



Attitudes That Sweeten Marriage

Donald Townsley

Is your marriage as happy as you want it to be? Many marriages today are in trouble and the mates are unhappy. With the high divorce rate in this country, and unfaithfulness to the marriage bed so prevalent, it is clear that many marriages are not what God intended them to be. God never intended that marriage be an unhappy state, but that it be one of the happiest, most fulfilling relationships man would have on this earth (Prov. 5:18-19). When a marriage is in trouble and the companions are unhappy, someone is breaking the laws of God!

God created the man and said it was not good for him to be alone, so he made an help meet for him — woman (Gen. 2:18, 21-22; 1 Cor. 11:9). God then instituted the marriage relationship (Gen. 2:24). The institution of marriage is a divine, monogamous and life-long relationship of *oneness* (Matt. 19:4-6; Rom. 7:3-4). God said by the prophet Malachi that “he hateth putting away” (Mal. 2:16). Jesus said that there is only one reason for “putting away” and marrying again, and that reason is fornication (Matt. 19:9). Only the innocent party has the right to put away his companion and marry again.

God never intended that marriage be an unhappy state, but that it be one of the happiest, most fulfilling relationships man would have on this earth (Prov. 5:18-19).

The Husband/Wife Relationship

God ordained that the man should rule over his wife (Gen. 3:16), not unjustly as if she were a slave, but he is to rule her with love (Eph. 5:25, 28-29). This is to be a self-giving concern for her person — a love that seeks her happiness and well-being at the sacrifice of his own interest and welfare (1 Cor. 13:5). The wife is to reverence and submit to her husband (Eph. 5:24, 33; 1 Pet. 3:1), and to love him (Tit. 2:4).

In the marriage relationship the husband and wife become exclusively the possession of each other (1 Cor. 7:2-5). Marriage fulfills one of the greatest needs of mankind — to love and be loved. This relationship

see “Marriage” on p. 755

Vol. XLII No. 24
December 17, 1998

Editorial

Vol. XLII December 17, 1998 No. 24

Editor: Mike Willis

Associate Editor: Connie W. Adams

Staff Writers

J. Wiley Adams	Irvin Himmel
Donald P. Ames	Olen Holderby
O.C. Birdwell, Jr.	Frank Jamerson
Dick Blackford	Daniel H. King
Edward Bragwell	Aude McKee
Paul J. Casebolt	Harry Osborne
Bill Cavender	H.E. Phillips
Bob Dickey	Donnie V. Rader
Johnie Edwards	Tom Roberts
Harold Fite	Weldon E. Warnock
Larry Hafley	Lewis Willis
Ron Halbrook	Bobby Witherington
Clinton D. Hamilton	Steve Wolfgang

Guardian of Truth Foundation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Connie W. Adams	Fred Pollock
Alan Birdwell	Weldon E. Warnock
O.C. Birdwell, Jr.	Mike Willis
Dickey Cooper	Steve Wolfgang
Ron Halbrook	

— Subscription Rates —

\$19.00 Per Year

Single Copies — \$2.00 each

Foreign Subscriptions — \$22.00

— Bulk Rates —

\$1.25 per subscription per month

Manuscripts should be sent to Mike Willis, 6567 Kings Ct., Danville, Indiana 46122-9075. He is available at 1-317-745-4708. E-mail: mikewillis1@compu-serve.com

All business matters should be addressed to O.C. Birdwell, Jr. who serves as Executive Vice-President for the Guardian of Truth Foundation. He is available by phone at 1-800-633-3216 or by mail at P.O. Box 858, Athens, AL 35611.

Subscriptions, renewals and other correspondence should be sent to Truth Magazine, P.O. Box 9670, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

Book orders should be sent to Truth Bookstore, P.O. Box 9670, Bowling Green, KY 42101. Phone: 1-800-428-0121.

Postmaster: Send change of address to P.O. Box 9670, Bowling Green, KY 42101.

Separation of Church and State

Mike Willis

The issue of separation of church and state is a fundamental principle of our Constitution. The First Amendment forbade Congress to make any laws establishing or prohibiting the free exercise of religion. Watching how this amendment to the Constitution is applied is sometimes comical.

Campaigning in the Churches

A certain group of American politicians is allowed to campaign in churches; another group is not allowed. Every election the Democrats campaign heavily in Black churches without a word being said by media watchdogs about the separation of church and state. President Clinton and Jesse Jackson are common speakers in Black churches and their message is not "faith in Christ." The message is "get out and vote" for our party. However, when Evangelicals pass out literature as a voter's guide or a conservative Republican speaks in Evangelical churches, the news media howl in protest of their actions being a violation of the separation of church and state.

Left-wing religious groups can organize and propagandize this country without protest. Right-wing religious groups who organize and propagandize are watched like a fox in the hen house. TV portrays them as religious extremists trying to get control of the Republican party. Were the stakes for our children not so serious, watching this scenario play itself out would be humorous.

Election Day

On election day, separation of church and state is relatively meaningless. A few years ago, the Danville congregation received a call from those in charge of finding a place to hold elections to see if the church would be willing to let them use our building for election purposes. We explained that we did not use our building for such things so they went elsewhere.

In the last election, my place to vote was the Christian Church. As I drove to the polling place, the yard was littered with campaign signs until we got within a certain number of feet of the polling place, at which point

See "Church and State" p. 756

Preachers With “Outside” Support

J. Wiley Adams

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14).

I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service (2 Cor. 11:8).

It is certainly right for those who preach the gospel to derive their living from those who benefit from their efforts. It is not “charity” but “wages.” There is most certainly a difference in the two.

At Corinth Paul received his living from two sources. Although he preached to benefit the Corinthian brethren, he declined to accept any support from them. Therefore, he “made tents” and was assisted in his further needs by “other churches.” It would not have been wrong for him to have received his support from them, but Paul did not do so for a very good reason. He did not want his teaching efforts to be hindered by anyone raising the question as to his motive. He sought carefully to avoid anything to cause these rich brethren to think he was out to feather his own nest. Here and there you do find those who will say some very hurting things in this regard.

When I first began preaching in 1948, I had a good job with Hercules Powder Company in Hopewell, Virginia. During this time I preached on a Sunday appointment basis all over eastern and southeastern Virginia at a time when no one spoke of liberal and conservative churches. I made good money and was able, because of this, to decline any support or even gas money. I did not need it. I first accepted car expenses when I was a Bible student at what is now called Florida College. From 1951-55 as a student with very limited income I needed my expenses so I accepted them. I also accepted home made syrup, Rhode Island Red chickens, a bundle of collard greens now and then, and a batch of frozen squirrels. These were “fringe” benefits.

Since 1955 I have done full-time local work with a few gospel meetings when brethren wished to use me in this way. From that day forward I have taken my living from the churches.

Some local churches are able to fully supply the needs of the local
continued next page

Attitudes That Sweeten Marriage
Donald Townsley front page

Separation of Church and State
Mike Willis..... 2

Preachers With “Outside” Support
J. Wiley Adams 3

About That AIDS Quilt
Larry Ray Hafley..... 4

The Ten Plagues
Olen Holderby..... 5

Hailey’s View on Divorce and Remarriage
Ben F. Vick, Jr. 9

“Creed-Bound” Minds
Robert F. Turner 11

Raising Moral Children in an Immoral World
Wayne S. Walker 12

Shooting the Wounded or Discharging the Deserters
Steve Klein..... 14

Converted to Christ!
Jimmy Short 15

Should God Have Drowned Noah?
Irvin Himmel..... 17

The Judgment
Johnie Edwards 18

Index 21

evangelist. I have worked under such arrangements. Other churches are not able to supply all the needed support to their preacher and other churches make up the difference. I have also worked, and am now working, in that kind of arrangement. This can be at times an up and down proposition as contributing churches have to regulate the amount they can send out by their local situation. In my own case I have been blessed greatly from generous churches and sometimes individuals. I am most thankful for this.

