



# Lessons On Lying From the Book of Proverbs

David Dann

The apostle Paul exhorted the church at Ephesus concerning lying by saying, “Therefore, putting away lying, let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another” (Eph. 4:25). Lying is, of course, the telling of intentional falsehood. To lie is to do the opposite of speaking the truth. The one who lies says things that he knows are untrue in an effort to get others to believe his falsehoods are the truth.

The telling of lies is a constant problem in our society. Not only is lying prevalent in our society, but it is also widely accepted and tolerated. One cannot watch any situation comedy on television for more than two minutes without witnessing one of the characters lying to another. This sort of thing has become so commonplace and acceptable that it is just laughed off as a harmless joke. Of course, the television shows are only mirroring what is actually taking place in the real world. Lying is widely practiced and widely tolerated.

The Bible, on the other hand, paints a

very different picture of lying from what we see in society. The Bible presents warning after warning against lying. In particular, the book of Proverbs presents some excellent instruction on lying for our consideration. We learn from Proverbs that:

**1. Lying lips are an abomination.** “Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal truthfully are His delight” (Prov. 12:22). An abomination is something that is detestable, revolting, or disgusting. While the world may look at lying

as something that is tolerable and useful, God views it as an action that is disgusting. It is an action that places one in league with the devil, who is described by Christ as, “a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44). In describing heaven the apostle John writes, “But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (Rev. 21:27).

**2. The righteous man hates lying.**  
*see “Lying” on p. 376*

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## The Centrality of the Atonement

Mike Willis

The danger of allowing things of first importance to become secondary will always be with us. One can major in minors to the neglect of the fundamental themes of the gospel. Jesus spoke of the danger of losing one's perspective when he condemned the Pharisees for straining out the gnat and swallowing a camel (Matt. 23:24) and of emphasizing tithing mint, anise, and cummin to the neglect of judgment, mercy, and faith (Matt. 23:23).



A few years ago, a brother wrote a book charging that we, as a body of people, had neglected the atonement. He reached this conclusion based on the survey of published sermons.

Without a doubt, the atonement is of first importance. Paul wrote, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ are fundamental.

How can one be certain that he keeps the Lord's sacrificial death a top priority?

### The Lord's Supper

The Lord himself solves the problem of keeping the Lord's death a top priority. God ordained the Lord's supper as a weekly memorial to his death, burial, and resurrection. Paul wrote,

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come (1 Cor. 11:23-26).

see "Atonement" on p. 377

## The Need For Balance

Connie W. Adams

E.C. Koltenbah, who died several years ago, was an excellent biblical exegete. He also had an interesting sense of humor. Once he described a certain brother as one who “lacked a balance wheel.” This brother was never on an even keel. He was either way up or way down. It appears to me that all of us need a “balance wheel” in serving the Lord. Society at large is pestered with radicals who are all but consumed in the flame of their own zeal. Their all-absorbing issue becomes the pivotal point of the universe. This tendency becomes dangerous when it comes to religion.

The Bible teaches that God’s people are to be well rounded in the knowledge and application of truth. Every passage requiring soundness of faith and judgment has a bearing on this. The book of Titus is concerned with “sound doctrine.” The word “sound” means that which is wholesome, contributing to the spiritual health of those who receive the teaching. Elders are to use “sound doctrine” in convicting gainsayers (Tit. 1:9). Titus was to use “sound speech” in teaching all ages (2:1-8).

Paul urged stability when he commanded the Ephesians to “be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14). Such stability would enable them to “grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (v. 16). In our faith we are to supply virtue (all around excellence), knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (2 Pet. 1:5-8). Peter said, “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober” (1 Pet. 1:13). This is an appeal for us to maintain control of ourselves and act sensibly. Every passage calling for sobriety addresses this point. Practical applications are in order.

**1. All Christians need a balance wheel.** The cause of Christ is hindered by those who run, first hot, then cold. They are either on fire with zeal for the truth, or they are in the valley of despair and total indifference. They are uplifted one day and downcast the next. Their zeal for one part of Bible study blinds them to other equally important truths. Without meaning to start a war over the covering question, we have known several bossy women who wore a covering to prove they were in subjection, and have known a few who covered their heads while needing a blanket, or something, to cover their exposed legs from wearing short skirts. Some men have been appointed elders because they had a plurality of children who had been baptized, but without regard for whether they were “apt to teach” or were “self-willed.” What we need here is balance.

