Thor, who was associated with winter and the Yule log and rode on a chariot drawn by goats named Cracker and Gnasher." [The Catholic Pocket Dictionary of Saints]
- H. Note: All above references concerning Christmas were taken from "Why A Christian Must Not Celebrate Christmas" by Alan Sharpe.
- I. The story of the wise men, the Christmas lights, Christmas cards, and many other things connected with Christmas could be studied but the above should make it clear that all these practices came from man and not from God.

II. THE BACKGROUND OUT OF WHICH EASTER AND RELATED HOLIDAYS GREW.

- A. Easter Sunday is surrounded by many other events. There were three closely related seasons: The Carnival Season, The Lenten Season and The Post-Easter Season.
- B. The "Carnival Season" was adopted by the Catholics from pagan festivals of the ancient Romans. This "Carnival Season" of frolicking begins with the same feast that closes the Christmas celebration — The Feast of the Epiphany, held on Jan. 6 and is also known as the Christian Feast of

Lights and The Twelfth Night; that is the twelfth night from Christmas. It was to commemorate three events: Christ's manifestation to the wise men, his baptism and his first miracle. The "Carnival season" is concluded by Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras was the day before the "Lenten Season" began. [*The History of Easter* by J. L. Denison]

- C. The "Lenten Season" was a season of sackcloth and ashes. It became a Season of Fasting. This period of fasting and self-denial commemorates Christ's forty days of fasting in the wilderness immediately following his baptism. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday of Passion Week. Wednesday is the day faithful Catholics gather at the altar to observe mass. Also the priest dips his thumb into ashes that were made by burning palms that were blessed on Palm Sunday of the previous year. The priest makes the sign of the cross on their foreheads while saying, "Remember, man that thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return."

The closing event of The Lenten Season is Holy Week; also known as Passion Week. In it we find four special days: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Palm Sunday is to remember the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem. Maundy Thursday (also known as Holy Thursday) is observed to commemorate the washing of the feet of the apostles by Christ. Good Friday is considered the most holy day of the Passion Week and is observed in memory of the crucifixion of Christ. Holy Saturday is a memorial of the day before Christ arose from the dead. [*The History of Easter* by J. L. Denison]

- D. Easter Sunday follows "Lenten Season" and can fall on any Sunday between March 22 and April 25. Easter is the celebration of the resurrection day of Christ. Easter is largely a product of Catholicism. The Catholics borrowed many ideas for Easter from Judaism and Paganism. Other things connected with Easter: "The Easter Egg," "The Easter Bunny," "Easter Clothes," "The Sun Dance," "Good Luck Charms," and "Easter Fires" also were borrowed from others. [*The History of Easter* by J. L. Denison]
- E. "The Post-Easter Season" is also very important to the Catholics. "Easter Monday" follows Easter Sunday and in some cases they have an egg roll on Monday instead of Sunday which commemorates the rolling of the stone away from Christ's sepulchre. Next comes "Ascension Day" which

falls on Thursday, forty days after Easter and commemorates the ascension of Jesus. The third event is "Whitsuntide," and begins with "Whit-Sunday" which commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The fourth event of the Post-Easter season is "Trinity Sunday." It occurs fifty-seven days after Easter Sunday. It commemorates the Holy Trinity or Godhead. The fifth and final event of the Post-Easter Season is "Corpus-Christie." It is observed on Thursday following Trinity Sunday, which is the sixty-first day after Easter. "Corpus Christie" means "the body of Christ," and is a festival held in honor of the Lord's Supper. [*The History of Easter* by J. L. Denison]

III. FEASTS THAT WERE KEPT BY THE JEWS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- A. Passover. Exodus 12:1-14
- B. Unleavened bread. Exodus 12:15-20; Lev. 23:5,6
- C. First fruits. Lev. 23:9-14; Num. 28:26
- D. Pentecost (Feast of weeks). Exodus 34:22; Duet. 16:9-21; Lev. 23:15-22
- E. Trumpets (The seventh new moon). Lev. 23:23-25
- F. Day of Atonement. (Yom Kipper). Lev. 16; 23:26-32
- G. Tabernacles (Booths or ingathering). Duet. 16:13-17; Lev. 23:42; Neh. 8:13-18
- H. Purim (Lots). Esther 3:7; 9:18-32
- I. Sabbath Day. Exodus 16:22-30; 20:8-11; 23:12; 31:12-16; 34:21; 35:2,3
- J. Sabbath Year. Exodus 23:10-11; Lev. 25:2-7; Duet. 15:1-10; 31:10-13
- K. Jubilee. (Year of liberty). Lev. 25:8-16,23-55; Num. 36:4
- L. New Moon. Num. 10:10; 28:11
- M. These feasts were given by God and were kept by the Jews. 2 Chron. 8:13
- N. Worship that was not commanded by God was condemned.
 1. There were many pagan practices that were condemned by God. Duet. 12:2-4,29-32.
 2. God condemned Aaron, the brother of Moses, for setting up a feast day for the Lord contrary to God's will. Exodus 32:1-10

IV. A STUDY OF THE BIRTH, DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

- A. The birth of Jesus is set forth in detail in Matt. 1:1-25; Luke 1:1-2:40.
1. He was born of a virgin in Bethlehem as prophesied. Isa. 7:14; Micah 5:2
 2. He was visited by wise men, but the number is not told. Matt. 2:1-13
 3. Herod commands children two and under to be killed in his desire to kill Jesus. Matt. 2:16
- B. The birthday of Jesus was never kept by the church because God did not authorize it. Col. 3:17
- C. To keep the birthday of Christ as a Holy day would add to God's word which is condemned. Rev. 22:18
1. We are not to please men. Gal. 1:10
- D. Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose on the first day of the week. Matt. 28:1
1. We are not given a specific Friday or Sunday during the year to keep in memory of His death or resurrection.
 2. God did not authorize keeping a certain day (Good Friday) as a holy day to remember the crucifixion of Christ.
 3. The Bible is silent on keeping one Sunday (Easter) a year holy to remember the resurrection of Christ.
 - a. The only appearance of the word Easter is found in the KJV and is a mistranslation of *pascha*, the ordinary Greek word for "passover." Acts 12:4
- E. God gave a memorial to remember the death of Christ.
1. Unleavened bread to remember his body. Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:15-20
 2. Fruit of the vine to remember his blood.
 3. This memorial was taken on the first day of the week. Acts 2:42; 20:7
- F. When churches keep days holy and teach doctrines not authorized by God's word they are adding to His word which is a sin. Rev. 22:18,19
1. This is being done by the traditions of men and Christ said this is vain. Mark 7:7-9
 2. Even some churches of Christ have allowed Christmas to have a place in the church.
 - a. Some have Christmas trees, nativity scenes, programs and other activities that show they are keeping Christmas as a celebration of Christ's birth.

V. THE WILL OF CHRIST FOR US CONCERNING DAYS, MONTHS, TIMES AND YEARS.

- A. In the early days of the church, the Jews were accustomed to keeping feast days, fasts and holy days. Ezek. 45:17; Zech. 8:19
- B. Paul wrote that keeping such days ended with Christ dying on the Cross. Col. 2:14,16
 - 1. Paul said he was afraid of those who continued to keep those dates. Gal. 4:10; 1 Thess. 3:5
 - a. Days: Sabbaths and fasts. Luke 8:12
 - b. Months: new moons. Num. 10:10; 28:11-14
 - c. Times: Passover, feast of Pentecost, feast of Tabernacles.
 - d. Years: Sabbatical years, year of jubilee.
- C. When people obeyed the Gospel they left behind their worship of idols and all pagan feasts. 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Peter 4:3

VI. MAY CHRISTIANS OBSERVE HOLIDAYS?

- A. Each day of the week is named for a pagan god.
 - 1. This doesn't mean we worship those gods when we use the names of the days of the week.
- B. When we observe a holiday, but not religiously, it is not a sin.
 - 1. A Christian does not keep a holiday as a holy day.
 - 2. We can observe Christmas as we do July 4th or other holidays.
 - 3. Families getting together, giving gifts and eating together anytime of the year is not a sin.
 - 4. If we have a nativity scene in our yard or other things that show we are keeping this day as a religious day to remember the birth of Jesus, then we are sinning.
 - a. It is a sin to do or say things religiously contrary to what God has authorized. Col. 3:17

VII. GOD'S WILL FOR CHRISTIANS.

- A. We are to be living sacrifices. Rom. 1:1,2; 2 Tim. 4:6-8
- B. This means daily serving God. Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 2:47; 20:31; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 4:12

CONCLUSION:

1. We have learned when Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Palm Sunday and other religious holidays originated and when they began to be observed by certain religious people.
 2. Christians should desire to do only what God has commanded and to glorify His name.
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Traditions Of Men Regarding The Law Of Moses

Randy McQuade

1. Ever since the Christian age began, people have always tried to bind the Law of Moses.
 - a. In New Testament times, the Jews tried to bind circumcision on the Gentiles (Acts 15:1).
 - b. In this lesson, we will discuss the present push to bind the Law of Moses today.
 - c. Premillennialists even try to bind Moses' Law in the future by teaching that animal sacrifices will be reinstated when Christ comes again. That would seem quite difficult given what Peter, by inspiration, said would actually happen at that time (2 Peter 3:10-12)!
2. If you ask any number of people how to be saved, chances are more than a few will say something like, "Believe in Jesus and keep the Ten Commandments", however, none can ever produce a Scripture that backs up what they say.
3. There are many traditions of men regarding the Law of Moses, however salvation in the Christian age is through the blood of Christ and obedience to the Gospel, not Jewish tradition (1 Peter 1:18-19).

DISCUSSION:

- I. **MANY TODAY TRY TO BIND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN PARTICULAR.**
 - A. Many strive to keep the Ten Commandments.

1. Sometimes people will quote from the Law of Moses when giving a reason not to do something.
- B. Some teach that one must observe the Sabbath in particular.
 1. Many people believe that Sunday is the Sabbath and treat it as such. Not only are they teaching false doctrine by trying to bind the Sabbath, but they have the wrong day as well.
 2. Others realize that the Sabbath is the seventh day and therefore observe it,
 - a. Ellen G. White who took over the last remnant of William Miller's group of "Adventists" after Miller's predictions of the second coming failed to come to pass, founded what we know today as the "Seventh Day Adventist Church."
 - 1) Ms. White claimed to have had a vision in which she was caught up into heaven where she saw a halo around the commandment to keep the Sabbath and told it to her followers.
 - 2) It is funny that when Paul tells of the situation Ms. White claims to have been in, he says that it is unlawful to speak about those things (2 Cor. 12:2-4).
 - 3) The same inspired apostle warned not to give heed to those who change the Gospel given by the inspired men (Gal. 1:6-9).

II. THERE ARE OTHER ASPECTS OF THE LAW OF MOSES THAT MEN TRY TO BIND TODAY.

- A. Some would bind laws concerning food (not eating "unclean" beasts).
 1. On the other hand, some are inconsistent binding parts of the Law of Moses, but still eating their pork chops, bacon, catfish and shrimp.
- B. Some denominations burn incense in their "worship."
- C. Many people believe they must "tithe" as is instructed in the Old Testament.
- D. Some people observe "holy days".
- E. Still others circumcise their male children.
 1. While there is nothing wrong with this if it is done for purposes of cleanliness, it is not to be done as a religious observance.

2. Circumcision today is of the heart and not of the flesh (Rom. 2:28-29).

III. THE LAW OF MOSES IS NOT BINDING ON CHRISTIANS.

- A. To whom was the Law of Moses given in the first place?
 1. It was given to the Jews (Deut. 6; 29:29; Rom. 2:14).
- B. The Law of Moses was never intended to be permanent (Gal. 3:23-25).
- C. The Law did not give hope, it left one hopeless (Rom. 3:20).
- D. The sacrifice of the Old Law could not take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4).
- E. There is a sharp contrast between the Old Law and the New.
 1. The New Law written on tables of the heart is superior to the Old Law written on tables of stone (2 Cor. 3:3).
 2. The New Law is more glorious (2 Cor. 3:6-11).
 3. God's Jew is spiritual (Rom. 2:28-29; 9:6-8).
- F. The Law of Moses has been taken out of the way.
 1. It was nailed to the cross of Christ (Col. 2:14).
 2. Christ abolished it (Eph. 2:14-16).
 3. Jeremiah prophesied there would be a New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34) and that prophecy has been fulfilled (Heb. 8:6-13).
- G. When the Old Law was taken out of the way, it was done completely. Nothing was "carried over."
 1. Some argue that parts of the Law of Moses were carried over into the New Law. They reason that we are not to steal, murder, commit adultery etc. and that was all part of the Law of Moses, so therefore those things were carried over into the Law of Christ.
 - a. The reason we do not do these and other things is not because they were forbidden under the Old Law, but because they are forbidden under the New Law.
 - b. Being in the Law is not what made those moral principles good; they were in the Law because they were good. And, for that same reason they are in the New Law as well.
- H. Those who are justified by the Law are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4).

IV. THE LAW OF CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE LAW OF MOSES IN EVERY RESPECT.

- A. It is a better covenant (Heb. 8:6).
- B. It is based upon better promises (Heb. 8:6).
- C. It has a better sacrifice (Heb. 9:12-15).
- D. It has a better priesthood (Heb. 7:11) with a better High Priest (Heb. 4:15; 7:21-22).

V. WE ARE TO RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE WORD OF TRUTH (2 Tim. 2:15). THOSE WHO DO NOT, RESORT TO MANY FALSE ARGUMENTS.

- A. Those who do not rightly divide the word sometimes argue that Jesus kept the Law of Moses and we should follow his example. They argue that since He told the rich young ruler to keep the commandments, then we should also.
 - 1. Jesus and the young ruler both lived under the Law of Moses and so it was necessary for them to keep it.
 - a. Jesus came to fulfill the Old Law (Matt. 5:17-18). In keeping it perfectly, he fulfilled it.
 - b. The New Law did not even go into effect until after the death of Christ (Heb. 9:15-17).
- B. Many people argue that baptism is not necessary for salvation because the thief on the cross was not baptized.
 - 1. Again, the thief lived and died under the Law of Moses. We do not look to the Old Testament (which is when this takes place even though it appears in the New) for examples of salvation under the New Testament.
 - a. In the same manner, you would not expect to be tried for a crime under a civil law that had been repealed.
 - b. Furthermore, you would not go to England to commit a crime and expect to be tried under the laws of the United States.
 - 2. The thief not only died under the Law of Moses, he died before the Great Commission was even given (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).
- C. Many argue that it is acceptable to use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God because David did.
 - 1. What David did in the Old Testament has nothing to do with how we are to worship in the Christian age under the New Law which simply says to sing (Col. 3:16-17; Eph. 5:19).
 - 2. They also sacrificed animals under the Old Law, but you see no one arguing to do that.

VI. LET US ANSWER SOME OF THE ARGUMENTS MADE TO TRY TO BIND THE LAW OF MOSES.

- A. The covenant to Abraham's seed was everlasting (Gen. 17:7).
1. No one is doubting that. The question is; who is Abraham's seed today? The seed are those in Christ (Gal. 3:26-29).
 2. The first covenant (with the fleshly seed of Abraham) was conditional in the first place (Deut. 28; Josh. 23:14-16). The fleshly seed of Abraham broke that covenant and God was no longer bound to keep his end (Heb. 8:8-9).
- B. It is argued that those things revealed are "forever" so that people "may do all the words of this Law" (Deut. 29:29).
1. The Hebrew word translated "forever" is a word that means a "time out of mind" "practically forever" and not necessarily literally forever.
- C. Some argue that God never changes, so the Old Law must still be in place.
1. We are not contending that God has changed. The Law has changed, but that was all part of the plan that was in place from the beginning (Eph. 3:9-11). As we noticed earlier, the Law of Moses was never intended to be permanent (Gal. 3:23-25) therefore, God has never changed.
- D. Others argue that Paul preached in the synagogues on the Sabbath.
1. Paul was indeed in the synagogue on the Sabbath day, however this does not mean he was observing the Sabbath. Rather, he used the opportunity to preach Christ to the Jews because they would all be there to discuss the scriptures.
- NOTE: The next two arguments are used particularly by Sabbatarians.
- E. The Sabbath existed before the Law, so it doesn't matter if the Law was taken out of the way, it would not include the Sabbath.
1. This argument is faulty in that it fails to recognize the difference between the existence of a day and the observance of a day. Of course the Sabbath existed from the seventh day of the world upon which God rested.

2. The point is that the command for man to observe the Sabbath was not given until the Law of Moses (Exodus 20:8-11; Neh. 9:13-14).
 - a. It was made to those who were alive at the time, not their fathers before them (Deut. 5:3).
 - b. The Sabbath was not made known to them until Mt. Sinai (Neh. 9:13-14).
- F. It is argued that just the "ceremonial law" was taken away and that the Ten Commandments, the Law of God, are still in place.
1. Scripture makes no distinction between the Law of Moses and the Law which God gave. They are one and the same.
 2. God gave the Law of Moses (Ezra 7:6).
 3. Moses gave the Law of God (2 Chron. 34:14).
 4. The Sabbath was mentioned right along with burnt offerings, new moons, and set feasts as being part of the Law of God (2 Chron. 31:3). The thing is, the Sabbatarians claim that the Law of Moses (ceremonial law containing burnt offerings etc.) is separate from the Law of God (Ten Commandments). Nowhere in the Ten Commandments do we read of Burnt offerings, new moons or set feasts. Obviously, there is no difference between the Law of God and the Law of Moses.
 5. The Jews were commanded to keep the Sabbath in order to remember they had been in bondage in Egypt and that God had brought them out (Deut. 5:15).
 - a. The Law of Moses was taken out of the way.
 - b. It was prophesied to be taken away (Jer. 31:31-34).

CONCLUSION:

1. Any serious student of the Bible must rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).
 2. Many do not, and by traditions of men have tried to bind the Law of Moses upon those who are not bound by it.
 3. The Bible teaches that the Law of Moses has been taken out of the way by the death of Christ in order to make way for the more excellent Law of Christ.
 4. The traditions of men always get in the way of plain Bible truth.
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Sayings Heard Today #2

**“That's Just Your Interpretation”
“We Can't All See Things Alike”
“What Makes You Think You Are
Right And Everyone Else Is Wrong?”**

Jim Blankenship

DISCUSSION:

I. THAT'S JUST YOUR INTERPRETATION:

A. What does Interpretation mean?

1. It is a generic term and may refer to any work of literature.
 - a. Some general principles of the term are:
 - 1) Referred specifically to the sacred Scriptures, the science of interpretation is generally known as *hermeneutics*, while the practical application of the principles of this science is *exegesis*.
 - 2) In nearly all cases, interpretation has in mind the thoughts of another, and then, further, these thoughts expressed in another language than that of the interpreter. In this sense it is used in Biblical research.
 - 3) A person has interpreted the thoughts of another when he has in his own mind a correct reproduction or photograph of the thought as it was conceived in the mind of the original writer or speaker.
 - 4) It is accordingly a purely reproductive process, involving no originality of thought on the part of the interpreter.
 - 5) If the latter adds anything of his own it is *eisegesis* (reading “into”) and not *exegesis* (reading “out of”).
 - 6) The moment the Bible student has in his own mind what was in the mind of the author or authors of the Biblical books when these were written, he has interpreted the Scriptures.
 - 7) The rules of the correct interpretation of the Scriptures will depend upon the character of these writings themselves, and the principles which an interpreter will employ in his interpretation of the

- Scriptures will be in harmony with his ideas of what the Scriptures are as to origin, character, history, etc.
- 8) In the nature of the case the dogmatical stand of the interpreter will materially influence his hermeneutics and exegesis.
 - 9) In the legitimate sense of the term, every interpreter of the Bible is guided by certain principles which he holds antecedently to his work of interpretation.
 - 10) The Bible is for him a unique collection of writings, Divinely inspired and a revelation from the source of all truth, the Bible student will hesitate long before accepting contradictions, errors, mistakes, etc., in the Scriptures.
- b. There are special principles involved:
- 1) The Scriptures are a Divine and human product combined.
 - 2) That the holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit is the claim of the Scriptures themselves.
 - 3) Just where the line of demarcation is to be drawn between the human and the Divine factors in the production of the sacred Scriptures materially affects the principles of interpreting these writings.
 - 4) That the human factor was sufficiently potent to shape the form of thought in the Scriptures is evident on all hands.
 - 5) Paul does not write as Peter does, nor John as James; the individuality of the writer of the different books appears not only in the style, choice of words, etc., but in the whole form of thought also.
 - 6) The Bible is written for men, and its thoughts are those of mankind (through inspiration, jb) not of angels or creatures of a different or higher spiritual or intellectual character; and accordingly there is no specifically Biblical logic, or rhetoric, or grammar.
 - 7) The laws of thought and of the interpretation of thought in these matters pertain to the Bible as they do to other writings.

- 8) God is the author of the Scriptures which He has given through human agencies.
 - 9) The contents of the Scriptures, to a great extent, must be far above the ordinary concepts of the human mind.
- c. In some cases the Bible is its own interpreter:
- 1) John 1:38, *"And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."*
 - 2) Heb. 7:2, *"To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace."*
 - 3) In Luke 24:27, it is used of Christ in interpreting to the two on the way to Emmaus *"in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself,"* RV, "interpreted" (KJV, "expounded").
 - 4) Acts 9:36, *"Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did."*
 - 5) 1 Cor. 12:30, *"To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues."*
 - 6) 1 Cor. 14:26, *"How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, everyone of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying."*
 - 7) 2 Peter 1:20, *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."*
 - a) Customs can change as long as you don't change the laws.
 - b) Laws can be changed only by the lawgiver.
 - c) Principles never change.

II. WE CAN'T ALL SEE THINGS ALIKE.

A. What do we mean?

1. In addition to the ordinary sense of perceiving by the eye, we have...
 - a. *chazah*, "to see" (in vision): "Words of Amos...which he saw concerning Israel" (Amos 1:1).

- 1) The revelation was made to his inward eye. *"The word of Yahweh which he (Micah) saw concerning Samaria"* (Micah 1:1), describing what he saw in prophetic vision (compare Hab. 1:1).
 - b. *horao*, "to take heed": "See thou say nothing" (Mark 1:44).
 - c. *eidon*, "to know," "to note with the mind": "Jesus saw that he answered discreetly" (Mark 12:34).
 - d. Therefore, "to view," "to have knowledge or experience of": "He shall never see death" (John 8:51).
- B. What does the Bible say about the idea of perception?
1. Matt. 13:14, *"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:"*
 2. Matt. 13:15, *"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."*
 3. Mark 8:17, *"And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?"*
 4. Acts 10:34, *"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"*
 5. Acts 28:26, *"Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:"*
 6. 1 John 3:16, *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."*
- C. Let's keep the same line of thought as with the previous point.
1. Customs can be changed as long as you don't change the laws.
 2. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 3. Principles never change.

III. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU ARE RIGHT AND EVERYONE IS WRONG?

- A. What saith the Scriptures?