However, there is a deficiency in some churches in the matter of preacher support. Not with all but some. The receiving preacher is sometimes not certain as to when to expect his checks each month. This is poor business. No one can plan a budget or meet payment dates when the promised support may not arrive at the expected time. Yet, we want the preachers to pay their debts, which indeed they should. Sometimes the treasurer is out of town and makes no arrangements while he is gone. It can be an honest oversight but that does not change the fact that a gospel preacher is trying to keep his mind on his work while fighting the check book. Some think any day in the month is sufficient but the creditors do not think so. Hmmm!

Some years ago I recall having to call one treasurer nearly every month because, as he laughingly would say, "Well, Mama did it again and forgot to make out the checks." Somehow I failed to appreciate the humor intended. (I could camp down here a while about this kind

of thing and wax eloquent but I will resist the urge.)

How many times have I sweated out the mail man over the years and sometimes had to make other arrangements to make ends meet until the support arrived. In order to keep on in their preaching, brethren will make such adjustments, however hard it may be, for the gospel's sake.

To balance the picture I am grateful for the many diligent men who write the checks who are right on time with the arrangement. You can set your clock by this kind of brother. May their tribe increase.

While I am out on this limb let me say that preachers ought to send adequate reports, say thank you for the support received, and keep the sending churches informed as to any progress made where the receiving preacher is working. This is the right thing to do and I was always taught that saying "thank you" should be second nature. Brethren, let us be profited from a study of God's Word on this subject.

110 Greenwood Dr., Warner Robins, Georgia 31093



About That AIDS Quilt

Larry Ray Hafley

Perhaps you have heard about the "AIDS Quilt." Each segment of the quilt has the name of an AIDS victim on it. It is very, very large. It is often unfurled to highlight the need for research to find a cure for the dread malady and also to memorialize those who have died from the deadly disease. (Regardless of the cause, death is painful for friends and loved ones. We should be prayerful and sympathetic toward those who mourn their loss.)

I wonder if those who sponsor the AIDS quilt could find time to create an "Abortion Quilt."

Those who memorialize AIDS victims often find time to light candles to protest the execution of cold blooded killers. They refer to capital punishment as "state sponsored murder." Surely, then, they could remember the millions of babies whose lives have been snuffed out by the "state sanctioned" killing of infants.

Maybe not, though, for such a baby blanket would cover the world in shame.

4626 Osage, Baytown, Texas 77521

Olen Holderby

The Ten Plagues

The Ten Greatest Battles Ever Fought

An Introduction

We are, obviously, discussing the ten plagues that God brought upon Egypt. These are recorded in Exodus 7-12. When one studies the Bible record, along with some history of biblical Egypt, the plagues will be seen to contain more than one purpose — to convince Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt. At least two more purposes must be added to this one: (1) God would make sure the Egyptians knew who he was, and (2) God would, also, convince the Hebrews of his reality and position. In view of this, we offer a longer introduction than we otherwise might. Harry Rimmer's book, *Dead Men Tell Tales*, furnishes some excellent material on the background to the plagues.

Hatshephut was the daughter of Pharaoh who drew Moses out of the waters of the Nile. The king of Egypt, Tuthmosis I, died and Tuthmosis II came to the throne. He was a weak monarch. Hatshephut married him, and he dies soon thereafter; but, she continues to reign as queen. Hatshephut had been pushing Moses toward power and prominence. To make her position more secure, she marries her young half-brother, the rightful heir, Tuthmosis III. When he was 21 he forced Hatshephut to abdicate, and she soon disappears. This king, Tuthmosis III, ruled about 53 years altogether (1501-1447 B.C.); and, this would make him the Pharaoh of the oppression.

The elevation of Moses by Hatshephut would anger Tuthmosis III, and he, no doubt, would consider Moses a competitor. This could account for the hasty departure of Moses from Egypt when he killed the Egyptian.

The first basic idea which I wish to lay before you is this: All Old Testament events point toward or contribute to the bringing of Christ into the world. If this is so, the ten plagues must fit into God's plan for that great future event. But, how?

Let us first consider the case of Abraham; he first enters the biblical picture in the chronology of Genesis, chapter 11. In chapter 12, God makes four promises to Abraham, repeating the land promise in Genesis 15:5-21. In verses

13 and 14 of this chapter God said, "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in the land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterwards they shall come out with great possessions." This appears to be the first reference in the Bible to the Egyptian bondage. The reader may wish to compare these two verses with Exodus 3:18-22.

Now, let us return to Egypt for a few more thoughts. The "Land of the Nile" thought their Pharaoh had "inherent wisdom" and was descended from the gods. They appear to have been more religious than any other race of men, and were one of the most polytheistic nations ever known. It has been suggested that they had some 2200 gods and goddesses. What was the first of the commandments given at Sinai? "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Harry Rimmer refers to a time when they almost became monotheistic, in their worship of the sun (Amon-Re was the usual designation). Each of these gods had a particular *theophany*, or way to appear to the Egyptians. Usually this was in a form of some animal or creature depicted in art and statue as part man and part animal. This will later prove to be very problematic for both Egyptians and Israelites.

In contrast with the Egyptian gods, the Israelites accepted the idea of one true God. We cannot know exactly how well informed they may have been, since we know of no general law to them at this point. God directly spoke with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In Genesis 46:1-4, God speaks with Jacob about going down into Egypt. Much time passes and the next person that God singles out with whom to speak appears to be Moses. So Jacob and his descendants, 70 of them in all, go down into Egypt (Gen. 46:27). Here, in Egypt, the Hebrews could observe the worship of the Egyptians with their many gods, sacrifices, and formalities. This, undoubtedly, contributes to some of their disobedience to Jehovah God at a later date.

With this information before us, we are ready to approach the plagues. In Exodus 3, is recorded God's

conversation with Moses. He sends him back into Egypt, with his brother, Aaron, as his spokesman. Concerning the plagues God said, “And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand over Egypt” (Exod. 7:5). Here we see the second purpose in God’s plan behind the plagues. Each of the ten plagues will be seen to be a direct blow at some Egyptian god or goddess; and, sometimes more than one is involved. The stage is set for a real conflict — ten great battles. The “war of the gods” is about to begin.

In the introductory scene, we see 80 year old Moses standing before the younger king to request permission for a three-day’s journey to sacrifice to God (Exod. 3:18). The reasoning behind this three-days journey may be seen by reading Exodus 8:26; sacrificing animals that were sacred to the Egyptians could only cause difficulties for the Israelites. In Exodus 5:1-3, we have the first appearance of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh; they were pointedly refused permission to make the three-day’s journey.

The Case of the Serpents Before Pharaoh

God said to Moses, “When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent” (Exod. 7:9). Now, Moses was educated in the learning of the Egyptians and Pharaoh knew this. Perhaps Pharaoh wanted to see just how Moses would operate after his being gone for 40 years. The Egyptian magicians did in “like manner with their enchantments,” throwing down serpents, but “Aaron’s rod swallowed up their rods.” This swallowing up proves the Egyptian gods to be powerless in the face of Israel’s one God and gives some hint as to what is ahead. After all the plagues have passed and the Israelites are in the wilderness, Moses said, “. . . upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments” (Num. 33:4). So, let us turn our attention to those ten great battles.

The First Plague — Turning the Water to Blood (Exod. 7:19-25)

This would be a blow at many Egyptian gods; the sacred Nile was the “blood-stream” of Egypt. Osiris (judge of the dead), was considered the source of the resurrection and everlasting life. He was the greatest of all the gods of the underworld. Osiris, along with the Nile god, Hapi, and the god of the annual inundation, Satet, were disgraced. Jehovah was greater than the Nile. There were some 30 other gods involved with the Nile River in some way. All fell before the Hebrew God.

Verse 22 says, “The magicians did so with their enchantments.” One is made to wonder why these magicians didn’t reverse the act of Moses. This would surely prove their power. The Egyptians are forced to dig for water to drink, and the condition stayed thus for seven days. They must have been wondering, “Where are our gods?”