**2. Congregations need balance.** Some were begun in times of crisis when  
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it was necessary to give much attention to certain subjects. But some made the mistake of continuing to dwell on that subject and related matters to the neglect of other truths. A church may be well taught on the work and organization of the church, while the spirit of the world takes over the minds and lives of its members. The edifying of the church requires a balanced diet of truth. Elders need to regularly review the areas of Bible study being covered. Are babes in Christ being given what they need to grow? Are the young being given the help they need to strengthen their faith in a world which seeks to destroy it? Are they being taught what the Bible says about marriage and the home before they make a big mistake? Are they being shown how to apply the principles of the word of God to “flee youthful lusts”? Titus 2 makes it plain that truth is relevant to the needs of aged men, aged women, young women, and young men. In Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul argues that God’s wisdom made every necessary provision for every Christian to come to the full measure of his potential and ended by saying that this “maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

**3. Preachers need balance.** Preaching the gospel is honorable work. God chose this means of spreading the truth to all the world. But it is easy for a preacher to run to extremes. One can become so obsessed with a certain subject that he cannot preach without bringing it in somewhere. It becomes his hobby. Perhaps he sees a problem which needs correction and he addresses it. But the needed change does not appear all at once and he is determined that *it will be done*. So, he begins to “nag” on the subject until even those who agree with him grow weary of repeated thrusts week after week. Why not give the matter thorough treatment, then let it soak in for awhile? While it is soaking, go on to something else. Paul told Timothy to preach with “all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2). Don’t forget the “longsuffering” part of it. Later on, approach the subject from a different direction. A sore needs healing,

but you can pick at it until it becomes infected. Balanced teaching lends greater respect to whatever must be said on the troublesome problem.

Paul said, “I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you” and “I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:20, 27). The most useful thing any of us can do is to teach people exactly what the text of the word of God says. In local work for many years, we have seen the greatest interest shown in sermons which carried us through some book in the Bible, speaking morning and evening until the book was covered. Sunday evening attendance was better during these studies. By teaching in context with applications where such were needed, many needed areas can be treated without anyone thinking you have gone out of your way to grind an axe.

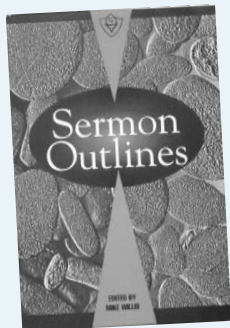
**4. Papers need balance.** Nearly every periodical was started to meet some special perceived need, which it was thought was not being properly met elsewhere. Journals begun out of spite, with a competitive spirit, to grind personal axes, or to satisfy an inflated ego, will do much harm. At various critical times, periodicals have rendered a valuable, if not fully appreciated, service. There will always be times when some subjects require more space than others. At such times, responsible men ought to use whatever means they find open to them, to teach truth and expose error. But what we must not forget is that our adversary, the Devil, is not a one issue enemy. While we are pounding him on one front, he is already attacking another section of the wall. Here again, balance is needed.

E.C. Koltenbah was right. What we all need is “a balance wheel.”

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## Sermon Outlines

Edited by Mike Willis



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# The Andy Griffith Bible Class

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Bobby L. Graham

Recent years have witnessed the dumbing down of the school curriculum and the weakening of biblical emphasis in the teaching programs of many local churches. It has not been too surprising that some churches have turned to television stars/programs for their content at the same time that the schools have turned to social adjustment, cultural diversity, sex education, and values clarification. Obvious effects have included a lack of knowledge/understanding of basic material once considered necessary for civic/employee performance in the nation and little appreciation/understanding of basic Bible teachings. Gone are the days when many could cite book, chapter, and verse for the eating of the Lord's supper on the first day of every week, the work assigned to the local church, New Testament teaching about the Christian's relation to the world, and Jesus' teaching about marriage, divorce, and remarriage. What has been the response of elders, charged with the oversight of souls and the operation of local churches?

Some have decided to turn to the kinder, gentler approach of using old Andy Griffith television programs to teach the Bible. Without any disparagement of the show or the characters (I personally like them), let us consider this approach in a Bible class. To any thinking individual, it should be obvious that it has some glaring deficiencies.

**1. It uses an inordinate amount of time for the precious little teaching that can be gleaned.** Any thirty-minute program might include a very few minutes of coverage of the spiritual principles. Would the same elders/teachers be willing to use the class period in similar fashion, if the television show were not being used? Unfortunately, the answer for some is probably positive, because of their little regard for the Scriptures. How can anyone justify the entire time being used to view the program (just under thirty minutes), so that the class could then discuss for the remaining time (probably ten to fifteen minutes at the most) whatever principles they found. At the most, they are spending one-third to one-fourth of their time on what they ought to be doing.