1. Prov. 12:15, *"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."*
2. Prov. 14:12, *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*
3. Prov. 21:2, *"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth (i.e. knows, jb) the hearts."*
4. Isa. 30:10, *"Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:"*
5. Acts 4:19, *"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."*
6. Eph. 6:1, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."*
7. Col. 3:25, *"But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons."*

IV. LET'S LOOK AT SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW THESE PRINCIPLES WORK.

- A. With each of these we need to ask ourselves, are we dealing with customs, laws, or principles.
 1. Customs can change.
 2. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 3. Principles never change.
- B. Many customs of our times says "one church is as good as another."
 1. God's law says:
 - a. Matt. 16:18, *"...That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*
 - b. Acts 2:47, *"Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*
 - c. Eph. 1:22, *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."*
 - d. Eph. 5:23, *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body."*
 - e. Col. 1:18, *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

2. Customs have changed but God's law has not.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore, there is still only one church.
3. The bottom line is with most of these Scriptures listed above is the fact that people don't want to change their minds about what they believe as opposed to what the Bible says.
 - a. Or as we might put it, "What was good enough for grandpa and grandma is good enough for me."
 - b. It has always seemed strange to me that principle doesn't work in every area of our lives, just in matters religiously.
 - 1) If wood cookstoves were good enough for grandma, is it good enough for you?
 - 2) If a model A Ford was good enough for grandpa, is it good enough for you?
 - 3) "That's different!" you say, what's more important, your soul or your physical comforts? Matt. 16:26

C. What about marriage, divorce and remarriage?

1. God's law says:
 - a. Matt. 19:3-9, *"The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? ⁴And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, ⁵And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? ⁶Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. ⁷They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? ⁸He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. ⁹And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."*
2. God's law does not change.

- a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore God's law on marriage, divorce, and remarriage does not change.
- D. What about drinking alcoholic beverages in moderation?
1. God's law says:
 - a. Prov. 20:1, "*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*"
 - b. Prov. 21:17, "*He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.*"
 - c. Prov. 23:29-30, "*Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? ³⁰They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.*"
 - d. Rom. 13:13, "*Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.*"
 - e. Gal. 5:21, "*Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*"
 - f. 1 Cor. 6:9-11, "*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*"
 2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore drunkenness to any degree is still wrong.
- E. What about secret orders like Free and Accepted Masonry?
1. God's law says:
 - a. Matt. 4:8-10, "*The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; ⁹And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt*"

fall down and worship me. ¹⁰Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore one cannot be a Christian and a Mason at the same time anymore than he could be a Catholic and a Christian at the same time.
- F. Should a Christian attend every service of the church to please God?
1. What does God's law say?
 - a. Heb. 10:24-26, *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. ²⁶For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."*
 2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore it is a sin to willfully forsake the assemblies to the saints anytime.
- G. Do we have to pay taxes, is it OK to cheat just a little?
1. What does God's law say?
 - a. Luke 20:22,25, *"Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? ... ²⁵And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."*
 - b. Rom. 13:6-7, *"For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. ⁷Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."*
 2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore we must pay taxes.

H. Do we have to give on the first day of every week?

1. What does God's law say?
 - a. 2 Cor. 9:7, *"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."*
 - b. 1 Cor. 16:1-2, *"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. ²Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."*
2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore, Christians must give every first day of the week.

I. Is all of life worship?

1. What does God's law say?
 - a. Matt. 2:2, *"Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."*
 - b. Matt. 2:8, *"And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."*
 - c. Acts 8:27, *"And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship."*
 - d. Acts 24:11, *"Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship."*
2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore, we see in each of these passages the worshipers had to go from one place to another to worship. If all of life is worship they would not have to go anywhere else to worship.

- J. Is it sinful to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with an instrument of music?
1. What does God's law say?
 - a. Rom. 15:9, "...*For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.*"
 - b. 1 Cor. 14:15, "*What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.*"
 - c. Heb. 2:12, "*Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.*"
 - d. James 5:13, "*Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*"
 2. God's law does not change.
 - a. Customs can change.
 - b. Laws can be changed only by the law giver.
 - c. Principles never change.
 - d. Therefore, since God's law says sing, to do otherwise would be in direct violation of God's law, so we must sing to please God in our worship to Him.

CONCLUSION:

1. We never go by our own interpretation, how we see it, nor think we are always right.
2. The only thing that is 100% reliable is God's word, not any man's word because "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*"

ENDNOTES:

1. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Electronic Database Copyright 1996 by Biblesoft.
 2. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, Copyright 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers.
 3. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996 by Biblesoft.
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Traditions Of Men Regarding Giving

Fund Raising, Tithing, Begging, Any Day of the Week

Freddie Shows

1. The theme of these lectures is one of grave importance. Nothing can serve to secure the future of the church in a better fashion than to establish the pattern for the things we practice. We are of course discussing the traditions of men and vain religion.
2. Every departure from the New Testament pattern we have witnessed from the apostolic age to the present, has come as a result of a man-made innovation developed from either taking a tradition and carrying it too far, or from some person or persons deciding that a particular vanity (a pet project or hobby horse) was more important to them than the word of God. Even things which seem good in and of themselves can often be carried too far and eventually lead to a departure from the faith once delivered.
3. Every practice or action in New Testament worship has a foundation for its presence. A thing done, is done, because it is something which is commanded by God, or it is a thing done by being handed down in time based upon our tradition.
4. It may well be a thing done a certain way is done of necessity. Some things become a matter of tradition to fulfill a needed part of New Testament worship. For example, we establish a pattern for assembling at certain times. We establish a set time to meet on the first day of the week. We set a time to meet during the week to conduct a Bible study. We set a pattern for worship. We may have two songs, a prayer, a sermon, eat the Lord's supper, and give of our means in a set way. We follow such a pattern and use this pattern as binding. Is such wrong? Of course not.
5. The Bible commands us to do things "decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). The command is simple and logical. Necessity demands we observe things in such a way as to establish a common basis of order and unity. Such is not wrong, in fact it is even necessary to be observed to do the will of God.
6. Suppose, for sake of argument, we allowed all to choose their own time to gather at the building on the first day of the week.

What would be the result? In the days of the judges of Israel every man did that which was right in his own eyes. The result was astounding. Israel spent a period of many years in rebellion not only to God but without any sense of unity among themselves. Those were years when they were "cross purposes" with God and with one another. It would be foolish to presume we could let our mid-week gathering or worship service be handled without establishing an order of things. When I was a boy I attended several denominational services with an aunt and uncle of mine. The service was conducted with Pentecostals and there was no order whatsoever as each would "get the Holy Ghost" in his or own due time and "away they would go." Even as a small boy, I could see the wild and chaotic gathering was at best an abomination to God and man. There was no sense of order whatsoever.

7. The tradition of meeting at certain specified times and maintaining a certain, specified order to worship is not what we are concerned about. Such is an essential. As long as a tradition does not depart from the New Testament pattern of things, the tradition is not wrong and should not be brought into question. The things we should question, however, are the things which we see introduced which are "out of harmony" with the New Testament pattern.
8. One of those things we are concerned with is *giving of our means*. Does the Bible establish a set pattern for giving? Are we bound to hold to a set way of gathering funds for the work of the church? Are we bound to obtaining funds from a select group by a select means?

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT A CONTRIBUTION FOR THE WORK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH?

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

A. What does this verse really teach us?

1. Paul is addressing the church at Corinth about the collection to be gathered for the church at Jerusalem during a time of great famine.

2. It was an opportunity for other Christians to be benevolent toward their brethren who were less fortunate (and any others who were in need, 2 Cor. 9:12-13).
 3. It teaches “who,” “when,” and “how much” as pertaining to the collection.
- B. Some misconceptions about these verses:
1. That 1 Cor. 16:1-3 establishes what the collection is for (benevolence).
 2. That the collection is for the saints only.
 3. That this is not binding on how we are to gather funds for the work of the church today.

II. WHAT DOES THE VERSE SAY ABOUT THE COLLECTION?

- A. It will define our giving.
1. Take special notice of what is being said. “*Now concerning the collection for the saints...*” (1 Cor. 16:1a).
 - a. Again, we emphasize the need of this contribution.
 - 1) This collection was for the church at Jerusalem.
 - 2) If this verse established what the collection was always for, we could never have it be for another purpose. It would always be for the saints and then only for the saints at Jerusalem.
 - 3) Foy E. Wallace, Jr. used to say “anything that proves to much, proves nothing at all.”
 2. What is the purpose of having a common treasury to draw funds from?
 - a. The work of the church is to evangelize.
 - b. Benevolence is a part of that work.
 - c. Benevolence and evangelism are inseparable works.
 3. Why have a common treasury to draw from?
 - a. The fact that certain works are to be done establishes the need for funds.
 - b. The urgency of some works to be handled on an immediate basis establishes the need to have it set aside to draw from.
 - 1) Common sense would govern us toward having it readily available lest every time there is a need we have to search out the saints so they can contribute to the work.
 - 2) Suppose when the light bill came due or the water bill, or a bank note on the building, we had to gather together all the saints and then collect a

- set amount for that purpose? What would be the result?
- 3) This is the exact point Paul makes when he says "*that there be no gatherings when I come*" (1 Cor. 16:2).
4. Benevolence (a primary part of New Testament evangelism) is an on-going work.
 - a. It is consistent with the teaching of Jesus to help the needy.
 - b. Matt. 5:38-48, "*Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: ³⁹But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. ⁴⁰And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. {41} And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. ⁴²Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. ⁴³Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. ⁴⁴But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; ⁴⁵That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? ⁴⁷And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? ⁴⁸Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"
 5. It is inconsistent with New Testament teaching to say to those in need "go to the denominations and get food, clothing, or shelter, and come back to us and we will give you the truth."
 6. We may always draw from this common treasury for any Scriptural work that is used for evangelizing. (Again, we wish to emphasize the work of benevolence is part of evangelism. We wish to emphasize that the word benevolence be understood as the doing of good to those around us in fulfilling a need and is in no way meant to imply

the building of gymnasiums or swimming pools, or such like under the broad umbrella of benevolence).

- B. The language is imperative mood and therefore a command.
 1 Cor. 16:1b, *“as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.”*
1. He has hereby commanded (given order) concerning a collection.
 2. Any collection gathered by the church, to be used by the church, for the work of benevolence and evangelism, is to be gathered in just such a way.
- C. The next verse defines “when” and “who.”
 1 Cor. 16:2a, *“Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store.”*
1. When we gather is set as the first day of the week.
 - a. “When” we come together as the church on every first day of the week, we are commanded to “lay by him in store.”
 - b. Every member of the New Testament church is to set aside (purpose) on the first day of the week.
 - c. How often do I give? As I have prospered. If I have prospered this week, I am to hold aside (purpose; set aside) a portion of my prosperity into a common treasury which can be drawn from (used) for the purpose of benevolence and evangelism.
 2. The language here informs us “who” is to give.
 - a. He says “let every one of you.”
 - b. Christians are to give.
 - c. We do not have the right to solicit funds from anyone other than Christians.
 - d. Does this mean we cannot accept a contribution from a non-Christian?
 - 1) We can accept such funds when placed in the collection plate, but we do not solicit such funds from those who are not Christians.
 - 2) The church of Christ is not and should not be a begging organization.
 - 3) The very idea that we need to gather moneys outside the scope of our brethren is an offensive prospect. It is offensive to the work we should support. It is offensive to God.
 - 4) The very idea of needing non-believers to support the work of evangelism is unlike God who sees and recognizes none outside His family.

- 5) To do such is to make the church a gathering of beggars on the street, unable to support themselves.
 - 6) It lowers us to the level of men such as Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, and the like. When Oral Roberts made his appeal to raise eight million dollars or else he would die, Paul Harvey had the right idea with his bumper sticker of the week. It said, "save your money and send Oral home!"
 - 7) For these reasons we do not raise funds by the means of cake sales, car washes, tithes, fund raisers, or begging and pleadings.
 - 8) There has never been a time when God has not expected His people to support themselves and the work they were doing.
- D. The next part of this verse will define "how much" we are to give. 1 Cor. 16:2b, "*as God hath prospered him*"
1. The concept of New Testament Christianity is very interesting as it revolves around an attitude.
 2. If we can set our minds on the work of God, we can then assure that we will give as is needed to support the work of the church in every area.
 3. The only time we fall short is when we have a mind-set toward the things of the world.
 4. Christians examine how God has blessed them. They then give as He has allowed them to prosper.
 5. The reason we find ourselves short of the funds necessary to do is obvious. We still have those who will not purpose.
 - a. What purposing is not:
 - 1) It is not taking my paycheck and spending it on everything else and giving God what is left over. God is not interested in my scraps when I have finished eating.
 - 2) It is not waiting until I arrive at the building and scratching around in my pocket to see what I can find there today.
 - 3) It is not tithing.
 - a) Tithing is an Old Testament word.
 - b) Under the Old Law, the Jews were required to give a tithe or a tenth. This was not, however, the limit to their contributions. They also gave

free will (voluntary) offerings (Lev 7:16) and many other sin offerings. (The reader should take note of such throughout the book of Leviticus)

- c) A verse often mis-applied in the New Testament and applied to our giving is found in Matthew 5:20, where Jesus said: *“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”*
- The idea used is as such: “If the Jews gave a tenth in a tithe, we should exceed that and give more than a tenth.”
 - This verse is not a reference to our giving. It is a reference to our conduct. The scribes and Pharisees said and did not. We must not be guilty of this kind of righteousness, but we must do all we do not only by observing the letter of God’s word, but also the spirit (John 4:24).

- E. Our giving, as with all worship and service, must come from the heart.
1. Our love of God should be permeated throughout our lives.
 2. It will spill over into our prayers, our songs, our work and our contribution.
 3. Giving upon the first day of the week is as much a commanded part of worship as is our praying and our singing.
 4. Those unwilling to give as they have prospered cannot worship God in spirit and truth.
 5. Those giving, without being cheerful in giving, cannot worship in spirit and truth.
 - a. Paul reminded the Corinthian church about the collection of his first letter in his second. 2 Cor. 9:1-8, *“For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: ²For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. ³Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye*

may be ready: ⁴Lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. ⁵Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up before hand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness. ⁶But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. ⁷Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."

- b. To be scriptural in giving, we must be willing.
 - c. The very idea of finding it necessary to beg money or to sell off such as we have to raise money is contrary to the New Testament concept of giving as we have prospered.
 - d. It leaves the impression to the world and to God that we do not love truth enough to support it from our own hearts.
 - 1) My heart's desire for support of the work is reflected in my willingness to sacrifice in my giving.
 - 2) Selling off something in return for raising money is no sacrifice. I have given nothing.
 - 3) I am reminded of David who would not give any thing to God which cost him nothing in return. 2 Samuel 24:24
 - e. From his language we also can learn another valuable lesson.
 - 1) As I am willing to go the extra mile in giving to support the work, my giving will encourage those of my brethren around me to give.
 - 2) The question of how far is it to heaven can be easily answered. It is 2 miles to heaven, for the Christian is one who need not be compelled to go, but rather is willing when compelled to go a mile, he will gladly go twain. Matt. 5:41
5. Another false idea we have developed is that of giving and yet at the same time holding back said funds.

- a. It is Scriptural to ear mark money for a said purpose, i.e. a building fund, etc.
 - 1) The example of our text is our proof.
 - 2) They were to ear mark by setting aside (lay by in store) for the work of benevolence to the Jerusalem church.
 - b. It is not Scriptural to hoard up money in CDs and such like and refuse to use it when needed.
 - c. Many congregations are sitting on large sums of money that will never be used because they refuse to put it into circulation. They prefer to hold it for the so-called rainy day that never comes.
 - d. To do so is to never really give the money to the Lord's work at all.
 - e. If we control it to the point of never putting it into use, we have not given that money at all.
- F. The next part of this verse will define "why" we lay by in store. 1 Cor. 16:2c, *"that there be no gatherings when I come"*
1. We appeal to our earlier argument.
 2. Necessity demands the funds be readily available.
 3. Without a common treasury to draw from, such work as benevolence may often go undone.

CONCLUSION:

1. God has always consistently expected His people to support His work. The Jewish system was one of a national economy. They supported themselves by their offerings. God's people today are expected to do the same. God was very clear in establishing for them a means to be self-sufficient. He has placed the New Testament church under this same umbrella of being self-governed by the New Testament pattern. He also wants us to be self-supporting by the New Testament command and example of contributing of our means upon every first day of the week. We cannot defend a practice by looking only to the end result. The end does not justify the means. Regardless of the work we are doing and the amount of good we may reap from that work, we cannot draw upon any unscriptural means to accomplish that end and still maintain acceptability with God. We will never find a time acceptable with God to do evil so good may come. Gathering money by any means other than the way God has authorized is not only sinful, but also a lack of faith in God's appointed means to provide. The Bible warns *"whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Rom. 14:23). It also says, *"So*

then, faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Let us remember to let God govern our hearts and actions to His glory and honor. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 3:21, *"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."* In doing Bible things in the Bible way we can let all men see our confidence and trust in God's ability to provide the way. It is in the church we are able to declare to all the wisdom of God. Paul reminds again in Eph. 3:10-11, *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, ¹¹According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."* God has so declared, let us make certain by observing His way, thus it shall be to His glory and honor. Let us also remember, as we give, it will never be possible for me to out-give God. Paul reminds us in Galatians 6:6-10, *"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. ⁷Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. ⁹And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. ¹⁰As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."* We can do much good as we do God's way.

2. All else will come to naught.

Traditions Of Men Regarding Calvinism

Eddy Craft

1. Calvinism is a false system that effects the entire religious world.
2. Most, if not all, denominations hold to at least one tenet of Calvinism.

3. The word TULIP is a good way to keep up with the tenets (doctrines) of Calvinism. We will break this word into an acrostic to show the tenets of this false doctrine.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE "T" IN TULIP STANDS FOR "TOTAL HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY."

- A. The Calvinist tells us that humanity is totally depraved. This of course means that we are born sinners. They teach that we inherited this depraved nature from Adam and since that time, all men are born to evil: and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.
- B. Let us look at one of the verses they use to show this depravity. Psalm 51:5 *"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."* This verse does not say what many would like for it to say. A woman who commits fornication, if impregnated, conceives a child in sin, but the child itself is not a sinner. This passage is referring to the condition of the mother. One would have to go elsewhere to consider the condition of the child. Jesus taught. Matthew 18:3, *"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."* Did Jesus want his followers to be totally depraved? Of course not! Little babies are pure and innocent.
- C. Another verse they misuse is Psalm 58:3, *"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."* Notice again what this verse says. It does not say anything about inheriting Adam's sin. It says that the child goes astray speaking lies. Many times the Calvinist will use these verses for their false doctrine and never look to see what they are saying.
- D. All it takes to refute this false doctrine is to show how one becomes a sinner. James 1:14-15, *"But every man is tempted. when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁶Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."* Sin is a transgression of the Law (1 John 3:4). But where is the passage that teaches inherited sin?
- E. Calvinism takes away man's free moral agency. As we have already seen, the Calvinist believe that little children are born sinners and inclined to evil. But listen to the word of

God. Isaiah 7:14-16, *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, ¹⁶Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."* The Bible teaches clearly that as children grow up they have the freewill to choose the good or the evil.

- F. If we inherit sin, then whose sin did Adam inherit? Whose sins did the angels inherit? Whose sins did Jesus inherit? What about the virgin Mary?

II. THE "U" IN TULIP STANDS FOR "UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION."

- A. This means that God will unconditionally, arbitrarily choose some to be saved. The Calvinist tells us that this proves how loving God is. They of course always seem to get themselves among the elect. Isn't that interesting! This doctrine teaches that you don't do anything to be lost and you don't do anything to be saved, so it is all up to God. If I don't do anything to be lost, but I am lost, then whose fault would it be?
- B. If God just arbitrarily chooses to save some that may even be more wicked than you, but he doesn't save you, how would that be showing the love of God? The one's that God chooses to be saved, regardless of what they want, will be saved. The Bible does not teach that you are saved against your own will. The Bible teaches man, in order to be saved, must come to Christ on their own volition (Matt. 11:28-30).

III. THE "L" IN TULIP STANDS FOR "LIMITED ATONEMENT."

- A. This means that God did not die for every man, but only for the elect.
- B. Just think what that does to a great passage like John 3:16. They must change the word "world" to elect. The Calvinist must change the "every man" in Hebrews 2:9 to the elect. Every verse that teaches the truth about salvation must be changed by the Calvinist. It is again, I think, very interesting that the Calvinist are among the limited few. **BUT HOW WOULD THEY REALLY KNOW?**

IV. THE “T” IN TULIP STANDS FOR “IRRESISTIBLE GRACE.”

- A. This means that if one is elected he cannot resist God’s call.
- B. This means that some of the most ungodly men we know may be among the elect and could not resist it even if they wanted to.
- C. Calvinism teaches that the one’s that are predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished. This of course means that if one wanted to be lost that was saved, he could not; and if one wanted to be saved that was lost he could not. If I cannot be saved without the grace of God, and if His grace has not been extended to me, then whose fault is it if I am lost? If one had received the grace of God, there is no way he could know it, if Calvinism be true.
- D. Does the Gospel (the preaching thereof) have anything to do with one’s receiving the grace of God? Rom. 1:16, *“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

V. THE “P” IN TULIP STANDS FOR “PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS”

- A. Calvinism: *“They, whom God hath accepted in His beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally, nor finally, fall away from the state of grace: but shall persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved”* (Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XVIII).
- B. Can the elect hate God and be saved?
- C. Can the elect practice the works of the flesh and still be saved? They say yes but the Bible says no. Gal. 5:19-21, *“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”*
- D. Is there any connection between keeping God’s commandments and going to heaven? 1 John 2:3-4, *“And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴He*

- that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."*
- E. How will man be judged on judgement day? 2 Cor. 5:10, *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."*
- F. Can one's name be removed from the Lamb's book of life? Rev. 22:18-19, *"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: ¹⁹And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book."*
- G. The Bible teaches that one can fall from the grace of God. Gal. 5:4, *"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."*
- H. If you cannot fall from the grace of God, the following verses make no sense at all. James 5:19-20, *"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; ²⁰Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* 2 Peter 2:20-22, *"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹For 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. ²²But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."* The preceding verses prove this tenet of Calvinism to be false.