We are told that this plague was called forth “in the sight of Pharaoh.” I challenge the reader with this question: Why was Pharaoh coming down to the river? If it was not to pay homage to that sacred stream, then for what did he come? He must have been made to wonder the whereabouts of his gods. The first “battle” is over and the victory is clearly Jehovah’s.

The Second Plague — The Frogs (Exod. 8:1-14)

This second battle is to be after Pharaoh is plainly warned of the consequences of his refusal. The magicians apparently duplicated this feat also. Heqt was the frog goddess; and the frog was her theophany. The frog, among other things, was the symbol of fertility, insuring a fertile year for farm and family. Can one imagine this slimy creature crawling all over everything? What the Egyptians had revered, was now becoming disgusting. They could not live normal lives this way, and where is their frog goddess? She could give them no relief. The second battle is Jehovah’s.



Verse 8 is quite an admission for Pharaoh, “Intreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people.” His gods could not do the job. This compels him to make a promise to let the Israelites go, if he is given relief. He gets that relief, but changes his mind when respite comes. Another Egyptian deity hits the dirt. I can hardly imagine any Egyptian ever again worshiping Heqt.

The Third Plague — The Lice (Exod. 8:16-19)

I know of no particular god or goddess involved here; but it is obvious that it would involve any that cared for life and comfort. This plague seems, at least to this writer, to be a kind of follow-through on the previous two plagues. It certainly is a transitional plague; for the first time the Egyptian magicians fail and admit “this is the finger of God.”

The Egyptians were noted for their cleanliness; their priests were required to be absolutely clean when they approached their sacred altars. The lice would virtually make their worship impossible. How could they be considered clean with lice all over their bodies and clothing?

To add to this disgusting scene, the Egyptians could look across and see the Jews in comfort; while they, themselves, were busy fighting the lice. No doubt, they wondered “Where are our gods?” Alas, they have just been defeated by Jehovah God. In spite of this loss, Pharaoh refuses to permit the Jews to leave.

The Fourth Plague — The Flies (Exod. 8:20-32)

From this point on the Egyptian magicians retire from trying to duplicate Moses’ feats; though they do hang around for a while. There are several creatures included in

this word “flies”: the Gadfly, cockroach, and the Egyptian beetle all appear to be included, though there were others. The Ichneumon fly is the one most probably under consideration; at least, swarms of these flies have been known to invade the land of Egypt. Uatchit was their fly-god; but he could bring no relief from the present swarms. Thus, their fly-god is disgraced. To those observing, just about any god would be preferred over their fly-god, even the God of the Hebrews.



Pharaoh does not call for the magicians, but calls for Moses and Aaron. He tells them to go “sacrifice to your God in the land.” This is Pharaoh’s first offer at a compromise. We have already noticed (vv. 26-27) why this would be unacceptable; Moses demands permission to go as originally requested. Pharaoh bends a bit and offers another compromise, “ye shall not go very far away.” This seems to be the first time that Pharaoh offers a compromise with the original request.

Moses warns Pharaoh against being deceitful and the flies are removed. Pharaoh changes his mind again after relief came. But, another victory is chalked up for Jehovah. Are the Egyptians getting these great lessons? Better still, are the Hebrews getting them?

The Fifth Plague — The Animal Murrain (Exod. 9:1-7)

This battle will pit some of the most powerful of Egyptian gods and goddesses against the Hebrew God. Many Egyptian gods will here meet their Waterloo; for this blow is at both the Egyptian worship and livelihood: cattle, horses, asses, camels, sheep, and oxen.

Hathor (cow-goddess) was worshiped throughout Egypt and depicted, for the most part, with a human body, but the head of a cow, since the cow was her theophany. She was supposed to be the “mother principle” of deity and to give nourishment to the soul of the dead. But, where is she now? If the mighty Hathor couldn’t protect her followers, what god could?

When Hathor fell so also did the god Apis (sacred bull symbol). He had temples scattered throughout Egypt and was thought to be of great power. But what happens to his followers now? He cannot protect them against Jehovah. Without boring the reader with too much detail, I would like to identify a couple more of the Egyptian deities involved in this battle. Mut, wife of Amon-Ra (king of gods), was associated with the life-giving sun. Mut, goddess of the sky and wife of Geb, produced the egg out of which the sun was hatched.

This is quite an array of Egyptian deities that fell in this battle, receiving the fatal blow with the coming of the mur-

rain. Pharaoh sends to check on the cattle of the Hebrews and not a one had been lost. He still will not permit the people to go. To what god will he turn now? Another battle fought and another battle won by the one true God.

The Sixth Plague — The Boils (Exod. 9:8-12)

This plague can be best understood by noticing the Egyptian belief at the time. They had altars upon which they burned sacrifices and the ashes from these altars were thrown into the air to avert evil. One can easily see here the motive of God in ordering this plague. Instead of averting evil, the ashes thrown into the air brought boils with blains upon both man and beast.

Imhotep was the Egyptian god of medicine and prayers were offered to him for cures and protection from physical illnesses. But he failed the Egyptians here. Little comfort could be found by noticing that the Jews were resting with unblemished skins and in comfort.

We may notice that the magicians were still hanging around at this point, perhaps watching for an opportunity of their own; however, the boils and blains proved too much for them — “They could not stand before Moses.”

This battle was little more than a skirmish, but it struck a fatal blow at their god of medicine; he could not help them one bit. Another victory for the God of heaven! Yet, for all this, Pharaoh would not let the people go.

The Seventh Plague — Hail Mingled With Fire (Exod. 9:13-35)

Now, more of their livelihood is to be taken away, destroyed by hail and burned with fire. Reshpu and Qetesh were gods of storm and battle, controlling all the natural elements except light. Where are these gods now? Some of Pharaoh’s servants believed the warning and brought their cattle in from the fields, while others did not. The wheat and rye were not smitten, because they had not yet grown up.

There was no hail in Goshen, where the Hebrews dwelt. Can’t the Egyptians see that the Hebrew God is more powerful than all the Egyptian gods?

Pharaoh, for the first time admits, “I have sinned” and he promises to let the people go if he has relief. Alas, he changed his mind again and refused to permit them to leave Egypt. God’s plan is proceeding, more Egyptian deities have fallen. Battle number seven is over and won by Jehovah.

The Eighth Plague — The Locusts (Exod. 10:1-20)

With this plague God specifies another purpose for these battles. Speaking to Moses, God refers to his signs which he had wrought in Egypt and says, “. . . that ye may know

how that I am the Lord.” The Hebrews needed much the same lesson as did the Egyptians.



Pharaoh’s servants, for the first time, begin to plead with him to let the Jews go, pointing out that Egypt was virtually destroyed. Pharaoh offers another compromise — the Israelite men could go and worship. Moses says, “No” and the locusts come. Now Pharaoh gets in a hurry and “in haste” sends for Moses and Aaron. And for the second time he admits to sinning, “I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you.” His gods could not remove the locusts, so he ask Moses and Aaron, “intreat the Lord your God.”

The Lord removes the locusts, not leaving even one in all the land of Egypt. Still the Jews are not permitted to leave as requested. But, another mighty battle has been won and God’s plans are still proceeding.

The Ninth Plague — The Darkness (Exod. 10:21-29)

Egypt did not have much rain; the sun, moon and stars were seldom obscured. Now Moses is going to call for darkness over this sunny land, darkness so thick that it could be felt. But there would be no darkness in Goshen. They were to have six nights in one. We should remember that light figured in their system of worship.

Recall Osiris and Isis, who controlled the movements of the sun, moon, and stars? They could not remove the darkness so they loose another battle. The most essential thing in all the physical realm is light, and the Egyptians seem to have realized this, ascribing to their gods the job of keeping it thus. Three days of darkness and the Egyptians didn’t venture out.

Noticing some other gods involved here will help us see the importance of this battle. Thoth was the arranger of the celestial system, to offend him was to invite eternal death. Now for Jehovah to engage Thoth in battle must have caused even the Hebrews to tremble. Sekhmet was the goddess of artificial light, but she could do nothing. Horus, a greatly revered god, was said to be at his best at noon-day when the sun was the hottest. Three noons had passed; where was Horus?