**2. It replaces Scriptures as the text with something**

**written by men.** It would be just as profitable (probably more so) to search the writings of our "founding fathers" or certain poets or novelists who write from a biblical viewpoint, but the objections here would be too strong to adopt even this approach. People simply do not learn the Bible as they need to by studying casual or occasional references to the principles of right found in the Bible when the writings of men include them. The matters of context and emphasis will be lacking, as well as reasons and related principles. Only a Bible feather-weight would seek to justify this approach.

**3. This approach beguiles the members of the class by causing them to think that this is real Bible study, sanctioned by congregational elders.** One result that will follow is that they will soon disparage other approaches, especially one that adheres closer to the biblical text or emphasizes needed principles that such programs never allude to. How often do you think the writers will incorporate principles of modesty, the harmfulness of strong drink, the need to guard our hearts from defiling influences, and the sanctity of marriage. Even Otis, the town drunk, is presented in humorous fashion, so as to weaken the serious impact of the Bible message. Even when long-lasting marriages are portrayed as acceptable, the other side of divorce is also displayed. When spiritual principles are presented, they often are downplayed in some way to preclude any charge of extremism. This happens on a Hollywood production because the design of the writers is not to promote biblical morality or spiritual principles. Perhaps the most harmful effect is that this approach prepares God's people to accept only such teaching as they find pleasing, while rejecting that which challenges their understanding and demands sacrifice of self and personal ideas/practices for the sake of Christ.

**4. This approach also will gradually bring changes in others teaching efforts of the church.** Dramas will then replace sermons, role playing will begin to dominate Bible classes, youth ministers will then be needed to keep the young "interested," and elders will have lost their charges. Local churches will have become social clubs, civic organi-

zations, or humanitarian institutions, with only a smattering of the spiritual thrown in to appear religious. They will have lost their way in the wilderness of play and fun.

**5. The impact of this approach on souls should not be forgotten.** Souls will be lost to the world, to denominational religion, and to unbelief. After all, this is what the “other part” has been doing for decades. When members wake up to realize such, they will have no reason for remaining in their present local congregations. They will be able to find all that they presently enjoy, and even more of it, in other religious circles. Why shouldn't they? If some of this approach is good, would not more be even better?

In closing, we ask some pertinent questions. Elders, are you willing to give account to God for the souls under your charge after approving this kind of teaching in your congregation? Preachers, do you really look forward to answering the Lord about why you failed to speak against

such fluff and trivialities when you knew about it? Other children of God, do you really think that you would do as well in your spiritual growth by watching Andy and Barney as by studying what the Holy Spirit guided men of God to set forth for our edification? These are the issues involved in this situation — spiritual growth (1 Pet. 2:2), wholesome teaching (Tit. 2:1), and responsible elders (Heb. 13:17).

I do fear that many in each of the preceding three categories will find themselves “weighed in the balances and found wanting,” for the balances are divine ones, not those that humans thought best.

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## The New Name

Bart Campbell

In foretelling of things as they would be, the prophet Isaiah wrote: “And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name” (Isa. 62:2). Let us give some careful consideration about this new name as the Lord would give.

This name is the name “Christian.” “. . . and it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch” (Acts 11:26). It is significant that the church in Antioch, which included many Gentile converts, fulfilled this prophecy of Isaiah.

The name “Christian” is the name in which God is glorified. “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. But if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf” (1 Pet. 4:15-16). The name Christian glorifies God because it contains the name of Christ (1 Pet. 4:14, 16).

This is why human names are to be rejected; none of them serves to glorify God. The name “Christian” does, for it was given by God, a “new name” as Isaiah prophesied. It is also a name that contains the name of his only begotten Son, “Christ,” who came to this earth to do nothing more or less than the will of his Father (John 5:30).

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# What Does The Constitution Say? Mean?

Herschel E. Patton

Judges say different things as to its

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meaning, then say it says what they say it means. We do not need a lawyer or judge to determine what it says, but an English scholar to diagram the sentence

There are four basic propositions in the foundation of the American Humanist Association: atheism, evolution, relative truth, and autonomous man. (No deity, no Creator, no set truth — everything relative, no authority above man himself. The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) is the legal arm of this AHA (American Humanist Association) — an establishment of religion.

and give the meaning of words. When we learn what is said, then the lawyers and judges can debate whether the writers of the Constitution meant what they said or wrote something that really means something else.

The first amendment says, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

Notice this amendment does not say make no law respecting religion, but “an establishment of religion.” The practice of religion and an establishment of religion are different things. An establishment of religion is a church, denomination, establishment, with a head (president), name, officials, headquarters, creed. etc. They may believe in a divine Creator — God, many gods, or no god. Their practices are whatever the establishment decrees.

Concerning practices of an establishment, the first amendment of the Constitution says “or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” The exercising of religion is the practices there of. Preaching, praying, singing, promoting, wearing a particular garb, etc. are religious practices.