CONCLUSION:

1. If it is the case that Calvinism is true, then the Word of God is to no avail. They tell us that the natural man cannot understand the Word of God. If Calvinism is true, it would not matter anyway, because there is nothing you could do about your condition. How did they come to know that one cannot understand the Word of God? If they tell me that I cannot understand the Word of God, can I understand what they are telling me? Those who claim that the natural (lost, depraved) man cannot

- understand the Bible, will go to the Bible to try to get the natural man to understand that he cannot understand the Bible. Is it not amazing that the only two verses in the Bible that the natural man is supposed to understand are supposed to teach him that he cannot understand any of the Word of God?
2. Since Calvinism has affected all denominations in one way or another, and even the church of our Lord in some places, it is important to know all we can about this false teaching.
 3. Questions to ask those who claim that the natural (Lost Depraved) man cannot understand the Word of God.
 - a. Can a totally depraved person understand the Bible?
 - b. How does one convince a depraved man that he is depraved?
 - c. How and when did you learn that you were totally depraved?
 - d. What brought about your conversion?
 - e. Can a natural depraved man be a brain surgeon?
 - f. Would you read the Bible to a totally depraved person?
 - g. How can the totally depraved person change their nature?
 - h. How does God change the depraved nature of man?
 4. In closing, let me show the hopeless dilemma the Calvinist is in. Those who teach that man is totally depraved claim that the depraved man cannot read and understand the Bible. He must await a direct operation of the Holy Spirit to deal with his depravity and to illuminate the Scriptures. However, these same people claim that the world cannot receive the Holy Spirit. **WHAT A DILEMMA!**
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Traditions Among The Lord's People Today

Order of Worship, Divided Assembly, Separate Room For The Lord's Supper on Sunday night, Use of the Building, Dress for Worship, Reverence, Attitude

Richard Guill

1. Does anyone here tonight want this congregation or the church in general to die?
2. Powerful and influential voices among us are crying, "The church must change. If it does not change, it will die." Here is a typical quotation: "Praise God we are changing as a church. If we don't, we'll die." (Sandra Milholland, *Wineskins*, Vol.2, No.1, p.12)
3. We are told that many of the "baby-boomers" have left the church and will not return until and unless the church changes to meet their "felt needs."
4. We are told that we are losing our young people because the church's methods are old and out-dated, its message is not relevant to the young, and its worship is boring.
5. Many congregations have already swallowed this malarkey and changed dramatically to appeal to the younger generation and many of our young people are leaving the "tradition-bound" churches to flock to these "progressive, non-traditional" churches.
6. Alarmed by such losses, and fearing that the congregation will die, many congregational leaders are "ripe" for work of a "change-agent" when he comes among them.
7. One of the "buzz-words" of the change-agents is "tradition" and, according to them, is always a bad thing that must be corrected. It is portrayed as the culprit responsible for the decline seen in our churches.
8. My lesson for tonight has to deal with the subject of "Traditions Among The Lord's People Today," with specific emphasis upon the order of worship, divided assemblies, separate room for the

Lord's supper on Sunday night, use of the building, dress for worship, reverence, and attitude.

DISCUSSION:

I. TRADITION: DEFINING THE TERM.

- A. The Greek word translated as "tradition" is *paradosis* and is defined as "transmission, a handing down, to hand over, deliver" (Strong's Dictionary of the New Testament).
- B. The New Testament uses this word to describe two different kinds of "traditions."
 1. Traditions that originate with man and are handed down from generation to generation. These can be properly divided into two categories:
 - a. Traditions that violate the will of God or render it void (Matt. 15:1-9; Gal. 2:8; 1 Peter 1:18). Such traditions must always be changed or discarded altogether.
 - b. Traditions that are innocent and not sinful (1 Cor. 11:1-16; emphasize vs.2,16). These **MAY** be changed when necessary, providing the change does not violate Scripture. Why do not all churches today demand that their women be veiled or their head covered in services?
 2. Traditions of the faith (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6). These are **NEVER** to be changed. Note that to do so causes one to walk disorderly and he is to be disciplined.
 - a. Does puny man think he can improve on God's prescribed order?
 - b. Isn't this the very thing that led to the great apostasy which resulted in Catholicism?
 - c. Isn't this the predominant problem in denominationalism?
 - d. Isn't this what is fueling the liberalism which is engulfing the church today?

II. SPECIFICS OF MY LESSON.

- A. **ORDER OF WORSHIP.** The number of songs, Lord's supper before the sermon or after, etc. are traditions of man that may be changed when deemed wise or necessary.
 1. Didn't you brethren change the order of worship for this service tonight?
 2. Is it necessary for there to be any "order" of worship?
YES, 1 Cor. 14:40

3. Any change made must avoid producing confusion among the worshipers (v.33).
 4. New songs? Singing while partaking of Lord's supper? Women to serve communion and take up communion? Instead of a song leader, have a soloist, trio, quartet, choir?
 5. Different order every week? Spontaneity? Notice the text of 1 Cor. 14.
- B. THE DIVIDED ASSEMBLY ("children's church" or parallel worship) is a tradition of man that must be changed because it is without Scriptural authority.
1. We have Biblical authority for the assembly of the whole church together for periods of worship and exhortation (Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 11:18-20; 1 Cor. 14:23).
 2. Where is the authority for any to be separated into another assembly at the same time?
 3. Limited to children? only groups with a "special need?"
- C. SEPARATE ROOM FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER ON SUNDAY NIGHT is a tradition of man that needs to be changed wherever it is found.
1. A very important question: Why have the Lord's supper in a separate room? Is it because of the time element?
 2. One of the corruptions of the Lord's supper in Corinth was that some were taking before the others their own supper (1 Cor. 11:21). They are commanded, "*When ye come together to eat, tarry one for another*" (1 Cor. 11:33).
 3. Again, where is the authority for such a practice?
 4. Another problem is this: Some, believing it to be wrong, are placed in a dilemma. Should I just not partake, and violate a requirement of the Lord, or, should I go ahead and partake in a manner which I believe to be wrong and violate my conscience and thus sin (Rom.14:23)?
- D. USE OF THE BUILDING is a tradition of man that is subject to change if necessary.
1. The church building and its grounds are not holy!
 2. The Bible gives NO INSTRUCTIONS for the use of the building in which the church meets.
 3. Therefore, the use of the building for some functions and the refusal of its use for other functions has to be a tradition of man and CAN be subject to change.
 4. However, if the use of the building for some functions was for that which is sinful, then that tradition must be

changed if the church has the ownership and control of the property.

5. Consideration must also be given as to how the activity for which it is used will appear to others. Yard sale? car wash? piano for wedding? 2 Cor. 8:21, "*Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*"
- E. DRESS FOR WORSHIP is a tradition of man that may be changed provided the change made does not violate clearly revealed guidelines.
1. James 2:1-9 clearly prohibits us from any kind of preference of one member over another based solely on the quality of one's clothing. Such preference is sinful.
 2. The Bible does regulate what kind of clothing men and women are to wear to worship as well as at other times also. The two key passages are 1 Tim. 2: 9-10 and 1 Peter 3:3-4.
 3. The key to understanding is found in both passages. The outward adornment is guided by that which is within, the kind of spirit they possess.
 - a. Modest is from a Greek word *kosmois* which means "orderly, well-arranged, decent." We generally have applied this to clothing that is not provocative because it reveals too much of the skin, however it carries a much broader meaning as the rest of that verse shows. Notice the references to the hair, the jewelry, and the costly clothing.
 - b. Shamefacedness (shamefastness) is from the Greek word *aidos* and means "modest" and carries the idea of an inner steadfast sense of what is right and proper.
 - c. Note: Peter says that such proper adorning will flow from one with a meek and quiet spirit flowing out of an incorruptible heart (1 Peter 3:4).
 4. The spirit within is formed by one's attitude toward God and His Word. This leads us to our next major points in our lesson which will be covered together.
- F. REVERENCE AND ATTITUDE, or rather, A REVERENT ATTITUDE.
1. Many passages stress the need for man to hold the Lord in reverence and awe.
 - a. Hab. 2:20, "*The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him.*"

- b. Psalm 89:7, *"God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him."*
 - c. Psalm 33:8, *"Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him."*
 - d. Jesus taught his disciples to pray, *"Hallowed be thy name"* (Matt. 6:9).
2. I am convinced that a lack of respect and reverence for God and His Word is the major root of all unwarranted changes in God's church today.
 3. A truly reverent attitude toward God, His Word, and the church will not allow anyone to refer to God as "Dad," make unnecessary and unwarranted changes to the church and its worship, or tamper with his inspired Word.
 4. Nor will they come to worship wearing clothing that is so gaudy or revealing as to draw undue attention to self, or wear clothing to worship God that is not the best they have. (I have known men who wore a suit and tie every day in their work to meet their customers, but would wear jeans and a tee shirt to worship God)
 5. The problem with our women and girls who wear shorts to worship, short dresses, those with slits that reveal much of the leg and thigh, or blouses and dresses so low as to reveal much of their breasts is A LACK OF REVERENCE AND RESPECT FOR GOD as well as a great lack of respect for themselves or for their brothers in Christ. (Incidentally, for them to wear such clothing at times and places other than the worship of God shows the same disrespect)

CONCLUSION:

1. The God we worship and serve is an AUGUST AND POWERFUL BEING who is worthy of our profound reverence and respect and He expects such from us.
2. If we have such respect for God, we will never elevate our traditions to the level of God's word, and when we discover that our traditions are not in harmony with that word we will move quickly to abandon that tradition and hold to God's traditions.
3. May we never become like Israel of old who left God's revealed traditions and began to walk after their own ways. God's prophet pleaded with them to *"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk*

therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, WE WILL NOT WALK THEREIN" (Jer. 6:16).

Traditions of Men Regarding Salvation

Mike Hogan

1. Tradition: Defined in the New Testament Greek (*paradosis*) "a handing down" or on.
 - a. The handing down of the Lord's supper is one example (1 Cor. 11:23).
 - b. Paul, by revelation, instructed the Corinthian church about this item of worship, using an inspired letter, handing down the truth about the matter.
 - c. Paul instructed the church at Thessalonica to, "*stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle*" (2 Thess. 2:15).
 - 1) This was a verbal or written instruction handed down for their edification.
 - d. The use of the word "tradition" can be applied to conduct, or a living example, showing how one can follow after another's example of Christian living (2 Thess. 3:6-7).
2. Tradition means...
 - a. An inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom).
 - b. The handed down information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth, or by example from one generation to another without written instruction.
3. In many cases men suffer from what is known as, "Traditionalism."
 - a. Adherence to doctrines or practices of a religion.
 - b. This adherence to, "traditionalism" is a great cause for religious error and condemnation.
 - c. Traditionalism seeks to uphold and defend things done, rather than things written or authorized in the Word of truth (Col. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

- d. I was asked some time ago by a member of the body of Christ, "is it wrong to extend the invitation before the sermon, and then a second time at the end of the lesson as traditionally done." I was some what perplexed by his lack of Biblical understanding on the subject of authority verses tradition. I explained, "extending the invitation was a command of Christ, and the number of times it is extended is up to the need of the local church" (Matt 7:21; Mark 16:15-16).
- 1) He would have left were it not for this explanation of the word "tradition."
4. Jesus was faced with this same dilemma, many years before this (Matt 15:1-9).
- a. The scribes, and Pharisees seemed to hold the traditions of men in the same light and weight as God's law, claiming Jesus transgressed the traditions of the elders.
- 1) God's great truth defines sin as, "*transgression of God's will or law*" (1 John 3:4).
- b. Authorized and approved traditions can be upheld as right insomuch as they are not a transgression of God's law. Such as the time in which we worship or the number of times we worship each Lord's day.
- c. When traditions are held in the same light as God's approved commands and authority, accountability will be required of the transgressor (Matt 15:5-9; Rom. 2:1-9).
5. We will be discussing "traditions of men regarding salvation" such as: Deathbed Repentance, Sprinkling and Pouring, the Sinner's Prayer, Subjectivism, Infant Baptism, the Mourner's Bench, Alter Call, etc.

DISCUSSION:

I. THERE IS A PATTERN OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS AND REJECTION TO APPROVED HEAVENLY COMMANDS.

A. Adam And Eve...

1. Were given a commandment, just one, and transgressed it for a number of reasons (Gen. 2:16-17).
 - a. Self will, and submission to a lie (Gen. 3:1-6).
 - b. Understand, God meant what He said and made good on what He said (Gen. 3:8-23).

- B. The King of Judah, Jehoiakim, rejected the inspired revelation of God, from the prophet, Jeremiah and the penmen, Baruch. By burning this wonderful scroll, a plea from God to repent, using His terms and conditions (Jer. 36:16-27).

1. No matter how hard Satan tries to destroy the word of God, it will continue to be printed as history has clearly shown (Jer. 36:28-32).
- C. Many in the first century and today are establishing their own righteousness by rejecting the true righteousness of God (Rom. 10:1-3; 1 John 3:6-9).
 1. The righteousness of God is revealed unto men by the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17).
 2. The Gospel of our salvation (Eph. 1:13).
 3. The Gospel or (word) of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18-19).
 4. The Gospel that must be believed to produce fruit (Mark 15:15-16; Luke 8:15).

II. CAN MANKIND UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE ALIKE?

- A. The Bible claims man can understand it alike (John 17:17-23; 1 Cor. 1:10).
 1. If that be the case, then why have so many doctrines and commandments of men?
 2. Because Satan is alive and well (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:14-15).
 - a. However, Jesus said we can know the truth and the truth will make us free (John 8:32).
- B. When ye read, you can know what Paul understood directly by the Spirit (Gal. 1:10-12; Eph. 3:3-4).
 1. We are to study to be approved of God, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15).
 2. We can be complete unto every good work, using the inspired word (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 3. We can be set apart or sanctified by the truth (John 17:17).
 4. We can have an inheritance, because the word of God is able (Acts 20:32).

III. SOME CAUSES FOR DOCTRINES OF MEN.

- A. Claims of ongoing inspiration, such as apostolic succession:
 1. The passing down of apostolic powers and authority through the ages.
 - a. The Bible claims, the days of inspiration are over (1 Cor. 13:9-12; Jude 3).
- B. Dealing with God's word using "subjectivism" as a rule.
 1. A theory that limits knowledge to subjective experiences, better felt than told.
 - a. Hence the terminology ("born again" Christian).

- b. Suggesting one must have a supernatural experience in order to declare to the world, I was a Christian, but now I am born again.
- C. A misunderstanding of the new birth (John 3:1-8).
- D. Using a foundation of Calvinism to explain Scripture.
 - 1. Removing all personal accountability of right and wrong.
- E. False views about Faith, Grace, and Works (Heb. 11:6; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:1-2; Acts 10:34-35).
- F. Gnosticism and various forms of this hideous doctrine:
 - 1. Gnostic comes from the Greek word "to know."
 - 2. This term is generally used to refer to those who reject the inspired Word of God and rely upon human wisdom. Religious rationalists who try solving religious problems using their own speculative philosophical imaginations.
 - 3. Salvation then is obtained through intellectual means. Indeed, this view is alive and well this day!

IV. DISTURBING CONDUCT AND STATEMENTS OF THE RELIGIOUS.

- A. Denominational attitudes in the past toward the Bible,
 - 1. Most claim belief in the Bible, but when error is exposed or application needs to be made, then what?
 - a. I quote excerpts from an address by the cardinals of the Church to Pope Pius III, which is preserved in the National Library of Paris, Vol. 2, pages 650,651. "Of all the advice that we can offer your holiness, we must open your eyes well and use all possible force in the matter, namely, to permit the reading of the gospel as little as possible in all the countries under your jurisdiction. Let the very little part of the gospel which usually read in mass, and let no one be permitted to read it more. So long as people will be content with the small amount, your interest will prosper; but as soon as the people want to read more, your interest will begin to fail. The Bible is the book which more than any other thing has raised against us the tumults and tempests by which we have almost perished. In fact, if one compares the teaching of the Bible with what takes place in our churches, he will soon find discord, and will realize that our teachings are often different from the Bible, and often still, contrary to it."

In November, 1842 several Jesuit missionaries held a protracted meeting in the town of Champlain, New York. A large number of Catholics from adjoining towns and country sides attended the meeting." The meeting continued for several days, until the priests called for all Bibles to be brought to them. And on the 27th of that same month, they burned these Bibles, in front of a large crowd in the open. It was said of them, "It would be better to burn such translations of the Bible than to give it to grocers and dealers to wrap their wares in."

2. What a sad, and shameful commentary of the religious world.
- B. Again, "Penknife religion." Jesus said, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*" Matt. 24:35
1. The will of God that men reject, will be the standard and rule of their judgment (John 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; Phil. 3:16; 2 Thess. 1:6-9).

V. **DOCTRINES AND TRADITIONS OF MEN EXPOSED.** The number of doctrines supported by creeds and counsels of men are more in number than the gods of the erring Israelites, "according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah" (Jer. 2:28).

- A. Deathbed repentance: Does the Bible say anything about this well known subject?
1. The thought of a minister going into a hospital room to comfort and encourage the sick or dying is right and good in it's proper context.
 2. Repentance indeed is a true Biblical subject, but must be taken in context. Are we talking about the lost alien sinner, or the erring Christian?
 3. Many people of old did their best to hold out from obeying the Gospel until that point of failing health, when it was necessary to obey.
 - a. Tertullian, 155-223 A.D., was an outspoken advocate of putting off baptism until old age.
 - b. Constantine of the third century received baptism and communion on his death bed at the hands of an Arian bishop, Eusebius of Nicodemia.
 - 1) In light of history we can see men desiring to live like their father the Devil and attempt to pinpoint

the very time in which one will obey the commands of God (Luke 12:16-21).

- a) The rich "fool" thought he could do the same, but his life was taken before he thought.
- b) Does God accept premeditation as an acceptable sacrifice? Rom. 12:1-2

B. God calls all to repent and (turn) unto Him (Acts 17:30).

- 1. The Christian can fall away from the Lord, because of sin's separating effect (Isa. 59:2).
 - a. Many use Simon from Acts eight to drive their point home, "all one needs to do is repent and be save from past sins."
 - 1) Simon had already obeyed the Gospel when he was found in sin (an erring Christian) (Acts 8:17-23).
 - a) At this point, Simon needed to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:24; James 5:19-20).
- 2. The alien sinner, must repent and obey the Gospel in order to have their sins washed away (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - a. Can this person be acceptable to God in the closing moments of his life, NO!
 - b. When that time arrives, will they be able to obey from the heart, knowing they planned it this way?
 - c. At this point in life, one's heart could have become hardened and unwilling to carry out this premeditation. Where is the authority?

C. Sprinkling and Pouring in place of immersion:

- 1. The first known case of sprinkling was a man by the name of Novation in 251 A.D. He was near death, according to Eusebius. This was not a common practice in this era. Later, it became the rule, when other doctrines were in place such as: Adam's original sin, infant baptism, etc.
 - a. Sprinkling for baptism was accepted during this period on an emergency basis. It was developed through a tradition called, "baptisms of the sick."
 - b. Baptism at that time was upheld as necessary to obtain the remission of sins and for salvation.
 - c. Since many of the un-baptized would become terminally ill and immersion seemed unwise, small amounts of water was used by the priests, they poured it upon the subjects head.

- d. Where is the authority for this clear tradition of man?
Col. 3:17
2. No matter how hard one might try, you can't make the Greek word *baptidzo*, which means, "immerse," to mean "sprinkle."
 - a. Sprinkle *rhantidzo*, a verb according to Vine's, means "to sprinkle."
 - 1) It is true that the New Testament reveals the blood of Christ being sprinkled for sin, but only in the typical of the blood of animals in the Old Testament (Heb. 9:13;10:1-11;12:24; 1 Peter 1:2).
 - 2) Heb. 9:22, "*And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Heb. 9:22; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).
 3. Sprinkling does not come close to fitting the idea of a burial, but that is what baptism is, according to inspired truth (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
 4. Baptism is indeed a complete covering of the old man of sin.
 - a. Much water (John 3:23).
 - b. Baptized in the river Jordan (Matt. 3:6).
 - c. They both went down into the water and came up out of the water (Acts 8:36,38).
 - 1) There is one baptism (Eph. 4:5).
 - 2) This baptism is a washing and regeneration (Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5).
 5. In 1311 A.D., the council at Ravenna decreed immersion and sprinkling were to be regarded with "indifference."
 6. Doctrines And Discipline Of The Methodist Church, 1952, page 519, declares,
 - a. "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion."
 - 1) A brother once told me, his sister understood she needed to be baptized in order to have her sins forgiven, so she choose the Methodist to perform it because she knew they would not immerse one in water. She was unwilling to be covered, for whatever excuse.
 7. No matter how hard one tries to accommodate men, the Word of God will always read the same way (Gal. 1:6-12; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

- a. In order to lay claim to the grace of God, we "must" do His will first (Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9).
- D. Sinner's Prayer: A most popular tradition of man today.
1. The origin of this doctrine is not clear, but what is clear, it has no Biblical authority whatsoever to be applied to the alien sinner (Col. 3:17).
 2. We have all heard television evangelists ask the audience to say a prayer with them in order to call Jesus into their heart and be saved.
 - a. Why is it that every time this prayer is uttered, it is never the same prayer, in fact it varies greatly from false teacher to false teacher?
 - b. If you were in the town of Damascus two thousand years ago, and found yourself in the same room with Saul of Tarsus, what would you have heard uttered from his lips in prayer (Acts 9)?
 - 1) Saul prayed for three days (Acts 9:9,11).
 - 2) Saul believed in Christ, calling Him Lord (Acts 9:6).
 - 3) If anyone could have been saved through the avenue of prayer, I think it would have been Saul.
 - 4) As we look to an account of his conversion in Acts 22, we will notice Saul was yet in his sins after three days of prayer. His sins "were not" washed or remitted until he obeyed the preaching of Ananias and was baptized (Acts 22:16).
 3. On the day of Pentecost in Acts two, Peter stood up with the eleven and proclaimed the words of the prophet Joel, "*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Did Joel reveal what must be done (Acts 2:16-21)?
 - a. Peter and the eleven revealed the meaning of Joel's prophetically recorded statements (Acts 2:22-37).
 - b. Under great distress and discomfort because of the preaching of this new revelation, some asked "*men and brethren what shall we do*" in reference to their sin and conduct (Acts 2:37).
 - 1) Did Peter say unto them "repent and pray" NO! Acts 2:38
 - 2) Repent and be baptized, for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

4. This is in complete harmony with the words of Christ before He left this earth (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47).
 - a. Those on the day of Pentecost were saved because they gladly received the word and were baptized (Acts 2:41).
 - b. Those that gladly receive (believe) the Gospel message, are the recipients of God's grace (John 1:12; Rom. 1:16-17; 5:1-2; 6:1-18; 1 Cor. 1:18,21).
5. One must be in Christ to be a partaker of His blessings, one of those blessings is the power of prayer, the alien sinner will not be able to use prayer to get into Christ (Eph. 1:3; John 9:31).
 - a. The way into Christ is to be baptized into Him (Rom. 6:2-6; Gal 3:26-27).
 - b. Where "all spiritual blessings" are found, including the right of prayer (Eph. 1:3).

VI. OUT OF THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN, CAME OTHER TRADITIONS, SUCH AS: INFANT BAPTISM.

- A. Tertullian (160-220A.D.) was the first to develop, according to history, the doctrine of original sin. Teaching man shares in Adam's guilt, therefore unable to choose right and would always be inclined to obey evil.
- B. Cyprian, as the bishop of Carthage (248-258), expanded upon this doctrine, declaring infants having committed no actual sin, needed forgiveness for sin inherited from Adam. This was carried out in what is known today as, "infant baptism." He was recorded as the first to approve such a practice.
 1. This practice was not generally accepted at this time, and was not common. These views would naturally rise and fall together.
- C. Not until Augustine (450), did this doctrine take a solid hold upon the religious world.
 1. This alone would not produce "infant baptism," but combined with "baptismal regeneration," the idea began that baptism itself could take away sin, apart from faith, repentance and confession as being part of the Gospel formula (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16).
 - a. Many, if not all, of the reformers coming out of Catholicism read Augustine's writings and were persuaded by them.

- 1) The truth is, children are not born sinful, but become sinful (Rom. 3:12; 9:11).
- 2) A child cannot inherit the sins of his father (Ezek. 18:20).
- 3) As David stated this truth about his son that passed away, "*I shall go to him*" (2 Sam. 12:23).
- 4) "*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. 18:3).
- 5) Infants rightly stated, cannot Believe, Confess, Repent, or be Baptized.
- 6) It is clearly seen, children are safe and have no need of the Gospel, but one day obedience to the Gospel is a reality, all will sin (Rom. 3:23; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thess. 1:7-9).