One more of their deities should be mentioned because he is going to play a big part in the next and tenth plague. Ra, the king of the gods, was at times said to appear in the form of the first-born of a cow, if that first-born was a bull. There were other gods involved here but these will suffice to show how God is dealing with this polytheistic nation of idol worshipers.

Nine great battles have been fought and the stage is set for number ten and last battle of this “War of the gods.”

The Tenth Plague — The Death of the First-Born (Exod. 11:1-12:12)

As the previous plague had come to an end, we hear Pharaoh tell Moses that if he saw his face again that he should die. Moses accepts this verdict and promises, “I will see thy face again no more.”

God told Moses, “Yet will I bring one plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he will surely thrust you out hence altogether.”

Before looking at this plague, let us get a few facts that are obviously introductory to this plague. In Exodus 11:3, the attitude of the Egyptians toward the Hebrews has changed. The Egyptians would put on their best jewels for worship. Now, since the Hebrews were leaving to worship their God, the Egyptians would be loaning them their best, urging them to take it and use it. Thus, they are going to “spoil the Egyptians.”

In Exodus 12:1ff, the Passover is instituted. God said to Moses, You shall eat it, “with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and he shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord’s Passover . . . against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord” (vv. 11, 12).

When Moses threatened the life of the first-born in all the land of Egypt, he defied all Egyptian gods at once; all of them were interested in life and death. The first-born of the Egyptians were dedicated to their gods. What a challenge this was!

The Passover has been observed as God directed, and death of the first-born of all Egyptian families, as well as that of their cattle, has come. Pharaoh rose up in the night and hearing all the mourning, he sends a message to Moses and Aaron and commands them to leave as requested (vv. 31-32). “And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men”(v. 33). We see here the spoiling of the Egyptians and the enrichment of the Israelites, just as God had said would happen. Another mighty battle has been fought and the victory is obvious.

In Exodus 12:37, we see “six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside the children” leaving Rameses. The Egyptian gods were powerless and the Egyptian religion was defeated. Jehovah proved his supremacy and Israel was free. The Egyptians and Hebrews alike were to get these powerful lessons. But, do they? For how long? Is it any different with us today?

Whatever we might think of the Egyptians in their relying upon their false gods, these gods were very real to

Hailey's View on Divorce and Remarriage

Homer Hailey, a brother in Christ, full of years and an old man, has done some good writing during his years of service. All would profit from his books on the Minor Prophets, Isaiah, and Revelation. In fact, I have told others in the past that almost anything Homer Hailey has written is worth having in one's library. I say "almost" regretfully, because of his stand against the orphan homes and, within recent years, his book, *The Divorced and Remarried Who Would Come to God*.

In the preface of the afore named book, the second edition, he wrote, "I have no intention of entering into or carrying on a discussion of the subject." But this is like a kid who throws the first punch and then says that he does not want to fight. He entered the fray at least seven years ago when his first edition appeared. He has fired two rounds but, like the sniper, flees from the scene.

Hailey wrote:

It is neither said nor intimated anywhere in the New Testament that aliens who have been married, divorced and remarried, and now want to obey the gospel, serve God and attain heaven through faith, must separate, break up, or live in separate rooms while under the same roof. This was never even intimated by Jesus. At no time did He deal with the subject of an alien's marriage, divorce and remarriage.

He wrote, "Therefore all mankind are under Christ's jurisdiction, but only those who submit to the terms of the gospel are under His law of the new covenant" (51-52).

them. Now, what better evidence could one desire to show the folly of idol worship and the existence of the one true God to whom all men are accountable?

1515 Walnut, Alameda, California 94501

The word "jurisdiction" means "2: the authority of a sovereign power to govern or legislate 3: the limits or territory within which authority may be exercised: CONTROL" (*Webster's Seventh Collegiate Dictionary* 461).

If Christ's jurisdiction includes all the world (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16), then, all men must submit to his will. Brother Hailey admits our Lord's jurisdiction extends beyond the church, having cited several verses as proof (Ps. 2:8; Rev. 12:5; 19:15). Along this same line, David said of Christ's reign, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies" (Ps. 110:2). In the kingdoms of this world a monarch who rules in the midst of his enemies would mean that his enemies were obligated to submit. If they did not submit, they might suffer terrible consequences. Jesus rules now and is far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion (Eph. 1:20-21). Yet, alien sinners are not obligated to all of Christ's law, according to Hailey. The Bible teaches otherwise.

If all men are obligated to the law of Christ, which includes Matthew 19:3-9, then, all men are obligated to Matthew 19:3-9. Paul argued concerning the obligations that a man would have to all the law of Moses if he would be obligated to part of it by saying, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. 5:3). Therefore, anyone who is obligated to part of the New Covenant, which includes the plan of salvation, is a debtor to all of it, which includes Christ's teaching on divorce and remarriage (Matt. 19:3-10).

We are told that the "universal moral law" was made known to a degree at the time of Adam's sin, was revealed more fully in the Mosaic law, and then was revealed in its fullness in the New Covenant under Christ (33). But later Hailey tells us that "only those who submit to the terms of the gospel are under Christ's law of the new covenant" (52-53). Following his reasoning, if the universal moral law is fully revealed in the New Covenant and alien sinners are not amenable to his New Covenant, then, alien sinners are not even amenable to the universal moral law, which is fully revealed in the New Covenant.

If one is not obligated to a part of the law of Christ, then, upon what basis would he be obligated to any of it? If alien sinners are not obligated to Christ's law on marriage, then, they are not obligated to his teaching concerning the Great Commission, which is part of the New Covenant (Matt. 28:18-20). But all men are obligated to his teaching regarding the Great Commission, which is a part of the New Covenant; therefore all men are obligated to Christ's law on marriage.

Hailey denies that one can "live in adultery." But does he not know? Has he not heard of Paul's statements in Colossians 3:5-7? The inspired writer commanded, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: . . . In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them." Lived in what? The aforementioned sins, one of which was fornication. They had lived in it. Fornication is a broad term that includes adultery. So, if one can live in fornication, as Paul states that he can, then one can live in adultery.

F. Lagard Smith cannot make up his mind as to Hailey's view regarding divorce and remarriage. Smith wrote:

But Homer did make one big mistake. He wrote one book too many. Or at least the wrong book. Or at least a book in which he might have been wrong. Or partially wrong. Or maybe not wrong at all, but definitely on the other side of the fence from some other folks (Is Smith with Hailey or "other folks"?). And for this one mistake, Homer was immediately castigated as a false prophet!" (*Who Is My Brother?* 207).

Because of Hailey's influence through his life and books, many will be persuaded to believe and follow his pernicious doctrine. Ezekiel wrote, "But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and commiteth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath

trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die" (Ezek. 18:24). Hailey's position is wrong, and Smith is wrong for sympathizing with the false teacher.

From The Informer, Shelbyville Road Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Indiana

(Editor's Note: *It is ironic that an institutional brother, Ben Vick, can see what some among us cannot or will not see. Brother Vick rebukes his brother F. Lagard Smith for not openly disassociating himself from brother Hailey's "pernicious doctrine." Perhaps we need to sic brother Vick on some of our own brethren. Those who say they "don't believe" brother Hailey's "views" refuse to call him a "false teacher" [something which brother Vick does not hesitate to do]. Unlike some, brother Vick does not cough, clear his throat, and look around to see if the coast is clear before he says what he believes.*

Wonder if the editors of Christianity Magazine will chastize brother Vick for what brother Ed Harrell might call an "unheroic" assault of brother Hailey? Or, will they publish brother Vick's article and add their "Amen"? It will be easier to sit back and criticize us for publishing the article than it will be to challenge brother Hailey's "pernicious doctrine."

Strange it is that all who have appreciated brother Hailey's work in the "present truth" are the "bad guys" for challenging his wandering into the present error, while the "good guys" allegedly are those who defend him and refuse to openly rebuke him and his "pernicious doctrine."