VII. OUT OF THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN, CAME TRADITIONS SUCH AS: SUBJECTIVISM (Salvation Experience).

- A. Subjectivism is defined as "The theory that 'limits knowledge' to subjective experiences."
- B. If you were to ask someone about their relationship with God, I'm sure you would get a widely varying response to the question, such as:
 1. I placed my hands on the TV and was saved during a prayer.
 2. I was driving in my car and started praying, tears came to my eyes and I knew I was saved from my sins. "I became a born-again Christian."
 3. On and on this line of thought could continue.
 4. This is why, when you ask the question, is there saved people in every denomination? The answer will be yes. (A complete and utter misunderstanding of the new birth process.)
- C. The truth is, most place the role of the Holy Spirit directly in the role of conversion, because of the doctrine of "original sin" using John 3:1-8 as their proof text.
 1. Jesus uttered something very perplexing to Nicodemus, "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*" (John 3:3).
 - a. The word "must" places an imperative upon this new birth, and thus completely tearing down all understanding Nicodemus had of his religion.

- 1) In every new birth in the physical life, conception and birth come about in the same way. One is begotten by the father and born of the mother.
 - 2) In the spiritual world, one is born into the family of God in the same way throughout time. One birth, not two, no more no less. One is begotten by the Spirit and born of the water when he is buried with Christ in the waters of baptism (Rom. 6:3-4).
2. "Born of the Spirit" what is it? John 3:5
 - a. The Spirit is the truth, and was sent to reveal "all truth" unto the world (John 16:8,13).
 - b. The Holy Spirit is the truth (1 John 5:6-8).
 - c. "*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth*" (John 17:17).
 - d. The seed according to Jesus is the word of God sown in the heart (Luke 8:11).
 - e. Jesus said, "*the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*" (John 6:63).
 - f. In this same chapter Jesus asked the disciples, "*will ye also go away?*" And, they answered in truth, "*...Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life*" (John 6:67-68).
 - g. The Holy Spirit came to "*reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment,*" using the word to convict man (John 16:8).
 - h. The word is the seed and life is in the seed according to the laws God set up at the creation. In the natural world, seed will reproduce after its own kind, this process also translates into the Spiritual world (Gen. 1:11-12,21,24-25; Luke 8:11-15).
 - i. One must be begotten of the seed (the word of God) — conception in the spiritual heart.
 - 1) Man is begotten through the word (James 1:18).
 - 2) "*I begat you through the gospel*" (1 Cor. 4:15).
 - 3) We are born again of incorruptible seed, by the word of God (1 Peter 1:22-23).
 - 4) By the Gospel preached unto them (1 Peter 1:25).
 - 5) To be begotten by the word is to be begotten by the Spirit, who gave the word. "*The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*" (Eph. 6:17).
 3. If being "born of the Spirit" is to be born of the Gospel, then what does it mean to be "born of the water?"

- a. Some say the water is the physical birth, but clearly Nicodemus understood it to mean a man, not a baby. *"How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"* (John 3:4)?
 - b. This water is clearly the waters of baptism, because water is used in this inspired text (John 3:22-36,41-42).
 - c. The eunuch said, *"see here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?"* Acts 8:36-38
 - 1) Both going down into the water and coming up out of the water.
 - 2) Peter said about the household of Cornelius, *"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?"* Acts 10:47
 - d. The new birth demands one to be baptized, in order to become a new creature, in order to walk in newness of life (2 Cor. 5:17). A new life cannot begin apart from the new birth (John 3:5; Rom. 6:4).
 - e. The old man of sin is:
 - 1) Put to death in baptism (Rom. 6:3-4).
 - 2) Crucified with Christ (Rom. 6:7).
 - 3) Baptized into Christ's death (Rom. 6:3).
 - 4) Buried with Christ (Rom. 6:4).
 - 5) Resurrected in this act by the power of God (Rom. 6:5-6; Col. 2:12).
 - 6) Christ is put on in baptism (Gal. 3:26-27).
 - 7) We are baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal 3:27). Where all spiritual blessings are, in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
 - 8) The new man now has an answer to a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21).
4. The Spirit of God does not operate like the wind, but the wind describes the rebirth of the man's spirit into the spiritual Kingdom of Christ, the church (Matt. 16:18-19; Col. 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:24).
 - a. The kingdom would not come as would other kingdoms (Luke 17:20).
 - b. The kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36).
 - c. And so it is with the spiritual rebirth, it is the spirit of man that is reborn (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23).
 - d. Renewed in the spirit of your mind (Eph. 4:23).
 - e. The inward man is renewed day by day (2 Cor. 4:16).

- f. The spirit through the word, strengthens the inner man (Eph. 3:16).
5. Subjective feelings and experiences will not confirm ones salvation apart from the rebirth process, nor will feelings put one into Christ, but obedience to His will (Rom. 6:16-18; Heb. 5:8-9; 11:1,6; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Matt. 7:21).

VIII. OUT OF THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN CAME, TRADITIONS SUCH AS: THE MOURNER'S BENCH AND ALTER CALL.

- A. A bench about 20" to 25" high several feet long, sometimes covered with padding, known to be a place of outbreaks of tears over sin.
 1. No one is certain how the first altar call happened, but most historians lay it at the feet of early Methodists. One anecdote from 1798 tells of Pastor John Easter issuing a call for his audience to gather around a bench in the front of the chapel, and to pray for salvation.
 2. Those from the Calvinist tradition believed that men were called only to wait on God for their salvation, and not to press the matter themselves, and certainly not with such high-profile, using alter calls and the tradition of the mourners bench.
 3. Charles Finney, roped off the first few rows of seats in his meetings, and called these the "anxious seats." Sinners were urged to leave their seats in the back, and to move forward as the preacher railed against the evils of the day. As an encore, Finney then finished his sermons by preaching directly to those (and sometimes only those) in the first few rows.
- B. The tradition of the mourner's bench must be rejected based on the afore inspired directions of the Lord.
 1. If one is sorry for their sin, they will repent (Acts 17:30).
 2. If one is sorry about their sin they will obey the Gospel (Acts 2:38).
 3. If one wants to be saved, they must be saved according to God's will (Matt. 7:21).
 4. If one is sorry for their sinful condition, they will repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, not repent and cry, or repent and pray (Acts 2:38).

CONCLUSION:

1. The Bible says we can all understand alike (John 17:17-23; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 3:3-4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
2. No matter how much we come up with other ways of salvation, there will still only be one way (Acts 4:12; 2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6-12).
3. No matter how hard one tries to convince oneself they are saved, the Bible will always say, the will of God must be obeyed in order to be saved (Matt. 7:21).
4. No matter how much faith one might have in traditions of men, the word will always stand to judge all of man in the last day (John 5:28-29; 12:48; Rom. 2:16; Rev. 20:11-15).
5. No matter what we think, God will condemn those outside His Gospel (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
6. Why not obey the Gospel of Christ and become a New Testament Christian only?
7. As in Jeremiah's time, the king sliced up and burned the inspired scroll, God told Jeremiah to write it again (Jer. 36:28).
8. *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Matt. 24:35).
9. Why not obey the one and only Gospel today? Putting away all commandments and doctrines of MEN?

Traditions Of Men Regarding The Holy Spirit

Tom L. Bright

1. The subject assigned to me is a difficult one.
2. It is not the subject which is difficult, but exactly what to include in this lesson is difficult.
3. Man, in his traditions, has developed many and varying ideas relative to the Holy Spirit.
4. In my judgment, some of the major problems we have in the brotherhood today stem from the acceptance of these traditions of men.

5. Certainly the “work of the Holy Spirit” is one area where much confusion exists.
6. Thus, I propose to look at three basic areas of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The “Influence of the Holy Spirit,”
 - b. The “Illumination of the Holy Spirit,”
 - c. The “Baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

SECTION ONE

1. THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- a. In Rom. 8:14-16, Paul wrote, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”*
 - 1) Notice that Inspiration affirms the Holy Spirit leads man. But the HOW of this leading is not stated.
 - 2) In reality, the question is not, nor has it ever been, “Does the Holy Spirit lead man?” The important question for consideration is, HOW does the Holy Spirit lead man today?
- b. There are many views held today relative to *how* the Holy Spirit leads man. Some believe by “dreams,” others by “visions,” while many affirm “Divine illumination” (by which they mean in some indirect, inexplicable, “better felt that told” way), while another view is the Holy Spirit speaks directly to them.
- c. However, Peter directs us in the proper direction when he wrote, “If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11). Thus, the ultimate authority is the Bible, not man.

2. “HOW” ONE SPIRIT INFLUENCES ANOTHER SPIRIT.

- a. In the very nature of things, one spirit can influence another spirit in only one of two ways. It is either “directly” or “indirectly.” It is either “immediately” or “mediately” (through a medium).
 - 1) Peter gives us an example of “directly.” He wrote “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). This was a direct operation upon man to effect a result (inspired word).

- 2) An example of "indirectly" or "mediately" is found in Ephesians 2:17. Paul wrote that Christ "*...came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*" However, we understand the preaching was done through an agent, an instrument, a medium an inspired apostle.
- b. Thus, the manner of the Holy Spirit's influence is one or the other. There is no other choice possible.
- c. Nonetheless, multitudes of religious people contend for some form of a direct influence of the Holy Spirit upon the human spirit. The extent and degree of this influence varies from person to person.
- d. The views of those holding to this "direct influence" explains the *how* of this phenomena all the way from Divine inspiration to feelings, urges, or that which is better felt than told.
 - 1) Regardless of how this supposed influence comes, the effect is the same, the Holy Spirit communicates with them in some "semi-direct" way.
- e. Even though they want to deny it, the results are the same: In some way or another, they are claiming "Direct Influence" from God.
 - 1) Years ago one who claimed to be a Gospel preacher (Lynn Anderson) prayed for the Holy Spirit to illuminate those words lying so inert and lifeless on the page.
 - 2) This is divine illumination whether one admits it or not.
- f. Two TV preachers might claim God has told them to inform their audience they should give all they can to this particular preacher's effort.
 - 1) But answer this question, if I am supposed to give all that I can to preacher "A" because the Holy Spirit revealed it to him, how can I give all that I can to preacher "B"?
 - 2) Which preacher received a revelation from the Holy Spirit?
- g. The first century Christian had Divine proof, the miraculous gifts!
- h. If one argues the miraculous exists today, then the possibility exists that we could conceivably have two TV preachers, both affirming God has spoken directly to them, telling each preacher to tell their listeners they (audience) should give all they can to that individual. Interestingly enough, both messages were supposedly confirmed by a miracle!
- i. But what are faithful Christians to do when a person affirms God has revealed something to them directly and that which was supposedly revealed contradicts the Bible?

- j. Thus, the essential question is, “HOW does the Holy Spirit guide mankind today?” The real question is not, “Does the Holy Spirit Influence man today?”

3. HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT INFLUENCE MAN TODAY?

- a. We must understand that regardless of whether the person is a saint or a sinner, the manner in which the Holy Spirit operates is exactly the same.
- b. I propose the following: In Conviction, Conversion, and Sanctification, the Holy Spirit operates only through the Word of God.
- c. The terms explained:
- 1) By *Conviction* I mean the convincing of the alien sinner of sin.
 - 2) By *Conversion* I refer to the leading of the alien sinner unto obedience of the Gospel.
 - 3) By *sanctification* we speak of that leading of the child of God along the pathway of righteousness in our everyday life, which John describes as “*walking in the light*” (1 John 1:7).
- d. That these three essential things are done by the Holy Spirit’s word, as one takes His teaching into his heart, his mind, and allows it to be that which controls, dominates, leads, guides, and directs the individual, so is the Christian INFLUENCED by the Spirit of God.

4. IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT INFLUENCING THROUGH THE WORD.

- a. It is imperative we notice that Inspiration ascribes a particular thing to the Holy Spirit in one passage and in another verse attributes the same thing to the Word of God.
- b. For instance, the Bible assigns *instruction* to the Holy Spirit (Neh. 9:30) and to the word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Inspiration tells us both the Spirit and the Word *begets* (John 3:5; 1 Cor. 4:15), *quicken*s (John 6:63; Psa. 119:30), *teaches* (John 14:26; 6:45), *convicts* (John 16:8; Titus 1:9), *comforts* (Acts 9:31; 1 Thess. 4:18), *sanctifies* (1 Peter 1:2; John 17:17), *converts* (John 16:7-8; Psa. 19:7), *washes* (1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26), *makes free* (Rom. 8:2; John 8:32), *dwells* (Eph. 5:18-19; Col. 3:16), *leads* (Rom. 8:14; Psa. 119:105), *strengthens* (Eph. 3:16; Col. 1:9-11), and *gives birth* (John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23). There are other items we could mention, but this should suffice.

- c. Now, there are only four possibilities to this seeming dilemma:
 - 1) It is the Holy Spirit separate and apart from the inspired Word, or
 - 2) It is the inspired Word separate and apart from the Spirit, or
 - 3) It is the inspired Word using the Holy Spirit as a medium, or
 - 4) It is the Holy Spirit using the inspired Word as a medium.
- d. Unquestionably, the third choice is unthinkable.
 - 1) If it is the first or second option, we would have a thing being done by the Spirit separate and apart from the word on one occasion, and the same thing being done by the inspired word separate and apart from the Holy Spirit in another circumstance.
- e. Is it the Holy Spirit alone or the word alone?
 - 1) If it is the Spirit working on one occasion and the Word on another, is the influence wielded by the Spirit of greater validity than when the influence is wielded by the Word alone?
- f. Furthermore, will the direct influence of the Spirit supersede that which the Word says?
 - 1) If "Yes," then Paul's argument for the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures in 2 Tim. 3:16-17 is false.
 - 2) If "No," then why would we need the direct or semi-direct influence of the Holy Spirit?
- g. It goes without saying, these thoughts must be logically and Scripturally answered!

5. THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE WORD.

- a. The truth is, it is not the Spirit only or the Word only. It is not an either/or situation. It is the Holy Spirit operating through the medium of the Word. It is the Holy Spirit's Word operating in one's life.
- b. One hears the Spirit's Word and obeys it. This is the Holy Spirit operating on that person. Is this a "direct" operation of the Holy Spirit? No, it is through the Word preached, heard, and heeded.
- c. Paul wrote, *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh"* (Gal. 5:16). He also wrote *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"* (Rom. 8:14). If one "walks in the Spirit," is he doing

something separate, apart, and distinct from what he would be doing if he was being “led by the Spirit?”

- 1) Can one be “led by the Spirit of God” while refusing to walk according to the Spirit’s divine Word?
 - 2) If one “walks in the Spirit,” is he walking in agreement with the Spirit’s word? The answers to these questions are obvious.
- d. The Ephesians were told, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Eph. 5:18-19). The parallel passage is Colossians 3:16. Paul wrote, *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*
- 1) Is there any difference between being “filled with the Spirit” and letting “the word of Christ dwell in you richly?”
 - 2) If so, what is the difference? Each had the same result. The fact is, there is no difference.
 - 3) To be “filled with the Spirit” is the same as letting “the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” When one is “filled with the Spirit,” the “word of Christ” is richly dwelling in him.
 - 4) Furthermore, he is being “led by the Spirit of God” (Rom. 8:14) and he is walking “in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16).
- e. Stephen said to his murderers, *“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye”* (Acts 7:51). They, just like their fathers, were guilty of “resisting” the Holy Spirit.
- 1) Inspiration does not leave us to wonder what Stephen meant. The Levites in Nehemiah’s time said, *“And testifiedst against them, that thou mightest bring them again unto thy law: yet they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;) and withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear. Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.”*
 - 2) God repeatedly sent His inspired spokesman to the people, but in refusing to listen, they resisted the Holy Spirit.

- 3) Can one resist the Word of God without resisting the Holy Spirit?
- 4) If I resist the Spirit's Word, have I resisted the Spirit of God? Indeed I have!
- f. Paul wrote "*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God...*" (Eph. 4:30).
 - 1) What does it mean to "grieve" the Spirit?
 - 2) When one refuses to follow the will of God, Deity is grieved.
 - 3) In Hebrews 3:7-12, Paul quoted Psalm 95:7-10 in showing God's displeasure with the children of Israel when they rebelled against Him by refusing to go in and possess the promised land. A part of that quotation reads, "*Wherefore I was grieved with that generation.*"
 - a) God was grieved because of their disobedience to His commandments.
 - b) Moreover, Paul charges them with the sin of "unbelief" (Heb. 3:19).
 - 4) It is serious business to "grieve" the Holy Spirit.
- g. The same thought applies to the concept of quenching (1 Thess. 5:19, "Quench not the Spirit") and resisting the Spirit (Acts 7:51; see above). When one refuses to obey the Word of God, he "grieves" the Spirit because he has "resisted" and "quenched" the Spirit.
- h. The inspired Word provides everything needed so the man of God may be "*perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The "perfect" man here is the "complete" man, the one who is as God desires him to be.
- i. Peter added, "*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue*" (2 Peter 1:3). Is the Word of God sufficient to give us all things pertaining to life and godliness? Peter so affirms!
- j. Notice the various things attributed to the Holy Spirit's Word. Spiritual life is begun (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18; 1 Cor. 4:15) and maintained by it (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18). The Word will bring us to an eternal inheritance (Acts 20:32). We are sanctified by the Word (John 17:17; 2 Thess. 2:13-14). It makes us free (John 8:32; 17:17). The effectual working is by the indwelling Word (1 Thess. 2:13; 1:3). The unity of all believers comes from the Word (2 John 4; 3 John 4; Phil. 3:16; Eph. 4:3). The Word will save us (James 1:18). God's Word keeps us from sin (Psa. 119:11). His Word leads and guides

- (Psa. 73:24; 119:105). Always remember, Paul said it would make God's man "perfect" (complete; 2 Tim. 3:17).
- k. The Father draws us to him through Christ, and this is done by the Word of God (John 6:44-45).
 - l. God pleads with us through the medium of the Word (2 Cor. 5:20).
 - m. Every time the Gospel is preached by man today, and gives heed to it, he is being influenced by the Spirit.
 - n. When one puts on the "whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:10-17), he has been influenced by the Spirit of God.
 - o. When one puts on the things which constitute the "new man" (Col. 3:12-17), this influence comes from the Holy Spirit through medium of the Word of God.
 - p. When one's "conversation" (manner of life) is that which "becometh the Gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27), this is the result of the Holy Spirit's influence through the medium of the Word of God.
 - q. When wives submit themselves to their own husbands (Col. 3:28), when one loves his wife and is not bitter against her (Col. 3:19), when children obey their parents (Col. 3:20), when fathers do not provoke their children (Col. 3:21), when employees (the principle here taught) are the kind of employees God intends (Col. 3:22), and when one does heartily whatever he does (Col. 1:23), we see instances of men and women being influenced by the Holy Spirit through the medium of the inspired Word of God.

SECTION TWO

1. ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- a. In the previous section, we touched upon the claim some make relative to the "Illumination of the Holy Spirit."
- b. Some believe when one is in a deep study of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will lead that person to an understanding of the Word of God.
- c. This view is extended by others to the point the Holy Spirit "directly" guides them in doing other things, even to the point of directly working upon them to effect the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- d. It does not take a wise man to see that the implications of such a belief are many and great.

2. THE ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DEMANDS TOTAL AGREEMENT WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT'S WORD.

- a. If it is true one is illuminated by the Holy Spirit, does it not necessarily follow that they would never disagree with any other thing the Holy Spirit revealed about the same subject?
 - 1) Yet, it is not uncommon to find these individuals teaching something contrary to the Bible, or to find them contradicting themselves in their "illuminated" interpretation of a passage of Scripture.
- b. But the fact is, no inspired man ever contradicted any other inspired statement he had previously made.
 - 1) When writing or speaking by inspiration, Paul never contradicted himself. He wrote, "*For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church*" (1 Cor. 4:17).
 - 2) Paul taught the same thing wherever he went.
 - 3) He never taught something in one congregation and contradicted it in a second one.
- c. Therefore, we confidently declare that two men under the influence of the Holy Spirit would never disagree when they spoke on the same subject.
- d. In other words, if Paul was in Corinth preaching by inspiration of the Holy Spirit on whether baptism was essential to salvation, and Peter was in Jerusalem preaching by inspiration on the same subject, they would say the same thing.
- e. Now, if two people today were studying the same passage of Scripture and both are "illuminated" by the Holy Spirit, would they be in agreement? Yes.
- f. Paul affirmed "For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33).
 - 1) With absolute assurance we affirm the differences in the religious world today is a product of man and not God.
 - 2) If mankind enjoys Divine Illumination today, they should get together and study the areas wherein there is disagreement, allowing the Holy Spirit to "illuminate" them on what the passage teaches.
- g. Thus, we would have true Biblical unity!

3. HOW CAN WE KNOW WHICH ILLUMINATION IS CORRECT?

- a. If two people have an “illumination” from the Holy Spirit and yet they disagree in what the Bible teaches, how can we determine which is correct, if indeed either is correct?
- b. A few years ago I had a with debate with a United Pentecostal preacher in Chelsea, Oklahoma. Brother Ron Cosby, my moderator, and I prepared a chart entitled “Trust Me.”
- c. On this chart we quoted many of those of the Pentecostal persuasion with whom my opponent strongly disagreed. I kept telling him, “All of these claim miraculous ability, yet continually refuse to perform a miracle to substantiate their claims. How can we tell which one is true?” I pressed him to explain how we could know he was preaching the Truth and Oral Roberts was not. Do I need to say he never answered that argument!
- d. We ask the same thing of those claiming “illumination” of the Holy Spirit today when they disagree with others claiming the same thing. *How can we know which “illumination” is correct?*
 - 1) We are asked to accept what they say without proof, with mere assertion.
 - 2) In the first century, people were asked to accept what inspired men said and then miracles were performed to confirm their claims.
- e. How can we know today which “illumination” is correct?
- f. There must be something extraneous to, outside of, above and beyond one’s claim to “illumination.” There must be undeniable and irresistible proof of one’s claims in such matters as this.

4. DIVINE ILLUMINATION DENIGRATES THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- a. Another thing we need to realize is, the advocacy of Divine illumination brings reproach upon the Godhead.
- b. Paul wrote, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - 1) Here is an inspired affirmation that the Word of God has the ability to make one complete, and throughly furnish him to every good work.

- 2) This affirmation is either *true* or *false*!
- c. Those claiming *Divine illumination* imply a position which is self-defeating. The result of this contention ultimately brings us to a point that we could never know for sure what God said!
- d. Consider the following thoughts. The Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed (substantiated) the Word of God in the first century. Thus, we have the *full and final revelation* from Jehovah.
- e. Now, some tell us even though God inspired the revelation to man and then confirmed it by miracles, man still needs an "illumination" to understand the "full and final revelation."
- 1) If man needs *illumination* to understand the *full and final revelation*, what proof do we have that we do not need an "illumination" of the first "illumination" (thus, having a second illumination)?
 - 2) And if we need an *illumination* of the *illumination* of the full and final revelation, then who could logically argue we do not need an *illumination* of the *illumination* of the first *illumination* of the full and final revelation?
 - 3) So, the next question is: Where does it stop?
 - 4) How many *illuminations* do we need before we can say, "This is the absolute and final word on any matter?"
- f. If man needs Divine revelation to understand this finished revelation, then the confusion now reigning in "Christendom" (falsely so called) is a result of one of two things:
- 1) God's *inability* to give us an understandable revelation, or
 - 2) His *desire* not to give us a final, understandable final revelation.
- g. Therefore, the conclusion must be that Paul's plea for unity (Eph. 4:1-3) *can only be realized by all people receiving Divine illumination.*
- h. The Word of God will do everything God wanted it to do. It has the ability to bring man to a point acceptable to God. Man needs nothing more.

SECTION THREE

1. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- a. There are many and various ideas about Holy Spirit baptism. These ideas range from "I don't have any idea" to the bizarre.

- b. Even though the Bible does not have a great deal to say about this subject, it tells us enough so we can come to some definite conclusions about it.
- c. Since there are so many ideas about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it behooves us to note some things which *Holy Spirit baptism is not*. We can confidently say that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not:
 - 1) Merely the ability to perform miracles,
 - 2) Merely the ability to speak in tongues,
 - 3) Being filled with the Spirit,
 - 4) The “gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38),
 - 5) Being born of the Holy Spirit,
 - 6) Baptism in fire,
 - 7) Being literally immersed in the Holy Spirit (the element), or
 - 8) Merely the Holy Spirit being within.
- d. Furthermore, there are some things Holy Spirit baptism was not intended to do. These are:
 - 1) Make people believers—they were already (Matt. 16:16-28),
 - 2) Prepare them for baptism—they had been (Luke 7:30),
 - 3) Make people repent—they already had (Matt. 3:2; Acts 19:4, etc.),
 - 4) Save them—great commission baptism does this (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4),
 - 5) Cleanse them—the Word of God does this (John 15:3),
 - 6) Put them into Christ—great commission baptism does this (Gal. 3:27), or
 - 7) Sanctify them—the Word of God does this (John 17:16-17).

2. TO WHOM WAS HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM PROMISED?

- a. It was first promised by John the baptizer. He said, “*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*” (Matt. 3:11).
 - 1) John preached only to the Jews.
 - 2) Therefore, the promise of Holy Spirit baptism was only to the Jews.
 - 3) In addition, John affirmed that Jesus would be the Administrator of this baptism, thus it was not bestowed by the laying on of apostolic hands.

- b. Jesus Himself promised it to the apostles only. Luke records *"Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen...And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence"* (Acts 1:2-5).
- 1) Notice in verse two, the apostles are specified as those who were to receive it.
- c. In these verses, the Lord equates the "promise of the Father" with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- 1) This is the same thing he referred to in Luke 24:49, *"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."*
 - 2) In this passage, Jesus introduced something which helps us to better understand Holy Spirit baptism. He said they would be "endued with power from on high." Thus, the act of being "endued with power from on high" was equal to the "promise of the Father."
 - 3) Since the "promise of the Father" is the baptism of the Holy Spirit (established above), then "endued with power from on high" likewise refers to Holy Spirit baptism.
- d. This is what Jesus meant in Acts 1:8. He told the apostles, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*
- 1) If this reception of power was not equal to being "endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), then to whom or what does it refer? It is clear, the power of Acts 1:8 is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

3. UNIQUENESS OF THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE.

- a. The uniqueness of the apostolic office cannot be over-emphasized. Many people believe this office was special, but most do not realize just how unique it truly was.
- b. On the day of His resurrection, Jesus breathed on the apostles and said, *"Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained"* (John 20:22-23).

- 1) What did He mean by the idea of the remitting and retaining of sins? Was it based upon the capricious, whimsical, flighty fickleness of the apostles? Certainly not.
 - 2) He had specific reference to the preaching of the Gospel and to the loosing or retention of sins dependent upon the attitude of the hearer. Those who heard and obeyed the Gospel enjoyed the remission of their sins. Those who heard and did not respond were those whose sins were retained.
- c. Akin to this is Jesus' statement to the apostles near Caesarea Philippi. He said, "*And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*" (Matt. 16:19).
- 1) The basic thought presented in the original language is: The things the apostles would bind on earth would have already been bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth would have already been loosed in heaven.
 - 2) Thus, the keys of the kingdom of heaven in this passage denote authority to give entrance into the kingdom of Heaven, the New Testament church.
 - a) They began to exercise this authority on the day of Pentecost after they were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - 3) Therefore, the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" point directly to the "remitting or retention" of sins in John 20:22-23.
- d. The apostles were God's special spokesmen through which the Gospel was first announced.
- 1) Whatever God had determined to loose or bind in heaven, He would do so on earth *through the preaching of the Gospel of Christ*.
 - 2) Truly, the apostles were an intricate and essential part of God's plan to make known His eternal purpose in Christ Jesus.
- e. They exercised an authority enjoyed by no other individuals.
- 1) For instance, to the Corinthians Paul said, "*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. 14:37). How many today can claim to write the commandments of Christ?

- 2) How many can command "*in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*" as Paul did (2 Thess. 3:6)?

4. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK OF JOHN.

- a. We previously mentioned that John the baptizer introduced the subject of Holy Spirit baptism. We also noted that Jesus dealt with this subject before His ascension. Now we want to notice some things Jesus said to the apostles the night of His arrest on the same subject.
- b. After the last Passover supper and before arriving at the garden, Jesus had a long discourse (John 13:31–16:33) with the eleven; Judas had already left on his betrayal mission.
 - 1) The words spoken by Jesus point directly to the day of Pentecost and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) and the subsequent blessings that would flow from it.
- c. Several of Jesus' statements in these chapters can only be understood when we realize they were made to the apostles only. Man truly errs when he takes the Lord's statements in these chapters and applies every aspect of them to man in the twenty-first century.
 - 1) Without hesitation I affirm the sayings of Jesus in these three chapters have specific reference to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles (Acts 2) and the power derived therefrom.
- d. In John 14:16, Jesus said, "*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.*"
 - 1) Many want to apply this verse to present day Christians.
 - 2) But considering that Jesus said this Comforter was the Holy Spirit and would bring to their remembrance ALL THINGS He had said to them, it is clear this statement was limited in its scope (John 14:26).
- e. In John 15:26-27, Jesus said "*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.*"
 - 1) Here Christ reveals the Comforter was the "Spirit of truth," and He (the Comforter) would testify of Him and they (apostles) would bear witness ("testify" and "bear witness" are from the same original word).

- 2) This promise is limited to those that had been with Him from the beginning. Does this apply to any today? Certainly not!
- f. It is easy to see that this discourse focuses upon the coming power on the day of Pentecost. These promises of the coming “Comforter” and of the “Spirit of Truth” was *only* to the apostles of Christ, and to no other people.
- g. This shows without doubt, the promise of Holy Spirit baptism was made *only* to the apostles.

5. WHAT WAS “BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?”

- a. We now turn our attention to answering the question of exactly what Holy Spirit baptism was.
- b. For instance, some argue the Holy Spirit Himself was the element in which the apostles were baptized.
 - 1) In other words, the apostles were immersed in the person of the Holy Spirit (we are told).
 - 2) For instance, when one is Scripturally baptized, he is immersed in water (water is the element). So some argue the Holy Spirit is the element. However, the Bible clearly shows this is not the case.
- c. After the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles in Acts two, some were “confounded,” and all “were amazed and marvelled” (Acts 2:6-7). The apostles were even charged with drunkenness (Acts 2:13).
- d. The inspired Peter responds to this false charge (Acts 2:14ff).
- e. In verse sixteen, He connects the events of Acts two with the prophecy of Joel two, saying “*But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*” and then quotes Joel 2:28-32.
- f. Peter shows it was not the Person of the Holy Spirit that was poured out, but in fact, it was the power that came from the Holy Spirit that was poured out.
- g. In verse seventeen we read, “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*”
 - 1) The phrase “I will pour out of my Spirit” is of utmost importance.
 - 2) In this phrase, the preposition “of” is translated from the ablative preposition “*apo.*” The ablative case was used to denote source or origin. Thus, the Holy Spirit was the

source of that which was poured out, He was not the "element" poured out.

- 3) Furthermore, the verb translated *pour out* is prefixed by "ek," which is also an ablative preposition. Dana and Mantey says, "Verbs compounded with *apo,* 'ek,' and *para*' in the very nature of the case take the ablative where these prepositions bring to the verb the idea of separation (p. 82)."
- 4) This simply means the Holy Spirit was the "source." He was not that which was poured out.
- h. Jesus told the apostles they would be "*endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49), and that they would "...*receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...*" (Acts 1:8).
 - 1) Inspiration records the coming of this power (Acts 2).
 - 2) John the baptizer and Jesus the Christ spoke of it as the "baptism of the Holy Spirit."
- i. The apostles were told to wait in the city of Jerusalem for the "promise of the Father." When the "promise of the Father" came, they would be "endued with power from on high," which is Holy Spirit baptism.
- j. To say it another way, when the Spirit came, the power was to come (Holy Spirit baptism); the Spirit came, thus the power came.
- k. By this pouring out of the power of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, there would be the authority to confer spiritual gifts (among other things) upon select individuals. It was to be upon all flesh.
- l. Their "sons and daughters" would prophesy.
 - 1) "Prophecy" was one of the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:8-10).
 - 2) Also, the young men would see *visions* and the old men would dream *dreams*. The "visions" and "dreams" referred to the manner in which God would make His will known. For instance, the Lord spoke to Ananias in a vision (Acts 9:10). Peter received a vision (Acts 10:17).
- M. This, dear people, is what is meant by the term, "baptized with the Holy Spirit."

6. APOSTLESHIP WAS A RESULT OF HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM.

- a. Inspiration tells us that "apostleship" was a miraculous gift (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

- b. When one considers the situation existing in the first century, he can truly appreciate the absolute need for the apostolic office.
- c. The Great Commission was a stupendous undertaking. Twelve men from a small nation located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, was to take a strange message into a polytheistic world. This message consisted of the thought there was one God (the God of the Hebrews). This one God sent His Son from heaven to this world by way of a virgin birth, where He lived for some thirty-three years. This Son was rejected by His own people and was ultimately crucified by the Roman authorities (a death reserved only for the most base of criminals). This Savior of the world was buried, but remained in the sepulcher only three days, being resurrected by the power of this one God. After about forty days, this "Son of God" was taken back into heaven and there He reigns over His spiritual kingdom. Furthermore, it is because of His death that all men, Jew or Gentile, can have forgiveness of sins, dependant upon their willingness to come to Him in obedience to the Gospel.
- d. No doubt, something special was needed to give validity to this "good news." There were many barriers to overcome, one of which would be the various dialects and languages spoken by the people of the world. Another problem was, how could they prove their message was of divine origin?
- e. Thus, we see the need for the accurate deliverance, the undeniable confirmation and substantiation of this peculiar message. Indeed, their mission was daunting, to say the least.
- f. In His infinite wisdom, God anticipated every problem that would arise from the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. In one generation, He saw to it this message of eternal hope "*was preached to every creature which is under heaven*" (Col. 1:23).
- g. This specific aspect of God's eternal purpose in Christ had its beginning at Pentecost with the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- h. They received special powers from the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) Paul argued "*Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds*" (2 Cor. 12:12).
 - 2) What were these "signs of an apostle?"

- 3) The "signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds" can only refer to the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit.
 - 4) But by using the term "signs of an apostle," Paul undoubtedly was arguing for something above and beyond the other things he mentioned.
 - a) Why appeal to them if they were not something special?
 - b) Why petition these things if they were not unique?
 - i. The apostolic office was unique. They had special powers other spiritually gifted men did not have.
 - 1) One of these was the ability to impart miraculous gifts (Acts 8:14-19).
 - 2) There can be no doubt, there had not been any like the apostles before and there has not been any like them since.
 - 3) They stood between first-century man and God, as the Bible stands between twenty-first century man and God.
 - 4) They were the authority then.
 - j. Thus, it is my conviction the gift of apostleship was bestowed upon the twelve in the miraculous events of Acts two.
 - k. The fact the word "apostles" is found eight times in the four accounts of the life of Christ does not negate this thought.
 - l. I am convinced that inspiration used a figure of speech called "prolepsis."
 - 1) The word "prolepsis" simply refers to something or someone as existing before its proper or historical time.
 - 2) For instance, we often hear that "President George Washington chopped down his father's cherry tree." Here we are using a "prolepsis." When the young man, George Washington, actually chopped down the tree, he was not President of the United States.
- 7. DID THE HOUSEHOLD OF CORNELIUS RECEIVE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM?**
- a. Another question that must be addressed is whether Cornelius (Acts 10) and those in his house received Holy Spirit baptism. I have long maintained there is only one recorded instance of Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament, and the implication of one.
 - 1) The recorded instance is Acts 2.
 - 2) The one implied is Paul.

- b. We often hear, “Did not Peter say the house of Cornelius received the like gift?”
 - 1) Indeed he did. In Acts 11:17, we read *“Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?”*
 - 2) But did Peter mean by the use of this word what man normally attributes to it? Man generally says that the “like gift” means the “same gift.” However, this does not necessarily follow.
- c. Without doubt the apostles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts two.
 - 1) If Cornelius received Holy Spirit baptism, then he necessarily received the *exact* same thing the apostles received. If he did not receive the *exact* same thing the apostles did, then he did not receive Holy Spirit baptism.
 - 2) On the other hand, if Cornelius did receive Holy Spirit baptism, but did not receive the exact same thing the apostles received, then we can conclude one of two things:
 - a) There were varying degrees of Holy Spirit baptism.
 - b) Holy Spirit baptism is not defined by the power received but merely by the manner in which it came upon the recipients.
- d. If Cornelius received the same thing the apostles received, he could make the same claims they made.
 - 1) Paul argued, *“For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles”* (2 Cor. 11:5). Certainly Paul was affirming he had the same power and authority as any of the other apostles. Any claims the other apostles made, Paul could also make. Was Cornelius able to make the same claim?
- e. Could Cornelius affirm *“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds”* (2 Cor. 12:12) like Paul did?
- f. Did this Roman centurion feel he could write something to someone and say *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord”* (1 Cor. 14:27)? Paul did.
- g. Can we assume Cornelius felt the *“care of all the churches”* was on him daily (2 Cor. 11:28) as Paul did? Regardless of

what kind of man he was, Cornelius did not have this authority in the first century church.

- h. If Cornelius received Holy Spirit baptism (the Comforter; see above), there are some implications we need to consider. Notice the following thoughts.
 - 1) If he received it, he did so as one who was not included in the promise.
 - 2) There would necessarily be different results from Holy Spirit baptism.
 - 3) This means that one who did not meet the qualifications of being an apostle (Acts 1:21-24) received something that was promised to the apostles only. Does the Bible teach these thoughts?
- i. Therefore, in what way was the events of Acts 10 "like" that which Peter remembered?
- j. Look closely at the following verses, *"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God...."* It is this to which Peter referred to as the "like gift."
- k. Something similar to this event is recorded in Acts 4:31. Here Luke writes, *"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."*
 - 1) Now, why did Peter not refer to this occasion? What was the difference between Acts two and Acts four?
 - 2) One thing is conspicuous. The apostles spoke in tongues in Acts two; those of the house of Cornelius spoke in tongues and magnified God in Acts 10. However, those of Acts four did not speak in tongues.
 - 3) This event at Cornelius' house had happened without the imposition of apostolic hands. It was directly from heaven, not from man! The ability to speak in tongues, up until this occasion, was given by the laying on of apostolic hands.
- l. But on these two occasions, tongues were received directly from heaven. This, in my judgement, is the "like gift."

8. THE REASON FOR THE EVENTS AT CORNELIUS' HOUSE.

- a. We must look briefly at the reason for this miracle.
- b. A few years after the events of Acts ten, a problem arose in the early church concerning whether the Gentiles had to *"be circumcised after the manner of Moses"* (Acts 15:1).
- c. In the subsequent *"Jerusalem Conference,"* as it is sometimes called, Peter referred to his visit to the house of Cornelius. Consider carefully the following, *"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith"* (Acts 15:7-9).
- d. Notice in verse eight Peter said, *"And God, which knoweth the hearts."* This is generally understood to refer to the Gentile heart that God knew the receptive heart Cornelius had. But I am convinced it is not the heart of the Gentile Cornelius that was under consideration, but the obstinate, adamant, implacable, stubborn heart of the Jews in their feelings toward the Gentiles.
- e. God intended for the Gospel to go to the Gentiles. However, the Jews had no dealings with the Gentiles, other than what was absolutely necessary.
- f. Peter told Cornelius, *"Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation..."* (Acts 10:28).
 - 1) Just two days before, Peter had seen the vision of heaven opened, *"and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air"* (Acts 10:11-12).
 - 2) Based upon this, when Peter arrived at the house of Cornelius, he understood he *"should not call any man common or unclean"* (Acts 10:28).
- g. But the Jewish Christians as a whole were not aware of God's plan to accept the Gentiles.
 - 1) They needed something *"extra special."*

- 2) The events at the house of Cornelius was that "something special."
- 3) When Peter related to those in Jerusalem the events of that day, "*...they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*" (Acts 11:18).
- h. Consider this question for a moment: What do you think would have been the reaction of the Jews had Peter gone to the Gentiles, preached to them, baptized them and laid his hands upon them without the miraculous events that surround this occasion? Would the Jewish Christians have accepted the Gentiles? I think not.
- i. Thus, without hesitation I affirm the events at the house of Cornelius was to convince the Jews of God's intention to accept the Gentiles into covenant relationship with Him.
- j. It was not for the benefit of Cornelius or any other Gentile, *it was solely for the benefit of the Jews.*

CONCLUSION:

1. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a special event in God's overall scheme of redemption.
2. It is sad this subject has been so sadly treated in the religious world.
3. But Satan never fails to use anything and everything to turn people from the Truth of God's Word.
4. We hope this study has been of some benefit to our readers.

Traditions Of Men Regarding Mormonism

Victor M. Eskew

1. Joseph Smith was born on December 23, 1805, in Sharon, Vermont. His parents were Joseph and Lucy Smith.
2. After moving to Palmyra, New York, most of his family became Presbyterians. Joseph Smith, Jr., however, was undecided.

- a. Joseph Smith read James 1:5, he says, and his life would be changed forever.
- b. First Vision (early spring of 1820): Accordingly, he continues, "I retired to the woods, knelt down, and began to pray. Suddenly two 'Personages' appeared. One of them pointed to the other and said, 'This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him!' In answer to the question as to which of the 'sects' was right, the one Personage who had addressed me, so Smith goes, said that I was to join none of them, since 'they were all wrong,' and since 'all their creeds were an abomination in his sight' that, in fact, those professing their faith in these various 'sects' were all corrupt and hypocritical" (Smith as quoted in *Mormonism*, Anthony A. Hoekema, p.10).
- c. Second Vision (September 21, 1823): "He called me my name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, and that his name was Moroni; that God had a work for me to do; and that my name should be had for good and evil among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, or that it should be both good and evil spoken of among all people. He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; also, that there were two stones in silver bows and these stones fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted 'seers' in ancient or former times: and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book" (*Pearl of Great Price*, History 1:33-35).
- d. Reception of the Plates: "The next day, Smith continues, I went to a hill outside the village where we lived (called the hill Cumorah) and found the golden plates deposited in a stone box with the Urim and Thummim and the breastplate. I was not permitted to take them out at this time, however, but was told by the angel, who had reappeared, that I should come back to this place every year at this time for the next four years. Finally, however, on September 22, 1827, I was given the plates by the heavenly messenger, with instructions to keep them carefully until he, the angel, should call for them again" (*Mormonism*, Hoekema, p.11).

- e. On March 26, 1830, the *Book of Mormon* was completed and placed on sale in Palmyra, New York.
 - f. On April 6, 1830, at Fayette, New York, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially organized. The same year the church was incorporated (*Mormonism*, Hoekema, p.13).
3. Present day Mormonism has three Branches.
- a. Mormons — Salt Lake City, Utah.
 - b. Reorganized Branch — Independence, Missouri.
 - c. "The Church of Christ" — headquartered near Independence, Missouri.
4. Sources of Authority.
- a. The *Book of Mormon*.
 - 1) It contains the account of two great waves of immigration to the American continent.
 - a) The nation of Jeredites (2250 B.C.).
 - b) Lehi and his descendants (600 B.C.).
 - 2) It contains the history of the appearance of Jesus to the people of this continent after He was resurrected and ascended to heaven.
 - 3) It also contains the writing of the golden plates by one named Moroni. It was he who buried the plates in the hill Comorah. Fourteen hundred years later, now changed into an angel, Moroni appeared to Joseph Smith.
 - b. *Doctrine and Covenants*.
 - 1) First published in 1876.
 - 2) 138 sections, each divided into verses.
 - 3) It contains revelations given to Joseph Smith (except section 136, which was given by President Brigham Young).
 - 4) This book contains some of the most distinctive doctrines of Mormonism.
 - a) Baptism for the dead (Sections 124, 127, 128).
 - b) Celestial Marriage (Section 132:19-20).
 - c) Plural Marriage (Section 132:61-62).
 - c. *Pearl of Great Price*.
 - 1) The Book of Moses.
 - 2) The Book of Abraham.
 - 3) An extract from Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible (Matt. 24).
 - 4) Extract from the History of Joseph Smith, the Prophet.
 - 5) The Articles of Faith.
 - d. Other Revelations.

- 1) The President who is like unto Moses (D&C 107:91-92).
 - 2) Counselors to the President who receive revelations for guidance of the church as a whole.
 - 3) Council of Twelve Apostles.
 - 4) The Patriarch of the Church.
 - 5) Bishops and Stake presidents who received revelations for the duties of their particular offices.
- e. The King James Version of the Bible.
- 1) This is accepted as long as it does not contradict their other books and revelations.
 - 2) NOTE: The Reorganized Branch uses the Inspired Version, Joseph Smith's correction of the KJV.

DISCUSSION:

I. BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

DATE	EVENT
1805, Dec. 23	Joseph Smith, Jr. born
1817	Family settled in Palmyra, NY
1820	First Vision
1823	Second Vision
1827, Jan. 18	Married Emma Hall
1827, Sept. 22	Joseph Smith was given the golden plates
1829, April	Oliver Cowdery joined Joseph Smith
1829, May	Aaronic priesthood conveyed on Smith and Cowdery by John the Baptist.
1829	Priesthood of Melchizedek conveyed by Peter, James, and John. The keys of the apostleship were also bestowed.
1830, March 26	<i>Book of Mormon</i> completed.
1830, April 6	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was established.
1830	Independence, MO chosen as the "place of Zion."
1832-35	<i>Doctrine and Covenants</i> completed.
1837	Temple built in Kirtland, OH
1837-39	Mormons expelled from MO and moved to Nauvoo, IL.
1844, June 27	Joseph Smith was killed while in jail and became a martyr for the cause.
1843-45	Brigham Young declared his Presidency.

1844	Mormons divide over who should be the true heir to the presidency. The Reorganized Branch thought the President should be Joseph Smith, III.
1846, February	Epic journey to the west.
1847, July 24	Arrival in Salt Lake City, Utah
1851	<i>Pearl of Great Price</i> in collected form.
1853	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints organized.
1867	Inspired Version published.