May our loyalty to friends in the flesh not keep us from standing for the truth.)

At The Feet of the Master Teacher

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

This 213 page book examines Jesus as a teacher in comparison with his contemporaries. King's presentation of the teaching styles of Jesus' contemporaries demonstrates his mastery of that period of history and enlightens us in understanding how Jesus' methods of teaching were distinctive.

Price — \$14.95

Robert F. Turner

“Creed-bound” Minds

By some strange travesty those who cry loudest for liberty are often the ones who mean liberty for their opinions only; and “non-sectarian” preachers have a way of becoming the most “creed-bound” of all. The absence of an official written “discipline” is no guarantee of an “open pulpit.”

What is a “creed”? The word comes from the Latin “credo” which means, “I believe.” Many creeds of today retain the form of the so-called *Apostles’ Creed*, each article beginning with “I believe ____.” They are concise statements of belief, or doctrine, which identify the “position” of the maker.

Perhaps the first creeds were formulated in an effort to combat what was believed to be error — to state with clarity some matter that was being questioned — or simply an unashamed affirmation of principles upon which certain ones stood. Today our brethren write little creeds in tract form, to show what “we believe”; or as clauses in deeds to church property, to keep a church building in the hands of men who gave the same “I believe” as the original owners. (This seldom works, because of the failure to apply yesterday’s principles to tomorrow’s problems.)

Are such “creeds” wrong? Not necessarily! After all, “we do believe” certain things, whether we write them or not. But should we claim to state *that which must be believed*, anything less than God’s word is too little, anything more than God’s word is too much, and anything different from God’s word is condemned by this fact. A Christian’s “creed” may be stated as his confession that Jesus Christ is Lord — which recognizes the Son of God as having “all authority,” and accepts everything taught in his covenant. We believe, accept, and practice — recognizing as a basis of fellowship with Christ and Christians — only those things which may be proven to be “by his authority.”

The error of “man-written creeds” (as we call them) is (1) man’s presumption to shorten, lengthen, alter, or better arrange God’s revelation of truth; and (2) the setting up

and acceptance of some man’s “I believe” as a standard of right and wrong.

“Creed-bound” minds are minds tied to one’s own or some other’s “I believe” — no longer free to approach God’s word objectively, to be changed by this unchanging divine standard.

Creeds and sectarianism have moved hand in hand through history. Certain “beliefs” are accepted as “orthodox,” and become the standards for determining “fellowship.” Tradition, majority rule, big churches, papers, preachers, and such like take the place of God’s word and all who object must be marked and ostracized. These seem to think Romans 16:17 reads, “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine of our party and traditions.” This is sectarianism, whether in or out of the church, and it will send souls to hell.

But someone asks, “Should we not ‘believe’ something; and should we not have firm convictions, wanting others to accept what we believe to be the truth?” We should indeed! And, we may state, even write, what we believe about a matter without being a creed maker, or “creed-bound.” The difference lies in one’s attitude toward his beliefs. Have they become his standard, or is he still willing to “prove” them by God’s word?

Do we become angry if someone questions our “beliefs”? Are we unwilling to discuss them in the light of God’s truth? Do we refuse to consider any conclusion other than our own? Are we fair with ourselves in answering the questions of this paragraph? There is One who knows my heart and yours!

Robert F. Turner, 3:3, April 1966

Subscribe for a friend.

Raising Moral Children in an Immoral World

Through the years, most of us who preach have undoubtedly presented many lessons, which a lot of brethren have surely heard, on the threat of secular humanism or at least on worldliness and immorality in general. We certainly need to understand how these godless influences have been eating away at the very foundations of our society, especially as they seek to leave their mark on our children through their control of the educational system. One would assume that the purpose of such lessons is not to scare people, per se, but to make them aware of the dangers that we face, warn them of problems ahead, and encourage them to fight the good fight of the faith.

However, some people may react to hearing this kind of information with an attitude of discouragement and despair, throwing up their hands and saying, "Well, if the world is as evil as you say it is, then there is nothing that we can do about it and, therefore, there is no hope for us." It is almost as if they have fatalistically resigned themselves to a failure in trying to bring up their children with faith in God and a desire to please God. And that which people believe is impossible to do they will probably make little or no effort to accomplish.

Yet, as evil as our world is today, and there is no argument from this corner that it is pretty bad, the first century was surely no better than our time and perhaps may even have been somewhat worse in many respects. But despite the dregs of Roman and Greek culture prevalent in that day, a woman, with the assistance of her mother, but apparently without the help of her husband, was able to raise a son whose praise was spoken of among all the brethren of his time. That young man was Timothy, and he grew up in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation to be a faithful Christian and proclaimer of God's word.

Paul wrote to him, "I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, that without ceasing, I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also" (2 Tim. 1:3-5). This wonderful

example shows us that raising moral children in an immoral world is possible. However, that does not mean that it will be easy. It is going to take some effort.

It Is Going To Take Teaching

God understood this fact and so gave commandments to the children of Israel regarding his words to them. "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" (Deut. 6:7). Have you ever wondered why so few Jews are ever converted? While Judaism today is not the same as Old Testament Judaism, most faithful Jews still follow some of the Old Testament principles, and one that they do follow is to teach, teach, teach their children what it means to be Jews in such a way that they lose a very small percentage, especially compared to the number of children growing up in homes of Christians who never obey the gospel or soon fall away. There are undoubtedly many reasons why we are seeing such a "drop-out rate," but in a lot of cases (not all), it is most likely because the children were not taught sufficiently. The aim of parents should be to teach a child in such a way that he truly remembers his Creator in the days of his youth (Eccl. 12:1). Of course, this will not be accomplished solely by bringing children to two hours of Bible class and two hours of worship a week, and then attending two or three gospel meetings and perhaps a vacation Bible school each year. That is good, but in addition to it there needs to be daily, constant teaching in the home about God, Christ, the Bible, and other important spiritual matters.

To illustrate the importance of this, remember Timothy. The faith of Lois and Eunice dwelt in him. How? These things did not come by genetic inheritance or mere osmosis, but by teaching he "learned them" so that Paul said, "From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures" (2 Tim. 3:14-15). Parents cannot even hope to raise moral children in an immoral world without diligently teaching them God's will.

It Is Going To Take Example

To illustrate this principle, consider Abraham. God knew that Abraham would command his children and his

household after him to keep the ways of the Lord (Gen. 18:10). How did Abraham do this? Well, he certainly must have taught them. But how did God know that Abraham would continue to do this in the future? You see, Abraham had already established a pattern of reverence for, complete trust in, and obedience to God. When God told him to leave for a new homeland, he did (Gen. 12: 1-8). When God told him in his old age that he would have a child, he believed God (Gen. 15:1-6). And all of this occurred even before Abraham had any children. Then, when he did have children, he continued in the same way.

God told him to take his only son Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice, and Abraham did (Gen. 22:1-12). What kind of an impression must this have made on Isaac when he saw that his father obeyed God implicitly regardless of any personal feelings that he may have had in the matter? Not much is said of Isaac in the Scripture, but what is said seems to indicate that he followed his father's example of faithfulness. And it is for this reason that Abraham is used throughout the New Testament as an example for us (cf. Rom. 4:16-24; Heb. 11:8-19; Jas. 2:21-23). Abraham was a worthy example for his own family and so is a good example for us. It is not enough just to tell our children what to do. They will be the very first to detect any hypocrisy between what we say and what we do. Raising moral children in an immoral world also requires that we show them the difference between right and wrong by our example.

It Is Going To Take Discipline

The word "discipline" in our English language literally refers to that which is necessary to make one a disciple. If a parent is faithfully serving Christ, then his goal should be to make disciples of his children (cf. Matt. 28:19). In the New Testament, the word "discipline" is translated from a term that means "the whole training and education of children." It is the word that is rendered "admonition" in Ephesians 6:4, where Paul said, "And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." *Thayer's Lexicon* notes that this term relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment. Thus, everything that parents do in raising their children, including teaching and example, falls under this general category of discipline.

However, since the term does include reproof and punishment, there are contexts where it seems to be used with the more specific meaning of chastisement, yet still with the positive goal of correcting mistakes, curbing the passions, and increasing virtue. According to Hebrews 12:5-11, God chastens us as his children. We may not always know exactly how he does it, but it is justified on the basis that human fathers chasten their children if they wish to develop in them the peaceable fruits of righteousness. And the Bible has a lot to say about the need for chastisement

— correction and punishment — of children. For example, "Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15).

Also, "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother" (Prov. 29.15). These and other such passages are not saying that parents should be beating their children silly and senseless, or should they be used to justify genuine child abuse. But they do teach that children, being young and immature, will make foolish mistakes, and it is the job of parents to use chastening, punishment, and correction to teach them the difference between right and wrong. Furthermore, when those children are quite young and most susceptible to this chastening, the thing that they understand best and is in the majority of instances the most effective is the pain of using the rod of correction. The outright rebellion of youth so characteristic in our society is proof positive that one cannot raise moral children in an immoral world without some form of loving, yet firm, discipline.

It Is Going To Take Love

Parents are going to make mistakes. We may miss a golden opportunity at some special point to teach an important lesson to our children and have to make up for it in some other way. We have our own faults and weaknesses, and may not always act before our children in the way that we expect them to act, even though we may try. We may fail sometimes at discipline, either being too harsh on one occasion or being a little too soft on another. But in spite of all our mistakes and failures, the glue that can still hold a home together and provide a place of joy and peace where children can find a sense of stability and security now and later on a good basis for establishing their own homes is love. "But above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Col. 3:14).

This passage is not necessarily talking about the home but the church. Yet, whatever is true of the need for love in the family of God should be true in our own human families as well. In our homes, as we relate to each other, we need to "put on love, which is the bond of perfection." How can we apply this practically? First, the husbands (and fathers) are told, "Love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). It has been said that one of the greatest things which a man can do for his children is to love their mother. When children see that their father truly loves their mother, that example alone will teach them untold lessons about commitment, dedication, and faithfulness.

Next, wives and mothers are to be taught "to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers . . ." (Tit. 2:4-5). Brethren continue to argue about whether it is good, let alone right, for a woman to work outside the home under any circumstances, especially

if she has small children. I do not wish here to go into all the pros and cons on that because each family must do what is best for it. But consider this. We assume that God wants men to love their children too, but there is no specific command to do so. Yet here, Paul tells older women to admonish younger women to love their children. Because of her nature, the mother is the emotional center of the home, and her being there for her children is necessary for their emotional development and well-being. How do mothers do that? It is by being “homemakers” or as the King James Version reads, “keepers at home.” It may well be that at least one of the reasons for all the problems in the past several generations has been the fact that mom has not been home! “The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.” If we expect to raise moral children in an immoral world, we are going to have to show true love in the home.

Conclusion

Everyone, except the most rabid humanists and feminists, agree that the home is important. God established it for the good of mankind (Gen. 1:28; 2:24). It is in the home that God intends for two loving parents to raise children

who will be capable of taking their proper place in life when they grow up. Of course, children are free-will moral agents, so there are no absolute, iron-clad guarantees. There are other forces and influences in children’s lives which can counteract good teaching in the home or even make up for bad teaching in the home in certain circumstances. But God has a plan for the family, and when it is followed we can be assured that he will be pleased with our efforts. And the outcome will doubtlessly have a lot greater chance of being more favorable than rejecting or ignoring God’s plan and going our own way. “Correct your son, and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your soul” (Prov. 29:17).

310 Haynes St., Dayton, Ohio 45410

Shooting the Wounded, or Discharging the Deserters?

Steve Klein

I’ve heard the following quote, or similar words, several times in recent years — “The church of Christ is the only army I know of that shoots its wounded.” Such a statement is neither accurate nor helpful. It attempts to lay guilt at the feet of the church which should be born by sinners who have deserted the church and left the Lord’s way.

Literally speaking, no church could shoot its own members without the event being thoroughly reported by the news media and soundly condemned by the public (remember Jim Jones and The Peoples Temple?). But the quote surely is not meant to be taken literally. Rather, it means to imply that the church is guilty of actively seeking to do spiritual harm to those whose souls have already been damaged by the working of Satan. This is nonsense. What church is going to purposely pursue a course which destroys the souls of those who have fought courageously (and would be willing to fight again) in the battle against Satan? The worst any church should be charged with is botching a surgery intended to heal the wounded.

While the Bible teaches that those who are overtaken in sin should be “restored in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal. 6:1), the reality is that there are those who do not respond either to gentle encouragement or fervent pleas. When, despite efforts to exhort, reprove, and correct, an individual continues in sin, the church must withdraw from that individual. 1 Corinthians 5:13 plainly charges the church to “put away from yourselves the evil person.” And in 2 Thessalonians 3:6, the inspired apostle Paul wrote, “We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.” He is not a wounded soldier; he is a deserter. He is “walking disorderly” — out of step with the rest of the troops — and needs to be dishonorably discharged in the hope that such severe action will motivate him to “turn himself in” and take his place in the ranks once again.

From The Exhorter, Athens, Alabama

Prologue

C.R. Scroggins and Keith W. Shackelford

In the fall of 1997, Lauri Ritchie, then a junior in high school as well as a member of the Mt. View church of Christ in Foster, Oklahoma had arranged a Bible study with some of her classmates during the lunch period. Just prior to the first study Lauri had gone to the local grocery store where she would buy her lunch and read her Bible. While reading her Bible, Jimmy Short (an employee at the time), asked Lauri what she was studying. This encounter led to future studies with Jimmy and others. However, it was during the very first Bible study with him that the subject of a debate arose. Jimmy said he knew Hoyt Chastain, a Missionary Baptist preacher and debater who would be interested in debating. Lauri knew David D. Bonner, a gospel preacher who also would be interested in a debate. This set the course for the two debates that were held in Pernell, Oklahoma in June of 1998 and in Lufkin, Texas in October 1998. Hoyt Chastain offered the following propositions to be affirmed by each disputant: "Resolved that the church of which I am a member is Scriptural in origin, name, doctrine and practice."

In the December 3rd issue, brother Jesse G. Jenkins' review of these debates. In the article that follows, appears an article from Jimmy Short who was converted from listening to the debate in Pernell, Oklahoma.

C. R. Scroggins, 1005 N. Alice Dr., Duncan, OK 73533-1557
Keith W. Shackelford, Rt. 1 Box 116-B, Foster, OK 73534

Converted to Christ!

(Why I Left Denominationalism)

Jimmy Short

By request, I am writing to explain why I left a denominational church to become a member of the church of Christ. My hope is that this will not only be encouraging to those who are members of the body of Christ but will also be a useful tool in guiding the lost to the truth in God's word about salvation.

Up until the summer of 1998 I was brought up in a Southern Baptist church. My parents raised me to be a faithful member and I was considering entering some form of church ministry. In 1997 I was introduced to Dr. Hoyt Chastain and studied religious topics with him for a few months. Dr. Chastain is a retired Missionary Baptist preacher and a very experienced public debater. He was giving free lessons on the Greek language and Bible analysis at the church where I regularly attended. I knew nothing about the church of Christ until I heard Dr. Chastain explain some differences between denominations and the church of Christ.

When I first heard of the church of Christ and some of its doctrines, especially baptism and hymns without instrumental music, I thought it was one of the most ridiculous ideas I had ever come in contact with. I could not understand how a church that proclaimed to believe in God could say instrumental music was wrong in worship and baptism was required for salvation.

With the help of some friends in the Mt. View church of Christ in Foster, Oklahoma, I was able to help set up a public debate between Dr. Hoyt Chastain and David D. Bonner, who is a well-studied preacher in the church of Christ. During this four-day debate I was able to discover what I needed to study and how to go about it. This debate was good in showing me what I needed to study, but I found that isolating myself from the religious opinions of others and studying on my own was the most beneficial to me.