II. ARTICLES OF FAITH.

- A. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
- B. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.
- C. We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the law and ordinances of the Gospel.
- D. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- E. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.
- F. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, and so forth.
- G. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.
- H. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.
- I. We believe all God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.
- J. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will

reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

- K. We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our won conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.
- L. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying honoring, and sustaining the law.
- M. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul — We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.

Joseph Smith, *Pearl of Great Price*

III. EXAMINATION OF THE ARTICLES OF FAITH.

- A. Article One: We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.
 - 1. This statement appears to be true to God's word. However, when one delves into the teachings of Mormonism, he finds that the Mormons do not believe in the same God that we do.
 - 2. Doctrines believed about God.
 - a. The Mormons deny the Trinity.
 - 1) The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is one God in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (1 Peter 1:2; Matt. 3:13-17; John 14:16).
 - 2) Joseph Smith, Jr.: "I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Spirit was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods (Sermon on "The Christian Godhead—Plurality of Gods" as quoted by Hoekema in *Mormonism*, p.37).
 - b. Mormons believe that God the Father was once a man.
 - 1) Quote: "God was once as we are now, an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens. I say if you were to see him today you would see him

- like a man in form like yourselves in all the person and image of man" (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 5, p. 613 as quoted by Bill Bryant in "Mormonism," *Dangerous Isms*, B. J. Clarke ed., p.515).
- 2) "The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as a man's" (D&C 130:22).
 - 3) John 4:24; Rom. 1:22-23
- c. Mormons believe that God is just one of many Gods.
- 1) Quote: "...the doctrine of a plurality of gods is as prominent in the Bible as any other doctrine. It is all over the face of the Bible. ... The heads of the Gods appointed one for us; and when you take [that] view of the subject, it sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness and perfection of the Gods (*The Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp.370, 372 as quoted by Hoekema, *Mormonism*, p.39).
 - 2) Isaiah 44:6
- d. The Mormons believe that God is married to one, if not many wives.
- 1) Quote: "In heaven where our spirits were born, there are many Gods, each of whom has his own wife or wives, which were given to him previous to his redemption while yet in his mortal state" (*Mormon Doctrine*, Bruce McConkie, p.516).
 - 2) There is not one hint of this in scripture. In fact, the Bible uses the term "sons of God" in reference to angels (Job 1:6). Jesus said that they are not married in the heavenly realm (Mark 12:25).
3. Doctrines the Mormons believe about Jesus Christ.
- a. He is the firstborn of Elohim.
 - 1) Quote: "Among the spirit-children of Elohim the firstborn as and is Jehovah or Jesus Christ to whom all other are juniors" (*Articles of Faith*, Talmage, p.471).
 - 2) "*Before Abraham was, I am*" (John 8:58).
 - b. He is said to have been aided in creation by such personages as Adam, Noah, and Enoch in their pre-existent state.
 - 1) Quote: "Though it is said that Christ 'created' this earth under the Father's direction, it is also said that certain pre-existent, like Adam and Joseph Smith, helped him" (*Mormonism*, Hoekema, p.58).

- 2) John 1:1-3
- c. The virgin birth of Jesus is called into question.
 - 1) Quote: "Our Father in Heaven is the Father of Jesus Christ, both in the spirit and in the flesh" (*Doctrines of Salvation I*, Smith, p.18 as quoted by Hoekema in *Mormonism*, p.59).
 - 2) Luke 1:28-35; Romans 1:3; Galatians 4:4
- d. Jesus is said to have been involved in a polygamous marriage to Mary, Martha, and the other Mary.
 - 1) Quote: "Jesus was the bridegroom at the marriage of Cana of Galilee. ... We say it was Jesus Christ who was married, to be brought into relation whereby he could see his seed" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. II, Orson Hyde, p.82).
 - 2) There is not even the slightest intimation of this in the Scriptures (John 2:1-11). This is the fantasy of a very finite human mind.
- e. The Mormons believe that some sins cannot be forgiven by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.
 - 1) Quote: "Joseph Smith taught that there were certain sins so grievous that men may commit, that they will place the transgressors beyond the power of the atonement of Christ. If these offenses are committed, then the blood of Christ will not cleanse them from their sins even though they repent. Therefore their only hope is to have their own blood shed to atone, as far as possible in their behalf" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, I, 135, Joseph Fielding Smith).
 - 2) Hebrews 10:12-18, especially v. 12
- f. Saving faith must involve belief in both Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith as a prophet of God.
 - 1) Quotes:
 - a) "Faith in Christ and faith in Joseph Smith must go together" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, II, Smith, 302-303).
 - b) "Every spirit that does not confess that God has sent Joseph Smith, and revealed the everlasting Gospel to and through him, is of Antichrist" (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, Young, p.435).
 - 3) Gal. 2:16

- B. Article 8: "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."
1. The Mormons take a very low view of the Bible, even though when they approach a prospect they will be carrying only a copy of the King James Version. G. K. Wallace likened this action to trying to catch a horse with a bridle behind the back (the *Book of Mormon*) and an ear of corn (the KJV) out for the horse to see.
 - a. Quotes:
 - 1) I Nephi 13:28, "Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God."
 - 2) Bruce McConkie,: "One of the great heresies of an apostate Christianity is the unfounded assumption that the Bible contains all of the inspired teachings now extant among men" (*Mormon Doctrine*, McConkie, p.79).
 - 3) "The prophet Joseph Smith, from the beginning of his ministry, gave some time to revising passages in the Bible which had been translated incorrectly or so rendered as to make the meaning obscure" (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, arranged by G. Homer Durham as quoted by Hoekema in *Mormonism*, p.20).
 - b. Refutation of their poor view of the Bible.
 - 1) God has spoken unto us through His Son in these last days, and not through Joseph Smith (Heb. 1:1-2).
 - 2) Jesus told the apostles they would be guided into "all truth" by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13).
 - 3) Jude 3 reveals that "the faith" had been "once delivered" to the saints.
 - 4) Galatians 1:6-9 tells us that if an apostle, an angel, or any man teaches things contrary to the Gospel revealed in the first century, he is to be accursed.
 - 5) Revelation 22:18-19 states that anything added to or taken from God's revelation will bring the wrath of God upon one.
 - 6) Jesus took a very high view of God's Word.

- a) It was sufficient for those of His day (Luke 16:31).
 - b) The Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).
2. The Mormons have a very high view of the *Book of Mormon*.
- a. Quotes:
 - 1) Joseph Smith: "I told the brethren that the *Book of Mormon* was the most correct of any book on the earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than any other book" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Joseph Fielding Smith ed., p.194 as quoted by Hoekema in *Mormonism*, p.29).
 - 2) "It is noticeable that we make no reservation respecting the Book of Mormon on the ground of incorrect translation" (*The Vitality of Mormonism*, p.127 as quoted by Hoekama in *Mormonism*, p.19).
 - 3) "This book must be either true or false...If false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep laid impositions ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions who will sincerely receive it as the Word of God, and will suppose themselves securely built upon the rock of truth until they are plunged with their families into hopeless despair...If after a rigid examination, it be found an imposition, it should be extensively published to the world as such" (*Divine Authority of the Book of Mormon*, Introduction, Orson Pratt, as quoted by Bill Bryant, "Mormonism," *Dangerous Isms*, B. J. Clarke ed., p.511).
 - b. The *Book of Mormon* must be rejected because:
 - 1) It is more than what is needed:
 - a) The apostles were to be guided into "all truth" (John 16:13). If "all truth" were revealed by them, there is no need for additional revelation by Joseph Smith.
 - b) 2 Tim. 3:16-17, The Scriptures are all sufficient to make a man perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.
 - c) 2 Peter 1:3, God has given all we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Jesus

Christ. It is interesting that Peter did not say all we need would come 1800 years later in the days of Joseph Smith.

- 2) It contradicts what is in the Bible.

BIBLE	BOOK OF MORMON
Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:1)	Jesus was born in Jerusalem (Alma 7:10)
The name Christian given about 40-43AD (Acts 11:26)	The name Christian given about 73BC (Alma 46:5)
Three hours of darkness (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33)	Three days of darkness (I Nephi 19:10)
Melchizedek was without father (Heb. 7:1-3)	Melchizedek had a father (Alma 13:18)
Christ in heaven until second coming (Acts 3:20-21)	Christ revealed Himself to people in Americas after His ascension (III Nephi 10:18-19)
Remission of sins beginning at Jerusalem after death, burial, resurrection and ascension (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38)	Remission of sins before Christ came into the world (Mosiah 3:13)

- 3) The book of Mormon claimed perfection, but has undergone some 3,000 changes since its first edition as published.
- 4) The book of Mormon has no archaeological confirmation. "There has been no scroll, parchment, nor plate discovered bearing the name of one single person or place mentioned in the Book of Mormon (Crouch, pp.46-47 as quoted by Bill Bryant in "Mormonism," *Dangerous Isms*, B. J. Clarke ed., p.534).
- 5) It is referred to as *The Other Testament of Jesus Christ*, but the testament could not be in force because Jesus has not died for it (Heb. 9:15-17).

Too, the Bible tells us that Jesus will not die again (Heb. 7:16). Thus, the “Other Testament” will never be in force.

IV. OTHER FALSE DOCTRINES PROCLAIMED BY THE MORMONS.

- A. Elders who do not meet the qualifications of elders (1 Tim. 3:2-6).
- B. Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Melchizedek exist together
 1. D&C 107:1
 2. Heb. 7:1-12
- C. Baptism for the dead, thus, giving them a second chance for salvation.
 1. D&C 128:15-16
 2. Luke 16:26; 1 Cor. 9:27
 3. NOTE: Not practiced by Reorganized Branch.
- D. Lord’s supper.
 1. “It mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament” (D&C 27:2).
 2. Jesus partook of unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:26-29).
- E. Celestial marriage.
 1. “The most important single thing that any member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints can ever do in this world is to marry the right person by the right authority in the right place” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p.111).
 2. Doctrine & Covenants 132:15-16, 19-20.
 3. The Mormons teach there are two types of marriage.
 - a. Marriage for time. These marriages are to those who are not Mormons or marriages not done in the Temple.
 - b. Marriage for eternity.
 - 1) If one is married in the Mormon Temple, the marriage will last into eternity, as long as one does not commit murder, the shedding of innocent blood.
 - 2) “It is possible for such a marriage to join a Mormon to another person who is married to an ‘unbeliever’ in this life, or even to another Mormon; and the participants believe they will be married to each other in heaven, even if they are not married

to each other in this life" (*Answers to the Mormon Missionary*, Albert S. Hall III, p.227).

- 3) Other benefits to this marriage:
 - a) They shall be gods.
 - b) Angels shall be subject unto them.
 - c) Their children will be saved.
 - d) Their children will be spirit-children, not clothed upon with tabernacles of flesh and bones.
4. Rom. 7:2-3, Mark 12:25
- F. Errors with regard to man:
 1. Men pre-exist as spirits before their birth.
 - a. Moses 3:5 states that all things were created spiritually before they were created naturally on the earth.
 - b. These pre-existent spirits came into being through the union of their celestial parents, according to the Mormons (*Man: His Origin and Destiny*, Joseph Fielding Smith, pp.351, 355).
 - c. Job 18:4; Zechariah 12:1
 2. Men are born in the physical image of God.
 - a. "In the image of his own body, male and female, created he them."
 - b. John 4:24
 3. If man had not sinned, he would not be able to propagate himself.
 - a. II Nephi 2:22-23
 - b. Prior to man's fall, God said unto the man and woman, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth..." (Gen. 1:28).
 4. The children of Canaan were made black as a result of a curse for their sins.
 - a. Gen. 7:10 of the Inspired Version by Joseph Smith.
 - b. Brigham Young: "Cain slew his brother...and the Lord put a mark upon him, which is the flat nose and black skin" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 7, pp.290-291 as quoted by Hall in *Answers to the Mormon Missionary*, p.226).
 5. Men can become Gods.
 - a. D&C 132:19-20, 37
 - b. "The prophet Joseph Smith also made a significant contribution to the world's limited understanding of the Godhead. Perhaps one doctrine that most distinguishes Latter-Day Saints from other denominations

- is the conviction that all worthy men and women can become gods and goddesses" (*Church News*, September 9, 1989 as quoted by Bill Bryant in "Mormonism," *Dangerous Isms*, B. J. Clarke ed., p.516).
- c. Lorenzo Snow, fifth president of the Mormon Church: "As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become" (*Millennial Star*, 54, 404, as quoted by Hoekema, *Mormonism*, p.42).
 - d. "All ultimate differentiation between God and man has been done away with in this system, which now promises to it adherents what Satan, through the serpent, once promised to Eve: 'Ye shall be as God' (Gen. 3:5)" (*Mormonism*, Hoekema, p.42).
6. Yes and No to polygamy.
- a. The *Book of Mormon* condemns the practice of polygamy (Jacob 2:23, 27, 28, 31; 3:5).
 - b. Brigham Young: "The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of Gods, are those who enter into polygamy" (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 11, p.269, as quoted by Hall in *Answers to the Mormon Missionary*, p.214).
 - c. It is estimated that Joseph Smith had 50 wives. In the book, *Some Modern Cults, Sects, Movements and World Reviews*, Garland Elkins lists 49 of Smith's wives by name.
 - d. It was due bitter persecution against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that President Wilford Woodruff suspended the general practice of polygamy, while it still remained as a doctrine.
 - e. Matthew 19:4-5. Many is to cleave to his "wife," not to his "wives."
- G. Miracles and miraculous revelations still exist.
1. See Articles of Faith 5, 7, 9.
 2. 1 Cor. 13:8-13
 3. The Mormons advocate there should still be apostles in the church. However, in order to occupy this office one must meet certain qualifications according to Acts 1:21-22. No man who lives today can meet these qualifications. Thus, there can be no apostles today.
- H. Errors in their doctrines of final things.
1. Hell involves only a period of time of suffering for most. Only those who are "sons of perdition" will be in hell eternally (Matt. 25:41, 46).

2. There are three levels of heaven, celestial, terrestrial, and telestial (John 14:1-3, Jesus speaks of "a place.")
3. Article Ten; "We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the new Jerusalem) will be built on the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive it paradisiacal glory."
 - a. John 18:36; 2 Cor. 15:23-26

CONCLUSION:

1. The doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is very complicated.
2. The focus should remain upon nullifying the *Book of Mormon*. If this is done the entire religion falls.
3. It should also be noted that Joseph Smith is a false prophet. Several prophecies he made during his lifetime did not come to pass.
 - a. Smith prophesied that a temple would be built in Independence, Missouri in Smith's generation (D&C 84:1-5). This prophecy did not come to pass.
 - b. Joseph Smith is a false prophet. He is not to be feared, and is surely not to be followed (Deut. 18:20-22).

"Sayings Heard Today" #3

"Join The Church Of Your Choice" "One Church Is As Good As Another"

Virgil L. Hale

1. These sayings remind me of our Lord's question: "*Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*" (Matt. 16:18)
 - a. This question comes under the heading of "hear-say."
 - b. There is a vast difference in "hear-say" and "truth."
2. Peter's answer to the question revealed the truth.
3. There are many "hear-says" today. They are all opposed to the truth.

4. Let us now look at the two expressions assigned to me.

DISCUSSION:

I. "JOIN THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE."

- A. This statement is suggesting there are many kinds of churches.
1. This is true—but not with God's approval.
 2. Some seem to think that when it comes to the word "church" it is more or less like a cafeteria. You can just go through and look and pick out what you like—what suits you.
 3. The mega-churches of our day offer people what they want, not what they need. They are big, they grow, swell, but not with the approval of the Lord.
 4. We have had people write to our television program and ask, "With all of the different churches in the world, why cannot a person choose the church that suits his needs best?"
 5. One fellow told me years ago, that when he moved into another town, he changed from the church that he had been a member of to another church. The reasons that he gave were: it was near by, it was a beautiful building, it had comfortable pews, and it was air conditioned.
 6. It seems that God and His Word do not enter into the matter at all.
- B. In the first place, one cannot "join" the Lord's church.
1. When the Gospel is obeyed, the Lord adds that one to His church.
 2. Please note Mark 16:15-16 with Acts 2:47. To whose church were these people added? Denominationalism did not even exist at that time.
 3. Far too many of our brethren have bought into this kind of thinking, "Give the people what they want, and we will grow a big church." This might happen, but one day we must face the Lord in judgment.
- C. Let us be content to be a member of the church of the Lord's choice—His church!

II. "ONE CHURCH IS JUST AS GOOD AS ANOTHER."

- A. If you are choosing a husband or wife, would you say that one is just as good as another?
- B. When taking medicine, do you contend that one medicine is just as good as another?

1. While one medicine might cure, another might kill.
- C. Why are people so particular about some things and so careless about other things?
 1. Why so careless about things that have to do with the soul's eternal destiny?

III. IS "ONE CHURCH AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?"

- A. It makes a difference what we preach.
 1. We are to preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15; Jude 3; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Peter 4:11).
 2. We are not to preach another (false) Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 2:1).
 3. We are warned against false teachers (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:29-30; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1; Rev. 2:2).
- B. It makes a difference what we believe.
 1. We must believe in God (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:3; Acts 27:25).
 2. We must believe in Christ (John 8:24; 20:30-31).
 3. We must believe in the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Rom. 1:4).
 4. We must believe the Gospel (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
 5. Faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17).
 6. False doctrines produce false faith (Acts 26:9; Prov. 14:12; 2 Thess. 2:10-12).
- C. It makes a difference what we practice.
 1. We must worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Note Col. 3:17.
 2. We are not to worship according to the doctrines and commandments of men (Matt. 15:9; 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 4:6; Col. 2:21-22).
 3. The case of Cain is an example of substituting for what God had commanded (Gen. 4).
- D. The Lord built His church (Matt. 16:18).
 1. Can man build one that is just as good?
 2. At the day of judgment, would you want to be a member of a church started by man or the one built by Christ?
 3. Christ purchased His church with His blood (Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25).
 4. God is glorified in His church (Eph. 3:21).
 5. Reconciliation is in the Lord's church.

- a. Man is separated from God because of sin (Isa. 59:1-2; 53:6).
- b. Note Col. 1:21 with Eph. 2:16. Where are we told that reconciliation is found? Is it “in” or “out” of the body?
- 6. Christ is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23).
 - a. The body is the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18).
 - b. Thus Christ is the Savior of the church.
 - c. This is where the saved are added by the Lord (Acts 2:47).
- E. Please take a look at the parable of the laborers (Matt. 20:1-16).
 - 1. You will note that the householder hired laborers to work in “his vineyard” — not in someone else’s vineyard.
 - 2. Paul wrote that our labor is not in vain “in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - 3. Are you in the Lord’s vineyard? If not, your labor is in vain!

CONCLUSION:

- 1. If men had been content with the Lord’s church (as He established it) there would not be any man-made churches in our world today) thus men would not be saying, “Join the church of your choice” nor would they be saying, “One church is as good as another.”

The Bible Teaching On Unity

Dwight Fuqua

- 1. Division is not an abstract concept in the mind of some eccentric theologian. We live in a divided religious world!
- 2. It affects our world, nation, communities, families and individual lives. It challenges our brotherhood, our home congregation and our personal integrity.
- 3. How are we to react and what actions should we take? The antidote for religious division is individually applied.

4. As an individual, I cannot heal the hurts of a divided world. As a convicted and committed individual, I can and must take action in my corner of it.

DISCUSSION:

I. DIVISION IS WRONG.

- A. To act and react properly, we must have a strong, personal conviction that religious division is wrong.
1. It is wrong because it is contrary to our Lord's desire and prayer (John 17:20-21).
 2. It is wrong because it is contrary to the New Testament plea for unity (1 Cor. 1:10-17).
- B. The tragedy of religious division is seen in its fruit.
1. Look at the division in America. There are literally thousands of "churches" waving the same banner and professing allegiance to the same Lord. Confused and frustrated people are abandoning organized religion.
 2. Look at division among us. The church has been hindered, our great plea retarded and our God blasphemed.
- C. The closer home we get, the harder it is to look objectively at the sin of division.
1. It is easy to label division "wrong" in the religious world, but quite another thing to point the finger at us.
 2. Division is a problem that plagues us! What has the church split over in your community and area? Was it a matter of principle, pettiness or personalities? How sad that this state exists and that it is known to all.

II. FACING THE PROBLEM.

- A. We must first ask, "What causes division?"
1. Error! Division is caused by the intentional or unintentional propagation of doctrinal error. We must love, seek, know, live, preach, defend and contend for truth (2 John 9-11)!
 2. Pride! Solomon said, "*Only by pride cometh contentions*" (Prov. 13:10). Not only must we be true to the word, but willing to sacrifice self.
 3. Foolishness! Straining at gnats and swallowing camels cause division. We must not allow ourselves to be side-tracked by foolishness (2 Tim. 2:23).
 4. A lack of brotherhood! Much of the division in our ranks is caused by brethren not being brethren (Heb. 13:1). We

must focus on our responsibilities to God, the church and others.

- B. While never minimizing the importance of faithfulness to the word, emphasis also must be placed on spirit.
 - 1. If we have a teachable spirit, error will not divide us.
 - 2. If we have a submissive spirit, pride will not divide us.
 - 3. If we have a sound spirit, foolishness will not divide us.
 - 4. If we have a loving spirit, a lack of brotherhood will not divide us.
- C. Our response to division must be with the spirit of Christ!
 - 1. The spirit of Christ is not a compromising spirit. Our Lord never compromised the truth and we must never compromise the truth.
 - 2. The spirit of Christ is a humble, obedient, sacrificing, serving spirit (Phil. 2:5-8). As the church exists only because of our Lord's love and self-sacrifice, unity in the church exists only when we love the church and sacrifice ourselves for it.

III. PRACTICAL APPLICATION.

- A. In Ephesians 4, Paul deals practically with unity. There are four essentials:
 - 1. We must live right. Paul admonishes, "*Walk worthy of the calling with which you were called*" (v.1).
 - 2. We must think right. Our inward posture must be one of "lowliness and gentleness" (v.2a).
 - 3. We must make the right effort toward others. We are to be "*longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*" (vs.2b-3).
 - 4. We must hold and teach the right doctrine. There is ONE body, ONE Spirit, ONE hope, ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism and ONE God (vs.4-6).
- B. What can we do in our local congregations to enhance the unity of God's people? The answer is "balance."
 - 1. We must be willing to sacrifice self (personal opinion, preference, etc.) while standing firm for the truth (Gal. 6:14).
 - 2. We must be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9), but not conformists. A warring spirit never advances truth and error is never defeated by a conspiracy of silence.
 - 3. We must let "*love the brotherhood*" (1 Peter 2:17) find practical application in our midst. Treat every member

- as a brother or sister (1 Tim. 5:1,2) while respecting the will of the Father.
4. We must speak the truth in love and build up the body (Eph. 4:15,16), but warn the unruly (1 Thess. 5:14), reject the heretic (Titus 3:10) and withdraw from those who cause division (Rom. 16:17).
- C. Our great heritage cries out to us!
1. We must be committed to the truth! "Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent." "Call Bible things by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways."
 2. We must be discerning and balanced in that commitment! "In matters of doctrine, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty, in all things, love."