There are many doctrinal differences between the church of Christ and denominational churches. The main ones that I focused on and had to be convinced of were the teachings on the establishment of the church, baptism, and instrumental music.

Establishment of the Church

In Matthew 16:18-19, Christ said, "I will build my church" and would give to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven. In this passage we find that "kingdom" and "church" are meant as the same thing. Some who were with Jesus would not die until the "kingdom" of God or "church" of God came with power (Mark 9:1). This shows that the kingdom would come in the lifetime of some of those who were with Jesus in those days.

In Luke 24:47-49, Christ told his disciples that repentance and remis-

sion of sins should be preached beginning at Jerusalem. The disciples were told to go to Jerusalem and wait to be endued with power from on high. Acts 1:8 confirms that they would receive power “after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” If we can find when the Holy Ghost came upon them then we can know when they received the power that was promised to them. And if we can see when the power came then we can see when the kingdom or church was started. In Acts 2:1-4 it is obvious that the power came to the apostles when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, therefore it should be clear that the church was established with power on the day of Pentecost.

To be further convinced of the establishment of the church I found I had to examine the uses of the words “church” and “kingdom.” I found in the Bible that until Acts 2, the words “church” and “kingdom” were spoken of the future tense, but beginning in Acts 2:47 the church presently existed, “and the Lord added to the church such as should be saved.”

Baptism

All of my life I have been told that a person is saved before and without baptism. However, Mark 16:15-16 gives the true order of salvation. In this passage, Christ commands his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel. What order of salvation did this gospel teach? Christ said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” He did *not* say that the person who believes shall be saved and then some other time at that person’s convenience he can be baptized.

Christ told his disciples that repentance and remission of sins would be preached beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). While in Jerusalem, the apostles witnessed the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost. As Peter preached in Jerusalem, he taught repentance and remission of sins which was what Christ had told him to preach. Peter told those who were “pricked in their hearts” to “repent and be baptized for the remission (or forgiveness) of sins” (Acts 2:37-38).

However, I was hardheaded and these verses on baptism were not really enough to convince me to convert from one faith to another. The conversions in the book of Acts are what convinced me. When the Samaritans heard and believed Philip’s preaching — they were baptized (Acts 8:12). When Simon believed — he was baptized (Acts 8:13). After Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch — the eunuch was baptized (Acts 8:35-38). A woman named Lydia who heard Paul preach was baptized after her heart was opened (Acts 16:14-15). When Paul and Silas were in prison, a jailer asked them what he must do to be saved. They said to believe on the Lord and after they spoke to him the word of the Lord, he was baptized (Acts 16:25-34).

During Paul’s conversion, he was told to “arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:8-16). These conversions taught me that baptism is a very important part of what was being preached to these men and women who were being converted to Christ.

Being saved from our sins is what the term salvation is all about. What better way is there to be saved from sin than to be forgiven of our sin? Baptism is the act that Christ expects every sinner to obey for the remission (forgiveness) of his sins (Acts 2:38).

Instrumental Music

When dealing with this subject, I needed to understand that the New Testament is the authority for our pattern of worship today. Christ’s sacrifice took away the first law so that a second one could be established (Heb. 10:1-10). The Old Testament law was nailed to the cross and done away (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15). The new law (testament) did not go into effect until after the death of Christ (Heb. 9:15-17). Since the laws and practices of the Old Testament were done away, we should look to the New Testament for our doctrine and pattern of worship.

If we are going to use the New Testament for our worship pattern, we must find examples and commands of *how* or *what* to do. When music is mentioned in the worship of the New Testament church only vocal music is mentioned. There are several examples and commands of singing or vocal music in the New Testament (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; 13:15; Jas. 5:13). There is not one Scripture that even indicates instruments should be used. I found that while it was very easy to see the truth on vocal music, the emotional bond I had for instrumental music (having been a “Christian Rock” musician) was the most difficult thing I had to overcome. Therefore, I decided that I would please God by keeping his commandment of vocal music rather than please myself and men with instrumental music. By doing this, I knew I would not be adding to the pattern of worship that God has set forth in his word (Rev. 22:18-19; 1 Cor. 4:6).

Conclusion

All of these teachings were very difficult to accept in my mind, but the more that I studied the more I became convinced of the truth. It did not take very long for me to run out of excuses for the denomination of which I was a member, and so after struggling with what my friends and family might say, I finally decided to account for myself (Rom. 14:11-12) and obey the gospel plan of salvation. I realize now that the most important decision I ever made was being baptized into the one and only church that Christ built (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23).

P.O. Box 2105, Duncan, Oklahoma 73534

Should God Have Drowned Noah?

We live in an age when results are demanded. Pressure is applied, ultimatums are delivered, rigid quotas are set, and goals must be met.

For example, certain sales people are under enormous pressure to reach specified quotas or else. Some resort to unfair tactics, dishonest schemes, and less-than-honorable approaches in order to reach their assigned percentage. They feel that they are in a do-or-die situation..

The coach for a ball team may be a fine man and an excellent coach. He may do a splendid job in teaching his team good sportsmanship. However, some fans will demand that he be fired if there is a long losing streak. Winning is to them more important than fair play.

On production lines there is poor quality work in many cases because of the demand for large quantity and rapid turnout. The management wants mass production rather than quality merchandise. Slap it together and put it on the market.

Gospel preachers sometimes are victims of this kind of thinking. No matter how faithful the preacher or how hard he works, if certain numerical results are not visible, some in the church will insist that he be replaced. The contributions and the attendance figures are used as gauges. The preacher's work is evaluated by statistics.

Poor old Noah worked long and hard in building the ark. He was a "preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5). Although he may have preached and worked on the ark for many years, when the showdown came, only his immediate family went into the ark with him. All that work and only eight souls (counting the preacher) were saved! Some of our hardnosed folks who assess preaching by numerical results probably wonder why God did not

drown old Noah in the flood! They would argue that his work was ineffective and without impact. But God demands faithfulness, not what we add up as "visible results." We need more preachers like Noah.

The concept that in the absence of certain numerical developments a preacher is not doing his job may lead to tactics and schemes that are wrong. A preacher may feel pressured and obliged to attain "results." The message is

watered down. Emphasis is placed on whatever may attract more people. Higher statistical ratings take priority. Dedication to "preaching the word" takes a back seat.

God blessed Noah despite the small numerical showing from his work. There are some things far more important than counting noses and adding monetary amounts. God promised through Isaiah that his word would not return to him void (Isa. 55:11). Spiritual increase is more valuable than mere numerical increase. Let us show faith in God by loyally proclaiming the gospel without trying to force a particular kind of increase. Paul said, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but

God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6). Our task is to be faithful in planting and watering, God handles the increase.



2820 Huntenvood Dr. S.E., Decatur, Alabama 35603-5638

Scriptural Elders and Deacons

by H.E. Phillips

Price — \$15.95

The Judgment

The advocates of the A.D. 70 doctrine do not teach what the Bible teaches about the judgment. Let's take a look at some biblical teaching concerning the judgment:

1. *All Will Be At the Judgment.* The judgment scene says, "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:32). *All* means *all*, right? "For we must *all* appear the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body" (2 Cor. 5:10). Are you a part of *all* nations? If so, then you would have been at the judgment! Were you?

2. *Every Knee Bows/Every Tongue Confesses.* The judgment will find every knee bowing and every tongue confessing, as, "... every one of us shall give account of himself to God" and "every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (Rom. 14:11-12). If the judgment took place in A.D. 70 then you bowed your knee and confessed to God. Did you do that?

3. *Judgment Will Be the Last Day.* Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). If the judgment occurred in A.D. 70, all men have been judged and days ceased then. Are days still coming and going?

4. *The Crown of Life Will Be Handed Out At the Judgment.* As Paul came to the close of his earth life, he penned, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8). Did Paul receive the crown of life in A.D. 70? Paul said his crown would be received when Christ would appear as judge. Have you received a crown of life? If not, since you, as a faithful child of God have been promised "... the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). will you receive it? If the A.D. 70 doctrine be true, the crown of life has already been handed out!