CONCLUSION:

1. The sin of division is not a new problem, but it is a real problem. I challenge you to study our Lord's life and teaching and then act as He would act and teach as He would teach (1 John 2:6).
2. Mahatma Ghandi said, "If Christianity ever hopes to take the world, those who profess it must start living like the Christ who founded it."

Traditions Of Men Regarding Bible Versions

Nat Evans

1. THINKING THROUGH THE TOPIC.

In my opening statement I wish to say that I have received the assignment to speak on a very emotional and controversial issue—the version issue. My sentiments are exactly those expressed by my friend and bold proclaimer of truth, brother Goebel Music. In his great book on his review of the "EASY TO READ VERSION," He wrote the following: "Let it be known and understood by all that the scribe is not a scholar, never has been a scholar, does not have the

academic training of a scholar, is not to be referred to as a scholar, has never spoken of himself nor allowed others to speak of him as a scholar and will die after the same fashion.” Having quoted those words to express my own sentiments, I would also like to add the following. I hope to be a lifetime student and learner. If you can help me on any of these matters, I will gladly listen, for I certainly lay no claim to being an expert in this field.

2. TOUCHING TRIBUTE.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to some great men of the Book who have spent a great deal of time in research and writing in this field. I think of men like Foy E. Wallace Jr., A. G. Hobbs, Robert R. Taylor, Jr., J. Noel Merideth, James W. Boyd, Wayne Jackson, Roy C. Deaver, Thomas B. Warren, Guy N. Woods, Hugo McCord, J. W. McGarvey and many others. I know that of those just mentioned (that are still with us) that I could wish that they were speaking and writing in my place, for I know they could do a much better job than I.

3. TEACHING TERMS.

Our next order of business is to define some key terms. The word “tradition” is used in different ways. 1) There is tradition that is bound because it involves what Jesus, the apostles, and the prophets taught and practiced. 2) There is human tradition having to do with religious doctrine and practice which has been based on mere human authority, or loyalty to ancestors (Matt. 15:9,13). 3) There are cultural practices which are innocent within themselves that have been passed down through family custom. It is the second definition with which I am mainly concerned in our study. Sin enters the picture when we teach and practice things in religion that stand in opposition to the first definition (1 John 3:4; 1 John 5:17; James 4:17).

Our next term to examine is the word “translation.” It is used here in the sense of “to turn into one’s own or another language.” You would have the “source” (original language) from which you would be working. The language you are translating it into would be known as the “target” language.

4. TIMELY THEME.

Brother Robert Taylor said, “In my judgment it is one of the most crucial issues facing the Lord’s people today” (*Challenging Dangers Of The Modern Versions*, p.1). In his great book entitled, *A Review Of The Modern Versions*, Foy E. Wallace Jr. states in the

preface, "It is my firm conviction that the greatest immediate danger confronting the churches of Christ is the general acceptance of the pseudo-versions of the Bible" (p.xxxv). Goebel Music says in his preface of his review of the *ERV* (Easy To Read Version), "It is my personal conviction, certitude and certainty, if the devil can get the Word of God itself changed, modified, altered, restyled and reconstructed, denatured and disguised, then he will certainly have his best tool! I sat and wept time and again as I saw how these men disarrayed, disarranged, disordered, disrobed, as well as discomposed the *Koine* Greek and the teachings contained therein. I often wondered how they would like their 'will' and/or 'testament' to be so treated. Yet, they are dealing with God almighty Himself!" (Preface, p. XXIII)

5. TENABLE TRANSLATION (That which is capable of being held or defended, dependable, reasonable). I can confidently recommend the *King James* and the *American Standard* translations as being reliable and not containing fatal error.

I am dealing here with the thought of accuracy in translation. Robert Martin stated: "Why is accuracy of translation so important? Because the Bible is the Word of the living God. It is an utterly unique book. It is the inscripturated revelation to mankind of God's mind and will, and the inspired record of His redemptive work. And this being so, there is no more important piece of literature in the world. Thus, the accuracy of the Bible translation is of the utmost importance." (Robert Martin, *Accuracy Of Translation*, p.2-3)

6. THEISM'S TRUSTWORTHY TESTIMONY.

I am dealing here with the nature of the Bible's inspiration. It shall be my purpose not only to define "inspiration" but show its importance to our study. Whether or not the Bible is indeed inspired is at the very heart of so many of the departures we are seeing in the liberal modern versions. Shall we allow God to speak in behalf of His own holy book? What does the Bible have to say for itself as to whether or not it is inspired of God? The Scriptures claim they are inspired of God. Paul tells us in 2 Tim. 3:16-17 that they are "God breathed." When one honestly examines all of the evidence he will reach the conclusion that the Bible is inspired in such a way that its own words are inspired. This is to affirm "*verbal inspiration*." To affirm that inspiration extends to all the "words" of Scripture, is to affirm that the Bible is inspired in all of its parts. This is called "*plenary inspiration*." When you have a correct reflection of the original, then you have what God has spoken.

B. C. Goodpasture wrote, "Moreover, the Bible claims to be inspired. Even the casual reader has been impressed with the frequent use of such expressions as: *"Thus saith the Lord," "God spake," "The Lord testified, saying,"* and *"The Lord hath spoken it."* It is said that in the prophets alone these expressions occur 1,300 times; and in the Old Testament, 2,500 such phrases, attributing the authorship to God, are found... The evidences of the inspiration of the Bible fall into two classes—namely, *external* and *internal*... From the very nature of the case, however, the chief arguments in favor of the divine origin of the Bible are largely internal. This fact does not militate against the arguments in favor of inspiration. If the contents of a given bottle were in question, the best way to find out the truth would be to make a careful analysis of what was in the bottle. The internal evidence would be more conclusive than any kind of external evidence that could be produced. If the nature of a nugget of metal, which many thought to be gold, was in question, the best way to arrive at the facts would be to examine the nugget itself. In like manner we have a book, the Bible, which we claim is inspired. Does it bear the marks of inspiration? Will it stand the acid test of internal investigation? We have a right to examine this book to see whether or not it bears the marks of divine origin. It has nothing to fear from the most rigid investigation." (1971 *Harding Graduate School Lectures*, pp.25,32)

Goebel Music gave the following:

1. Every scripture is God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21, esp. v.21), and
3. These men spoke words, spiritual words, as the Spirit did teach them (1 Cor. 2:10-13, esp. v.13).
4. The conclusion is simple: The Bible Doctrine Is Declared as Verbal Inspiration, or, if you please, "Word for Word..."

7. TRANSLATION THEORIES.

Robert Martin wrote, "In order to evaluate the accuracy of the NIV as a translation, it is necessary to understand the philosophy of translation which produced it. Different methods of translation, of course, produce different kinds of translations. For example, the philosophy behind the *ASV* is radically different from that behind the *Good News Bible (Today's English Version)*; and thus, the resultant translations are radically different as well."

"The task of the Bible translator is to communicate the content of the biblical texts (originally written Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) in the native language of the readers for whom the transla-

tion is being prepared (in our case, in English). The issue, of course, is the method of doing this most effectively. What method or philosophy of translation should the translator use?"

"Nida asserts that 'there are fundamentally two different types of equivalence', two basic orientations, 'two poles of translating' — *formal equivalence* and *dynamic equivalence*. Now while the existing English translations evidence differing levels of consistency in the application of either formal equivalence or dynamic equivalence, nevertheless each one (either consciously or unconsciously) is oriented to one philosophy or the other. In the paragraphs, we will examine the philosophies of (FE) and (DE); and, then, we will try to ascertain the philosophical orientation of the NIV."

"When we ask what method of translating best communicates the content of the original text, formal equivalence translators answer that the content of the original is best communicated when the translator consciously tries to parallel closely the linguistic form (i.e., the structure, grammar, and exact wording) of the original. Dynamic equivalence translators, on the other hand, answer that the best way is to use the most natural form of the language of the reader (i.e., giving priority to the structure, grammar, and idiomatic expressions of contemporary English), **whether or not this closely parallels the linguistic form of the original text** (emphasis mine, NE). Albeit with differing levels of consistency in application, the formal equivalence method basically was followed by the translators of the *King James Version*, *The American Standard Version* (and the *English Revised Version*, the *New American Standard Bible*, and the *New King James Version*. Dynamic equivalence was the method followed, for example, in the production of the *Good News Bible* and the *New English Bible*."

"As noted above, the formal equivalence translator, when translating the content of the original text into English, tries to preserve the form of the original text as far as possible. With this philosophical orientation, the translator is concerned that the elements of the finished translation match as closely as possible the elements of the original text." (He is even concerned about accurately translating each word correctly. n.m.e.) "He is interested in trying to say 'what' the original text says by retaining 'how' it says it (as far as English grammar allows). Although clear English expression does not always allow the formal equivalence translator to do so, he tries not to adjust the idioms which the original writer used; rather, he attempts to render them more or less literally, so that the reader may be able to perceive something of the way in

which the original document employed local linguistic and cultural elements to convey ideas. — The formal equivalence method attempts to transfer (as far as is possible) the structural information of the message as well as the general idea or meaning of the words.”

“In contrast to formal equivalence translators, dynamic equivalence translators, focus attention not so much on the form of the original text as on the response of the modern reader. A dynamic equivalence translation has been described as one concerning which a modern reader could say, ‘That is just the way we would say it.’ As can be seen, in contrast to the philosophy of formal equivalence, *the philosophy of dynamic equivalence definitely has moved in the direction of paraphrase.*”

“The dynamic equivalence translation is based on the principle of ‘equivalent effect’ rather than on the principle of ‘formal linguistic equivalence. The main concern of dynamic equivalence, therefore, is not formal linguistic correspondence but correspondence of thought or idea. The ASV clearly was produced using the method of formal equivalence” (Martin). The NIV has been greatly influenced by the application of dynamic equivalence.

There is also what is known as the “Dynamic view of inspiration.” This is more commonly known as “thought inspiration.” Those who hold this view believe that God may have inspired the thoughts of the writers of Scripture, but He left each of them free to choose their own words. This dangerous view is brought over into the translation arena. Those translators who have adopted the theory of thought inspiration think that as long as they give in their view what is the basic thought, then they do not have to be concerned about the original words. He believes he has a right to change the words to get across to the reader the general idea. With the result being that he feels he can use *whatever words he chooses* to get across “*his idea.*”

We see then that the “dynamic method of translation” corresponds to the “dynamic view of inspiration.” Thus *a translators view of the Bible’s inspiration will have an effect upon his method of translating.*

Thought inspiration will not stand up under investigation. How would God get across an idea to a man without words? How would you explain a thought without words? Scripture itself shows that God was concerned with more than ideas (1 Cor. 2:10-13). Iain Murray as quoted by Martin well said: “When the Bible is being translated, its own doctrine as to its verbal inspiration imposes limitations on the translator’s function... The translator of Scripture

has, therefore, above all else, to follow the text; it is not his business to interpret it or to explain it." (It is his work to produce an accurate translation, not a human commentary on what he thought the original writer meant. n.m.e.).

I am in full agreement with Martin when he says: "In order for the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible to be properly acknowledged in the work of translation, the primary unit of translation must be *the word*, not just *the idea*. Any method of translation which departs from that commitment is in serious conflict with the doctrine of verbal-plenary inspiration. — Plainly speaking, the formal equivalence method of translation is philosophically committed to regarding and guarding the individual words of the original text as the primary units of translation; the dynamic equivalence method is not. Thus, the further the translator departs from formal equivalence in his work, the less compatible his method and ultimately the finished product become with the orthodox doctrine of biblical inspiration and authority."

The dynamic equivalence theory has had a tremendous impact in the field of Bible translation over the past two decades. It has affected the kind of Bibles that have been produced. The sad thing is that the average Joe on the street does not know anything about this. To him a Bible is a Bible, and if it has Holy Bible printed on the outside, then it must be God's Inspired Word on the inside, and thus trustworthy. Besides being called "dynamic equivalence," it has also been referred to as "common language translation," "impact translation," "idiomatic translation," and "thought inspiration."

Goebel Music points out: "Those who promote dynamic equivalency almost always emphasize that they aim to be perfectly faithful to the meaning of the original text. But this simply cannot be done when dynamic equivalency methodology is used. **Though dynamic equivalency proponents claim to honor the meaning of the Bible text, in practice they do not! In practice they change, twist, and pervert scripture.**"

Does the fact that a translator believes in the theory of dynamic equivalence give him the right to take liberties with the Word of God? Why should a translator have the right to change, delete from, and add to the Word of God? Such an approach ignores God's warnings about adding to or taking away from His Word (Rev. 22:18-19; Prov. 30:6; Jer. 26:2; Deut. 4:2). When men think their thoughts are more important than God's words then they have no place in the field of Bible translation. Would this not be robbing men of God's words? We learn from Gal. 3:16-ff that just one word

is important. Paul made an argument upon one word “seed” and whether or not it was singular or plural. Even the tense of a verb becomes very important. Please note John 8:58 and Matt. 22:31-32. Since the means which God used to convey his truth to man was that of “words” (1 Cor. 2:10-13), then I deduce from this that those words (each of those words) is important.

I want a translation where the translators had great respect for the Word of God, and had the intent of trying to accurately give me God’s Word in my own language.

After noting how the NIV adds to the Word of God and subtracts from it, Robert Martin gives the following remarks near the close of his review of the NIV in his book on *Accuracy In Translation*. “The NIV is not worthy of becoming the standard version of the English-speaking world. Its accuracy is suspect in too many ways.—In closing, I must make one final observation. We must beware of the long-term costs of supposed short-term gains. The idea in some places seems to be that more people will read their Bibles if they have one of the simpler dynamic translations, like the NIV. This may or may not be so; I do not know. I suspect that spiritually-minded folk have always read their Bibles and studied diligently those parts ‘hard to be understood’ (2 Peter 3:16). I do know, however, that sacrificing precision for simplicity is no bargain. Inaccurate and paraphrastic Bible translations cannot but contribute to the further erosion of theological precision in the decades to come.—Many new versions have come from the press in the twentieth century and undoubtedly we may expect more in the future. Each will claim to be the ‘new standard in Bible translation.’ We cannot afford to be swept along by the advertising or by the flurry of uncritical enthusiasm which accompanies each new Bible version. We must be cautious and conservative. We must insist that new versions earn their right to widespread use in the churches not by advertising finesse but by our careful scrutiny of their accuracy. The Bible is the touchstone of our faith and practice. We cannot afford to be careless and uninformed in these matters.” (Martin, p.70) (emphasis mine, NME)

8. TAMPERING TRANSLATORS.

James W. Boyd wrote: “I am not opposed to a new version per se and would welcome one if we had one. But the need for a new version has been grossly exaggerated, and those which have been produced are truly perversions rather than versions. Those who translate ought to translate, not mistranslate, omit, add to, rewrite, paraphrase and offer personal commentary as if they were giving

a version of the Bible.—The reliability of the new versions can be determined to a great extent when one considers the attitudes the 'translators' have toward that which they profess to be translating. The overwhelming majority of the producers of new versions do not believe the Bible is God's inspired Word. They deny the Virgin birth. They believe Christianity is simply an evolved, rather than a revealed, religion. Even the Deity of Christ is claimed to be the result of an evolution of thought. They deny that the writers of the Bible were even conscious they were writing Scripture. They deny the accuracy of what is written. The claim the Bible was produced by unknown redactors and editors from myths, legends, earlier writings and hearsay. — But let them speak for themselves. Even the new versions they produce are admittedly injected with their own theologies and biases. In matters of difficulty they admit without hesitancy that they have paraphrased in their own words rather than translated God's Word. They contend they are not giving a translation as much as they are giving what they have determined to be the meaning of what the Bible teaches...."

"It can be accurately charged that the new versions are for the prime purpose of including in what is called a 'Bible' what could never be derived from the earlier (accurate and true—n.m.e.) versions of the Bible. They are for the propagation of denominational and theological error under the guise of a Bible. Such deception and lack of integrity ought never to be dignified by faithful brethren in any way" (James W. Boyd, Freed-Hardeman College Lectures, 1975).

9. TAINTED TRANSLATION.

I have been asked to mention some of the errors in the *New International Version* (NIV). I will mention a few of them that constitute fatal error, and will provide a brief refutation. I will be using an outline of my good friend and brother in Christ, Gilbert Gough.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE NIV IS FULL OF FALSE DOCTRINE THAT BRETHREN HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST FOR YEARS. IT CONTAINS FATAL ERROR.

A. Total Hereditary Sin (Original or inherited sin).

1. Psalm 51:5 (KJV), "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Psalm 51:5 (NIV) says, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, Sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

- a. However, the NIV is incorrect because this contradicts other Clear Bible statements.
 - 1) Ezek. 18:20 (KJV), "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son..."
 - 2) Matt. 18:3 (KJV), "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."
 - 3) 1 John 3:4 (KJV), "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - b. The KJV teaches that a man is born into a sinful world, not born sinful.
 2. This Calvinistic idea is carried over into the New Testament by rendering "flesh" (KJV) as "sinful nature" (Rom. 7, 8, 9; Gal. 5 – NIV).
 - a. Human nature is not sinful because we were made in the image of God and after His likeness (Gen. 1:26-27).
 - b. Men "go astray" (KJV); they are not "born astray" – The NIV in Psalm 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."
- B. Salvation by faith only.**
1. Rom. 1:17 (KJV), "For therein is the righteousness of God Revealed from faith to faith..."
Rom. 1:17 (NIV), "a righteousness that is by faith from first to last..."
 2. Rom. 10:10 (KJV), "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
Rom. 10:10 (NIV), "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."
THIS IS FALSE, for it teaches that a sinner is saved before he puts Christ on in baptism. (CALVINISM)
- C. The NIV says Jesus "made himself nothing" in Phil. 2:7.**
1. The KJV, "But made himself of no reputation."
 2. If something is nothing, then it does not exist; Jesus is made to be a non-entity.
 3. How could a self-existent being cease to exist? This is an absurdity and is evidence of poor scholarship.

- D. The NIV equates "epilepsy" with demon possession in Matt. 17:15.
1. Here the NIV does not translate but interprets by saying the boy was an epileptic.
 2. The KJV reads, "Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed..."
 3. Demon possession is not epilepsy. The translators did not translate.
- E. The NIV teaches Jesus causes men to stumble, and makes men fall.
1. 1 Peter 2:8 (NIV), "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that causes men to fall."
 2. Jesus is the stone, but He does not cause or make men stumble; it is man's own disobedience.
 3. Here, the NIV is guilty of paraphrasing, not translating. The KJV reads, "...which stumble at the word, being disobedient..."
- F. The NIV teaches the church was built on Peter.
1. Matt. 16:18 (NIV), "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church."
 2. Then the footnote says, "Peter means rock."
 3. But Jesus says Peter is a pebble, and the great confession Peter made concerning the Deity of Christ is the foundation upon which the church is built (1 Cor. 3:11).
 4. The NIV translators did what the Catholics have wanted to do for years but did not have the nerve to do. No doubt the Catholics love this verse in the NIV.
- G. Premillennialism is taught in the NIV.
1. Matt. 19:28 (NIV), "at the renewing of all things," rather than "in the regeneration" (KJV).
 2. This accommodates the literal 1000 years reign as does Acts 3:21 in the NIV which says "restore everything." KJV reads, "times of restitution."
 3. However, both passages refer to the Christian age.
 4. Eph. 1:10 (NIV) teaches a future state rather than one fulfilled in Christ.
 - a. KJV, "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."
 - b. NIV, "to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment."

- c. Gal. 4:4 (KJV) settles it, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
- H. The NIV teaches the spotless Son of God had to be purified (Luke 2:22).
 - 1. The NIV says, "...their purification."
 - 2. The KJV says, "...her purification."
- I. The NIV teaches Christ did not come to abolish the law (Matt. 5:17).
 - 1. But Christ did abolish the law, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill" (KJV).
 - 2. The NIV says, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."
 - 3. The NIV thus contradicts itself, as well as the Bible.
 - a. Eph. 2:15 (KJV), "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."
 - b. Heb. 10:9 (KJV), "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."

II. OTHER BLINDERS AND CONTRADICTIONS IN THE NIV.

A. Mark 1:1,2

- 1. Mark 1:1 (KJV), "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, The Son of God."
 Mark 1:1 (NIV), "The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God."
 The KJV involves the gospel Jesus preached and the second is what one believes about Jesus.
- 2. Mark 1:2 (KJV), "As it is written in the prophets"
 Mark 1:2 (NIV), "It is written in Isaiah the prophet."
 NIV says Isaiah, then quotes Malachi.

B. Heb. 11:17

- 1. Abraham sacrificed "his one and only son" (NIV).
- 2. But Galatians 4:22 tells us he had two sons. "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman."

C. The NIV refers to Jesus as God's "one and only Son" or "only Son."

1. cf. John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9
2. But 1 John 3:2 (KJV), "Beloved, now are we the sons of God..."
3. Here is a mistranslation of the Greek word "*monogenes*."

III. DEITY OF CHRIST DOWNGRADED IN NIV.

- A. Matthew 1:25 omits "her firstborn" in NIV.
- B. Luke 2:33 is changed to "the child's father and mother" (NIV) from "Joseph and His mother." Verse 43 says "parents" (NIV).
- C. 1 Tim. 3:16 in the NIV omits "God" and replaces it with "he."
- D. Acts 8:37 is omitted from the NIV even though 95 % of the evidence demands it.

IV. DOUBT AND DECEPTION IN THE FOOTNOTES.

- A. Mark 16:9-20, The NIV states that "The most reliable early Manuscripts omit Mark 16:9-20." This is very misleading.
- B. Luke 22:34, They say "Some early MSS omit verse 34a."
- C. Mark 1:1, They say "Some early MSS. The Son of God."
- D. Luke 22:43,44, "Some early MSS. Omit verses 43-44."

CONCLUSION:

Brother Gough says: "With all the omission, additions, contradictions, poor translating, paraphrasing, it is no wonder those who love the Word of God get upset. It is an impossibility for God to lie (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18)."

10. TENDENTIOUS TRANSLATIONS.

This takes place when a religious group decides to make its own Bible. They smuggle their own peculiar doctrines into the text. The Jehovah's Witnesses have done this with the *New World Translation*. Beware! Everything that calls itself a Bible or a Bible translation isn't!

11. TESTING TRANSLATIONS (Tradition, taste, or truth).

Do elders have a right to request that only reliable translations such as the KJV and the ASV be the only ones used in sermons, classes, and public Scripture readings? Is this binding human tradition, or is it guarding and protecting the flock? There is an excellent discussion of this Point by Robert R. Taylor, Jr. in his book on the versions (pp.280-292).

Brother Taylor defends the right of an eldership to make such a policy. He shows that they are merely using wisdom in so doing,

because in doing this they are being faithful in their work of feeding and protecting the flock.

TRIAL (SOME QUESTIONS).