5. *Life Eternal/Punishment At the Judgment.* Matthew 25 is a picture of judgment. The reading of the verdict of the saved and the lost reads, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). If the judgment took place in A.D. 70, then all of us either have eternal life or eternal punishment. Do you now have either of these?

6. *The End.* Paul told the Romans, "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Rom. 6:22). The end will find the "kingdom" being "delivered up to God" (1 Cor. 15:24). Do you think the church has been delivered up to God? The earth will be "burned up" at the end (2 Pet. 3:10-12). Has this earth been burned up or is the earth still here? It is pretty evident that the A.D. 70 doctrine is far from the truth.

4121 Woodyard Rd., Bloomington, Indiana 47404

A Tribute to Melvin D. Curry, Jr.

edited by Ferrell Jenkins
Contains scholarly essays on a number
of topics.

Price — \$18.95

“Marriage” continued from front page

brings into the life of each mate fulfillment, satisfaction, and contentment. A fruitful marriage is built upon love, trust, respect, faithfulness, and mutual consideration. Let us now look at some attitudes that will build each other up instead of tearing each other down — attitudes that will sweeten marriage.

1. Express Appreciation to Your Companion. Express appreciation for things that are done whether they be large or small. Look for the good qualities in your mate at all times; don't just look for the negative — if you do, everything will begin to appear totally negative! If you are to stay in touch with the reality of the good in your companion, you must look for good and express appreciation for it often.

2. Give Honor and Respect to Your Companion. Peter said to the husbands: “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife as the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7). Paul said to the wives, “And the wife see that she reverence her husband” (Eph. 5:33). Respect begets respect, so if a wife wants to be respected, she must show respect. Disrespect inflames bad feelings and breeds strife. Treat your mate with respect and dignity, and your mate will want to rise to the same level.

3. Be Forgiving. An unforgiving attitude inflames tension and strife. Never form the habit of bringing up past mistakes to put down your companion — this is being unmerciful and unforgiving, and it reopens old wounds. Everyone wants mercy and forgiveness for his shortcomings. Many times we forgive everyone but our mates; the first place forgiveness should be practiced is at home with our companions (Luke 6:36-38; Matt. 6:14-15; Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:32). Both you and your mate are imperfect human beings (1 John 1:8); when you are wrong, why not simply say, “I'm wrong and I'm sorry”? Only an immature and prideful person refuses to admit his shortcomings and sins.

4. Be Helpful and Constructive. Companions should be able to talk honestly with each other and treat each other as best friends (they should be best friends). You want your feelings, needs and opinions to be heard and considered, so does your companion. What does it mean to be a friend? Friendship is a privilege, not a situation with which to gain advantage. When one takes advantage of another there is no friendship; no loving companion will take advantage of his mate. Friends love each other dearly; so do mates who are trying to do God's will. A friend offers his best to a friend; companions who are what they ought to be offer their best to each other. A friend will go when needed, so will a true and faithful companion. A friend is a holder of confidences; if there is one person on earth one should be able to trust, it is his mate! A friend will have empathy for

another; if there were ever two people who should feel each pain of the other it should be companions! A friend will do all he can for another; loving mates cannot do enough for each other!

Marriage Partners are a Team

A healthy, loving husband/wife relationship is not a master/slave relationship. It is a sharing, complementing relationship where each mate recognizes the God-ordained role of each. When each mate realizes they need help, and that they do complement one another, they draw closer and grow to respect and love each other more.

God's Laws of Marriage Must Be Respected

Break any of God's laws and they will break and destroy you! Millions are paying painful mental, emotional, and physical penalties for rejecting and transgressing God's laws on sex and marriage — and most of them will pay eternally with their souls lost in hell! God's law is plain: “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Rom. 13:9), and the penalty for breaking this law is always enforced!

Let us look at the penalty: (1) Remorse (Prov. 5:11; Ps. 51:3); (2) Disease of the body (Prov. 5:11; Rom. 1:27); (3) Dishonor (Prov. 6:33); (4) Impoverishment (Prov. 5:10); (5) Spiritual death (Prov. 6:32; Rom. 6:23); (6) The only grounds for divorce (Matt. 19:9); (7) The Lord will avenge (1 Thess. 4:6).

If we who are married will only practice the things we have stated in this article, it will bring sweetness to the marriage relationship.. Try to make your marriage all that God intended it to be.

From Great Plainness of Speech, River Bend Church of Christ, Florence, Alabama

Answers For Our Hope

by Marshall E. Patton

Inightful, scriptural discussion of many troubling questions and issues.

Price — \$12.95

Call: Truth Bookstore

1-800-428-0121

“Church and State” continued from page 2

the signs were not allowed. But, there was no separation of church and state here. The state is perfectly willing to use the church’s buildings without charge as a polling site. The politicians are willing to place their campaign signs on the premises.

The result was pathetic. On the premises of a church that would be adamantly opposed to such things as abortion, gambling, and other immoral practices, politicians who campaign to legalize such things post their signs to persuade voters.

What Separation of Church and State Really Means Today

In the minds of far too many, separation of church and state means that those religious leaders who have somewhat to say about moral issues facing our nation should “keep their noses out of the state’s business, unless you are willing to say what we want to hear.” Separation of church and state means that preachers should not try to talk to voters about abortion (partial birth or earlier in the pregnancy), the impact of the immorality of the President on our country as a reason not to vote for those who will keep him in office, homosexuality as a transgression of God’s will, and other such issues.

John the Baptist did not hesitate to comment on the immorality of King Herod Antipas. When Antipas went to Rome and seduced his half-brother Philip’s wife to leave Philip and marry him, John the Baptist preached, “It is not lawful for you to have her” (Matt. 14:4). The verb *elegen* is in the imperfect tense of *lego*, indicating that John did not preach this just one time but that he kept on saying, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” That would be like one today going into the pulpit and saying, “It is not lawful for President Clinton to have oral sex with Monica Lewinski, to lie under oath about his affair, and to orchestrate a campaign to destroy those who investigate his immorality.” Our national media does not want to hear what Evangelicals have to say about such subjects. And, to intimidate Evangelicals from preaching on such issues, they hypocritically chastize preachers for violating the separation of church and

state. I say “hypocritical” because when liberal preachers want to go into print saying, “We should just put this affair behind us because God is a forgiving God,” they will provide a forum for them to speak, commend what they say, and honor them as highly respected moral leaders in our society. Such preachers are the same kind of “spiritual leaders” who curried Herod’s favor.

A Church Not Silenced by the State

When the State tried to squelch the voice of the church in the New Testament, the Apostles boldly asserted their determination to keep on preaching. Peter said, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye” (Acts 4:19). Again, he said, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

The time may come when our state tries to stop the mouths of those who preach God’s truth about moral issues such as homosexuality and abortion. In the latest incident when some radical shot an abortion doctor in the northeast with a high-powered rifle, the news media quickly tried to place the blame for this incident on those religious groups who oppose the woman’s *legal right* to an abortion. Such rhetoric certainly lays the political groundwork for stamping out those who preach against abortion. When a homosexual boy was robbed and hideously murdered in the west, the right wing religious groups were described as hate mongers who are ultimately responsible for his death.

If we are correct in assessing the trend that is developing in our country, we must prepare the minds of our brothers and sisters to stand for the truth without regard to what standing for the truth costs us. Jesus said, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). Again, he said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matt. 10:37-39). My prayer is that this trend not develop in our country, but should it occur, we must be prepared to give our lives in service to God.

Conclusion

I pray for our country daily. I pray that moral righteousness might be exalted in its borders and that those things contrary to God’s will may be defeated without regard to which political party holds office. But come what may, I pray that God will give me the strength to be faithful to him in whatever circumstances might exist.

Studies in the Life of Christ

by R.C. Foster

One volume edition.

Originally 4 volumes.

Excellent material. Hardback.

Price — \$34.99

6567 Kings Ct., Danville, Indiana 46122