1. Suppose a preacher who uses the NIV is to teach a Bible Class in Romans chapters 7 and 8. The elders recognize that the NIV is crammed full of Calvinism, and especially in these two chapters. The young preacher has not yet realized the weakness of this translation. Do elders have a right to prevent error from being taught? Should they not stop Calvinism in its tracks?
2. Suppose they know that a certain young man is going to have the Bible reading before the worship assembly, they observe that he plans to use one of the modern versions which changes the first day of the week to Saturday, and the breaking of bread to a fellowship meal. They know that the reading for that day is to include Acts 20:7. Should they allow the Scripture reading to come from a perversion, or should they in kindness request that he use a sound translation?
3. Suppose a certain lady who teaches a Bible class for children is planning to teach them from Kenneth Taylor's paraphrased work, *The Living Bible Paraphrased*. She plans to use it because she thinks the children can understand it better. Do elders have any say at all as to who, and what, and when, and where with regard to what takes place in the congregation's Bible classes? Would anyone contend that those elders would have no authority at all to insist that she not use a so-called Bible that promotes denominationalism, Calvinism, premillennialism, vulgarity, and is totally reckless in its paraphrasing of Bible truth?
4. Would elders have the right to keep a denominational preacher out of their pulpit and classrooms? Surely we should recognize that elders have the authority and obligation to see to that only sound doctrine is taught, and that no error of any kind is permitted to be taught in either the pulpit or classroom.
5. Do elders not have the right and the obligation to keep error from being taught in the Bible class through materials which they may use from time to time?
6. Why could they keep error at bay by refusing certain class materials to be used which contain error, and yet not be able to say a single word in protest or prevention if someone wants to use a perversion (as a standard of authority) in a sermon or

Scripture reading? Is it not the case that godly elders should do all within their power to keep false doctrine out?

7. Is fatal error any less dangerous simply because it may hide under the mask of a perversion that is misnamed a Bible, such as the *New World Translation*, and others of like character?
8. Suppose some rebel decides that it would be cute for him to do the Scripture reading one day from Anton LaVey's Satanic Bible, would the elders have a right to stop it? Remember now, it is called a Bible. If they could stop it in this case because it is disrespectful, and is not really the Bible, though it wears that name on the cover, why couldn't they do it in other cases? I believe they could and should. This would not be the upholding of human tradition, but would be instead the upholding of Divine tradition. Such would be the upholding of truth and protecting the flock from false doctrine. Let those who have contended that such is human tradition, and that the elders have no such authority read the following Scriptures. Prov. 23:23; Gal. 1:6-9; John 8:31-32; Eph. 5:11; 2 John 2-11; Acts 20:27,32; 1 Tim. 1:1-10; 4:1-16; 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 3:15-17; 4:2-4; Titus 1:9-11; 2:1-3,10,15; 3:10; Heb. 13:7,17; 1 Peter 5:1-3; and Ezekiel chapters 33 and 34.

12. TRADITION'S TRANSGRESSION.

My friends, God intends for every man to hear the divine message in his own language (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:44-47). It is vitally important that any translation that is made teach the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Every translation that has ever seen the light of day has had its critics. Many of them deserved it. Some were so wedded to the Latin language that the Catholic church sought to persecute and yes even put to death those who sought to give the Bible to the English speaking world. We owe much to those of the past who sacrificed so very much, some even their own lives to give us the Bible in our own language. We have no right to bind Seventeenth century English, any more than the Catholics had a right to bind Latin. The King James is a fine reliable translation. It was the ninth on the list in time of English translations. It has undergone several revisions. Many do not know that the 1611 KJV contained the Apocrypha. I am thankful that those uninspired books have been removed. Most of us would have trouble reading a 1611 KJV if we had one. Our language has undergone so much change in that time. Many archaic words have been eliminated, and replaced with more up to date words. More of them need to be. Why am I saying

this? Is it to downgrade the KJV? No. I am aware that there are some in our brotherhood who want to make a test of fellowship over the KJV. They want to withhold fellowship from those who may use another version, even from those who may use the *American Standard* of 1901. Whether or not a man uses the KJV, the ASV, or the NKJV (*New King James Version*) is a matter of preference, it falls into the area of judgment. The important thing is, is he teaching the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (2 Tim. 4:2-4; Eph. 4:15; Acts 20:27)? Even Jesus and the apostles made use of the *Septuagint* (a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament) — clearly an imperfect translation. It even contained the Apocryphal books. But in their use of the Septuagint, they only made use of those passages which taught the truth. Brother Wayne Jackson observed, “If lines of fellowship are going to be drawn solely on the basis of the version a person generally quotes, Christ and the apostles are quickly out of fellowship with some!” Brethren we need to look carefully before we leap into taking positions.

Wayne Jackson wrote, “The issue of ‘modern versions’ is a controversial theme on the current religious scene. It is fraught with much emotion — more ‘heat’ than ‘light’ in many stances. Extremism is characteristic of religious issues and the ‘translation’ matter is no exception to this rule. On the one hand, there are those who do not scruple to vigorously promote virtually anything that sails under the name ‘Bible,’ including such ridiculous caricatures as Clarence Jordan’s, *The Cotton Patch Version*.”

“At the opposite extreme are a few critics who allege that the use of any version, save that of the *King James* (1611), smacks of liberalism Some have even taken the extreme position that the use of a particular Bible version should be made a test of Christian fellowship. This is a very faulty viewpoint and it will not stand under careful investigation ...no translation can be condemned merely on the ground of its modernity; it must stand or fall on the basis of its internal merit ...Let a final word of caution be noted. We are not recommending a wholesale use of the many modern versions of the Scriptures. What we are saying is that there needs to be a more balanced, sensible, and even Scriptural view of this matter than some are now taking. The problem with most folks is not the translation they use, but the fact that they do not use the translation they have!” (*How To Choose A Good Translation*, pp.258-273; *Rightly Dividing The Word: Vol. 1*, Terry M. Hightower, Editor)

In my own personal study and in my preaching, teaching, and writing, I use the *American Standard* of 1901, and the *King James*

Translations. For what it is worth, it is my view that if you could combine the strengths, and eliminate the weaknesses of the ASV, the KJV, and the NKJV, that you would have one fine translation. Certainly if a particular translation teaches fatal error, then those who point such out to us are doing us a great service. Brethren, may I encourage each of you to take the time to read again brother Foy. E. Wallace's and Robert R. Taylor's monumental works in this field.

13. TRAVELING TOGETHER.

Brethren, it is my fervent plea that we have temperate tongues as we travel the road of life together toward the judgment (John 17:20-21; Eph. 4:1-6; Heb. 13:1). Let us with patience and kindness seek to teach those who may disagree with us. May we seek to keep on open mind ourselves as we continue to learn and grow. And, may we always keep in mind that the best translation of the Bible is when we see it translated into life. May God bless you and keep you (Num. 6:24-26).

What Is Right With The Church Of Christ

Melvin Sapp

1. Despite the many things that are troubling the Lord's church, there are many things that are right with the church of Christ.
2. To many, it seems as if the New Testament church has lost its identity and is drifting in a haze of liberalism.
3. Battles against liberalism are worthy endeavors and the fight to maintain the purity of the New Testament must not be vacated.
4. Yet, we must not neglect to promote and elevate the things that are right with the greatest organization known to man.

DISCUSSION:

I. IT WAS FOUNDED BY THE RIGHT PERSON.

A. Jesus is the right person to set up Christianity:

1. He is the Seed of woman (Gen. 3:15; Jer. 31:22).
2. He is the Spiritual Seed promised to Abram (Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:16).

3. He is God with Man (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-25).
 4. He is God in the Flesh (John 1:1-4,14).
 5. He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18-20).
- B. Jesus is the right one to build the church:
1. The Lord must build the house of God (Psa. 127:1).
 2. Jesus promised to build it (Matt. 16:18).
 3. Jesus purchased the church (Acts 20:28).
 4. He is the Head and Savior of the church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18).
 5. The church is Jesus' One Body (Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 12:12-13).
- C. The right church was not started by men who were stained by sin:
1. Only Jesus lived without sinning (Heb. 4:15; 7:26-28).
 2. Jesus is our perfect example (1 Peter 2:21-24).
 3. All other accountable men have sinned (Rom. 3:23).
 4. Bonaface III, Martin Luther, John Symthe, John Wesley and John Calvin all sinned.
 5. Only Jesus qualifies to start a church (Matt. 16:18; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 3:11).

II. IT WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE RIGHT CITY.

- A. Jerusalem was the designated place of origin:
1. The word of the Lord would go forth from Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3).
 2. The preaching of the remission of sins would start in Jerusalem (Luke 24:46-49).
 3. The apostles were to tarry in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-8).
 4. They were in Jerusalem on Pentecost when the Spirit came (Acts 2:1-5).
- B. Men have started different churches in numerous other cities:
1. Roman Catholic, Rome, Italy.
 2. Lutherans, Augsburg, Germany.
 3. Baptist, Holland.
 4. Seventh Day Adventist, Battle Creek, Michigan.
 5. Methodist, London, England.

III. IT WAS INAUGURATED AT THE RIGHT TIME.

- A. In the fullness of time (Gal. 4:4).
1. When the Holy Spirit was poured out (Luke 24:46-46).
 2. During the life-time of 1st century disciples (Mark 9:1).

- B. In the last days (Isa. 2:2-3; Joel 2:28).
 1. Last days started on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-21).
 2. The House of God was set up (1 Tim. 3:15).

IV. IT TEACHES THE RIGHT PLAN OF SALVATION.

- A. There is only one Gospel Plan Of Salvation (Mark 16:15-16).
 1. It is universal and applicable to all accountable people since Pentecost (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 2. All of God's saving power is in the Gospel (Rom. 1:16).
 3. It requires **Faith** in Jesus Christ (Acts 19:7), **Repentance** of sins (Acts 17:30), **Confession** of faith in Jesus as the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10), and **Baptism** (immersion) in water for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- B. Perversions of the Gospel will not save (Gal. 1:6-9).
 1. "Faith only" will not save (James 2:24).
 2. "Grace only" will not save (Titus 2:11-12).
 3. The "Sinner's Prayer" will not save (1 Peter 3:12; Prov. 28:9; 15:29).

V. IT HAS THE RIGHT HEAD AND LAWGIVER.

- A. Jesus has all authority in religious matters (Matt. 28:18-20).
 1. He is head over the church (Eph. 1:19-23).
 2. He has all pre-imminence over the church (Col. 1:18).
 3. All teaching and practices must be by His authority (Col. 3:17).
 4. Jesus is Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).
 5. The New Testament is His Law (James 4:12).
- B. Jesus is the only one with authority to save (Acts 4:11-12; Heb. 5:8-9).
 1. There is no salvation in the name of Pope John Paul, Martin Luther, John Wesley or any other man.
 2. Creeds, manuals, disciplines, articles of Faith, Koran, nor Catechism have any saving power.

VI. IT INCORPORATES THE RIGHT ACTS OF WORSHIP.

- A. It refuses to depart from the pattern of N.T. worship (John 4:24; Heb. 8:5).
 1. Preaching the Apostles' doctrine (Matt. 16:18-19; Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3).
 2. Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-29).
 3. Prayer (Acts 2:42; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1-2).
 4. Giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7).

5. Acappella singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12).

VII. IT HAS THE RIGHT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.

- A. The headquarters of the church is in heaven.
 - 1. Christ is the Head and He is in heaven (Eph. 5:23; Col. 3:1; 1 Peter 3:22).
 - 2. Christ ascended to sit on David's throne (Acts 2:33-36).
- B. A plurality of **elders** oversee each local congregation (Acts 14:23).
 - 1. Elders, Bishops, Pastors, Shepherds, Presbyters, and Overseers are synonymous terms (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Titus 1:5-8; 1 Tim. 3:1-7).
 - 2. These must be married men with faithful children who are capable of teaching.
- C. **Deacons** who serve the church under the oversight of the elders (1 Tim. 3:8-13; Phil. 1:1; compare Acts 6:1-6).
- D. **Preachers** who are also evangelists and ministers who preach the Gospel of Christ (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - 1. Women are excluded from any of the offices mentioned above (1 Cor. 11:3; 14:33-37; 1 Tim. 2:11-15; 5:14).
 - 2. Women can teach other women and children, they just can't teach over the man (Titus 2:3-5).
 - 3. Women can assist in teaching men when in private settings (Acts 18:24-26).
- E. Members are to work together for the good of the kingdom (1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 20:4).
 - 1. Our talents are to be used to the glory of God (Matt. 25:14-30).
 - 2. Our good works bring glory to God (Matt. 5:16).

VIII. IT HAS THE RIGHT MISSION.

- A. Jesus' mission was to save the lost (Luke 19:10).
 - 1. Love is the greatest motivation in making one a soul winner (John 3:16).
 - 2. Self sacrifice makes one willing to suffer for others (Matt. 20:28).
- B. The church perpetuates the mission of Christ.
 - 1. We have the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).
 - 2. The early church was mission minded (Acts 8:4).
 - 3. We have not gotten side-tracked into entertainment and recreation. [gyms, choirs, emotionalism, gimmicks, drama acts, and other worldly diversions]

- C. Heaven is still our focus and the motivation behind our service (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).
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Traditions Of Men Regarding Liberalism

Gilbert Gough

[For a more extensive study of liberalism, see the 15th Annual "Seek the Old Paths" Lectureship book, **Dangers Facing the Church: Changing Views**, and the chapter entitled *Loosing Where God Has Not Loosed (Liberalism)*, page 91.]

After the inspired apostle Peter had spoken of the true prophets of God in 2 Peter 1:21, he, in sharp contrast to the true prophets, reminds his readers of the false prophets who arose among the Israelites.

1. *"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction"* (2 Peter 2:1; cf. Micah 3:11; Isaiah 28:7; Jer. 6:13; 23:14; Deut. 13:1ff; 18:20).
2. Peter warns that in like manner as the false prophets arose among the Israelites, false teachers would appear in and among the brotherhood.
3. These false teachers would bring in their "damnable heresies" in a cunning and concealed way in order to deceive and seduce the unwary Christians.
4. They would establish their own partism and divide the precious body of Christ.
5. Consequently, for their denying the Lord, they would "bring upon themselves swift destruction" and thus would be condemned.

DISCUSSION:

I. LIBERALISM IS PROMOTED BY FALSE TEACHERS.

- A. Whether the brethren like it or not, false teachers (often-times labeled as liberals and rightly so) are "among us" and

they are trying their devilish best to destroy the church with their “damnable heresies.”

- B. Like “birds of a feather,” false teachers congregate together in such places as now defunct **Nashville Jubilee**, and spew their venomous teaching, and plot their strategies to change the Lord’s church.
 - 1. The false teachings of those involved in this evil gathering have been/are well documented for those who wished to be informed.¹
 - 2. Their lethal error would destroy and has destroyed the faith of many.
 - 3. They espouse:
 - a. Grace only saves,
 - b. Faith only saves,
 - c. Fellowship with the denominations,
 - d. Saved people in denominations,
 - e. Toleration of mechanical instruments of music used in worship,
 - f. Renunciation of the restoration principle,
 - g. Rejection of New Testament patterns for salvation, church organization and worship,
 - h. Unscriptural uses of women,
 - i. Not under law to Christ,
 - j. Use of modern perversions of the Bible,
 - k. Repudiation of the steps to salvation.
 - 4. This list of corruptions of the Scripture in no way is meant to be exhaustive, but it is exhaustive to hear of and refute all this refuse coming out of liberal circles.
- C. False teaching abounds! Who would deny it? False teachers are everywhere spreading their heresies just as Peter warned.

II. LIBERALISM INFLUENCES AND DESTROYS.

- A. Now, let us go back to 2 Peter 2:2. *“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”*
 - 1. As a result of liberal, false teachers and their evil work, Peter informs us of the two-fold consequences.
 - a. First, he announces a sad declaration that “many shall follow” the “pernicious ways” (“lascivious doings” ASV) of the false teachers.

- 1) The pernicious ways of the wicked has its appeal to men and women whose hearts are bent on satisfying their own longings and lustful desires.
 - 2) It is not enough for some to abide in the teachings of Christ, because the worldliness, carnality, and pleasures of sin are so alluring.
 - 3) It is easier to follow the way of the wicked than the path of righteousness.
 - 4) *"The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit"* (Prov. 12:5).
- b. Second, "the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." Others would see the hypocrisy of those followers of the evil teachers and the reproach that would be heaped upon the kingdom of Christ would have a devastating effect on Gospel evangelism.
- B. It is quite disturbing to see the church of our Lord being torn asunder by those of the liberal mentality.
1. With each false doctrine promoted there is the rending of the church.
 2. Souls of men, women, and young people are ripped away from the truth by the clever, crafty, and cagey deceit of men like Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Marvin Phillips, Jeff Walling, Buddy Bell and a host of others.
 3. Men like the afore mentioned have a large following and those following their "pernicious ways" would defend these wicked men rather than stand for Christ and His truth.
 4. Those who follow such men and would seek to defend these men in their error are guilty of bidding Godspeed to error (1 John 1:10,11).

III. MOTIVES OF THE LIBERAL ELEMENT.

- A. The apostle Peter then turns our attention back to the false teachers and discusses their motives in 2 Peter 2:3.
1. *"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*
 2. The chief motive of false teachers is to "make merchandise" of the brotherhood through the use of "feigned words."
 3. They are a covetous lot. Covetousness is unlawful desire for personal gain based upon greed.

4. Since false teachers are not concerned with what is lawful, being covetous does not matter to them.
 5. It reminds us of the apostle Paul's words of warning in 1 Timothy 6:5, "*Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*"
- B. Merchandizing is the name of the game for liberals.
1. Think of the merchandizing false teachers have made of the brotherhood in the form of their gimmicks.
 2. One gimmick remembered was the beaded bracelets that boys and girls were wearing to remind them of certain "truths" which was nothing more than Catholic idolatry. Thousands were sold and profits were no doubt good.
 3. Think of the merchandizing false teachers have made of the church through the writing of books. Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado and others have promoted their evil doings and seduced many away from Christ by the selling of their books that teach fatal and damnable error. It is a shame that even sound brethren have to purchase their drivel in order to expose the error for the unsuspecting, unconcerned, and naive brethren.
 4. Think of the merchandizing false teachers have made of the church through their magazines like *Image* and *Wineskins* (both defunct), and such like. Not to mention the subscription cost for articles promoting falsities, but the cost of advertising to promote evil agendas and materials is wasteful.
 5. Think of the merchandizing false teachers have made of the church in the exorbitant funds raised from churches to promote the Nashville Jubilee, the Tulsa Workshop, and other liberal havens for false teachers and their disciples. Thousands upon thousands of dollars has been raised from foolish churches and then spent in ignoble and wicked causes.

IV. WHY ARE BRETHREN ALLOWING LIBERALISM TO FLOURISH?

- A. Why are we allowing the liberal mentality to invade and pervade the church of Christ?
1. Such mentality is creeping into the church like "a snake in the grass" and the subtle serpent is showing himself, maybe not as covertly as his henchmen, but his shadow is appearing in congregations of God's people.

2. The shadow of the devil's influence is seen in many ways.
 - a. There is the shadow where many brethren are rejecting Bible authority.
 - 1) They have adopted the old Christian Church view that whatever is not specifically forbidden in the scriptures may be practiced, meaning unauthorized practices may be done without a "thus saith the Lord."
 - 2) No longer are some brethren asking, "Where or how does the Bible authorize such a practice?"
 - 3) Is this not typical liberal mentality?
 - b. There is the shadow where many brethren are setting up the welfare of mankind in this life as the supreme concern of the church.
 - 1) The social Gospel is the result, which is not the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-9), and it is the nothing but the ungodly philosophy of humanism under the guise of religion.
 - 2) The fruit of this rational is the church catering to people's lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride of life, alluring them with the building of Family Life Centers, gymnasiums, contemporary singing concerts designed to entertain, and dramatic performances.
 - 3) It appeals to man's carnal longings rather than lifting their eyes toward God.
 - 4) Is this not typical liberal mentality?
 - c. There is the shadow where many brethren will attack the faithful preacher who stands for the truth, exposes the error, lives what the Bible teaches and truly loves the brotherhood.
 - 1) They call him the "troubler of Israel" when in actuality, faithful preachers have not digressed from God's Word.
 - 2) It is those with the liberal mentality that have digressed.
 - d. There is the shadow of bad-mouthing the church of the Lord by ridiculing its "traditional" organization, worship and preaching.

- 1) The intention is to change the church which has been restored in the pattern of the New Testament to something different, i.e. into a denomination.

CONCLUSION:

For the subtle serpent's shadow to cease to appear, it is time for the light of the glorious Gospel to dispel the darkness once again. So, "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*" (2 Tim. 4:2). So, "*Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life...*" (1 Tim. 6:12). And, "*...be thou faithful unto death...*" (Rev. 2:10).

¹For a concise documentation of errors of speakers of the Nashville Jubilee read *Error from Jubilee Speakers* by O. B. Porterfield, February, 1994 and *What is Wrong with the Nashville Jubilee?* by Randy Kea, September, 1994, both from **Seek the Old Paths**.

NOTES:

TRADITIONS OF MEN: LIBERALISM/"ANTI-ISM"

AUTHORIZED		UNAUTHORIZED			
OBLIGATORY MATTERS (Must Do)	OPTIONAL MATTERS (May/May Not Do)	MATTERS EXPLICITLY FORBIDDEN	MATTERS IMPLICITLY FORBIDDEN	FORBIDDING MATTERS WHICH ARE AUTHORIZED	BINDING MATTERS WHICH ARE NOT BOUND
<p>Preach the Word Preach the Necessity of Baptism</p> <p>Worship God</p> <p>Sing</p> <p>Sing Spiritual Songs</p> <p>Sing the Truth</p> <p>Take the Lord's Supper</p> <p>Take the Lord's Supper Each Lord's Day</p> <p>Plan of Salvation</p> <p>Hearing</p> <p>Believing</p> <p>Repenting</p> <p>Confessing</p> <p>Be Baptized</p>	<p>Use Blackboard</p> <p>Use Literature</p> <p>Use Radio, TV</p> <p>Baptistry</p> <p>Songbooks</p> <p>Pitchpipes</p> <p>Tuning Forks</p> <p>One church</p> <p>Sending</p> <p>Aid to Another to Preach the Gospel</p>	<p>Adultery</p> <p>Fornication</p> <p>Murder</p> <p>Stealing</p> <p>Lasciviousness</p> <p>Drunkenness</p> <p>Idolatry</p> <p>Rom. 1:18-32</p> <p>I Cor. 6:9-11</p> <p>Gal. 5:19-21</p> <p>Eph. 4:28-31</p> <p>Rev. 21:8</p>	<p>Instrumental Music in Worship</p> <p>Missionary Societies</p> <p>Dancing</p> <p>Gambling</p> <p>Infant Baptism</p> <p>Sprinkling for Baptism</p> <p>Worshipping Mary</p> <p>Venerating Relics</p> <p>Rev. 22:18, 19</p> <p>II John 9-11</p> <p>Lev. 10:1, 2</p> <p>I Chr. 15:15</p> <p>Rom. 15:4</p>	<p>I Tim. 4:3</p> <p>Marriage</p> <p>Eating of Meats</p> <p>Baptisteries</p> <p>Simultaneous Bible Classes</p> <p>Located Preachers</p> <p>No Church</p> <p>Cooperation</p> <p>Individual</p> <p>Communion Cups</p> <p>Assisting Non-Saints</p> <p>No Support of Orphan Homes</p>	<p>Gal. 2:3-5</p> <p>Circumcision</p> <p>Order of Worship</p> <p>Binding of Anything that is Optional (tradition)</p>
UNITY	LIBERTY	LIBERALISM		"ANTI-ISM"	

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