Our Constitution rules out a state church, supported by taxes from all the people, whether they believe in that faith or not, and must do whatever the church tells the State to have them

do. It gives the establishment (church) freedom to practice their faith without being prohibited. Any individual, school, business, or state official who wants to have prayer, hand someone a tract, or invite someone to his church has the Constitutional right to do so. Of course, no individual, organization, or state has the right to force or coerce another to participate.

It was this kind of thing that caused many to flee from other countries and come to America, where freedom of religion could be had. This is what was in the minds of the framers of our Constitution when they wrote the First Amendment.

When Judge Roy Moore put a monument, with the Ten Commandments on it, in the building over which he presides, Judge Thompson said he was promoting the Judeo-Christian religion and said that was unconstitutional.

That monument was not an establishment of religion and was not put there at state expense (our taxes). An individual was promoting a code of laws which he and millions of Americans believe was divinely delivered, was the basis for our judicial system, recommending (not forcing) others to observe these laws in their lives. If more people followed these laws, the judge’s work place would not be so crowded.

If a Muslim was appointed, or



elected, to a judgeship and he wanted to put a picture of Mecca on the wall of his work place, then get down on his knees praying before it at certain times in the day, maybe wearing a certain garb, with a turban on his head, he would be practicing his religion, and our Constitution would forbid anyone trying to stop him. Our forefathers, who wrote the Constitution and its amendments, never thought they were violating what they had written, when they often mentioned the Creator in their addresses, took oaths with their hand on the Bible, prayed to the heavenly Father, even provided for a chaplain to say prayers at sessions of Congress, accepted and often quoted such slogans as “In God we trust” and “God bless America.”

When Judge Thompson ordered the Ten Commandments rock removed from the building where Judge Moore had placed it, he was not expelling an establishment of religion from the building, but expelling the promotion of faith and morality (practices of religion).

There is today an establishment of religion, established by John Dewey in 1941, called “American Humanist Association” (AHA). Its headquarters is in Buffalo, New York. It has officials, a creed (Humanist Manifestos 1 and 2, an official publication (*The Humanist*), and it is a religion. It is so referred to ten times in Humanist Manifestos 1 and 2. The Supreme Court has repeatedly so defined it, giving to it all the rights/benefits any other church in America has. Their stated aim is to make humanism “the religion of the twenty-first century.”

There are four basic propositions in its foundation: atheism, evolution, relative truth, and autonomous man. (No deity, no Creator, no set truth — everything relative, no authority above man himself [can do as he pleases].)

How do the humanists plan to accomplish their aim? They have, in

Humanist Manifestos 1 and 2, and in the humanist publication made known their plan. It is not to build church buildings and operate from them, but infiltrate with their philosophy families, educational fields (schools-colleges), churches, and government positions.

The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) is the legal arm of this AHA (American Humanist Association) — an establishment of religion. The ACLU has been very busy carrying out the aim of AHA in banishing every vestige of other religious establishments, with their practices. They have intimidated families, schools, churches, and judges with their threats of lawsuits. In many places they have unconstitutionally stopped Bible reading, prayer, Baccalaureate sermons, and devotional periods in schools.

Furthermore, the AHA religious establishment has infiltrated the schools with their no God philosophy, teaching it freely in schools, with the endorsement of the Supreme Court.

In 1946, John Dewey, founder of the AHA, became prominent in American education (holding a federal office) and did much to promote the philosophy of this establishment of religion.

In the 1970s a document (book) called *Values Clarification* was circulated among all teachers and schools as a required study and application in the whole educational process. The no God, no Creator, no right or wrong — every thing relative, no higher authority than self philosophy filled this book.

Thank God, many teachers of Faith refused to teach this philosophy to their students, but thousands did embrace and teach it. The fruit of this teaching, a few years later when students became adults is manifest. We began to have school shootings and an increase of immorality. In some cases the one doing the shooting asked his

victim if he believed in Jesus. History confirms the fact that when people and nations leave God out, violence and immorality follows.

In the AHA, along with ACLU, we have an establishment of religion favored and promoted by the U.S government (with our taxes) in its efforts to destroy other religions and establish only the religion of Humanism.

Concerning the practice of one’s religion, the first amendment to the Constitution specifically says “or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” This prohibiting is the very thing the AHA, through the ACLU, seeks to do with the practices of every religion, except religious Humanism.

This establishment of religion (AHA) has the same right as other churches to promote, preach, teach, and practice their faith in legal ways. The State cannot choose one among many religions and endorse and finance it alone. Our Constitution forbids the State to endorse a religious establishment, telling all its citizens what to believe and practice, as well as what they can’t do. Indeed, there must be this separation between church and State.

Today, the AHA (a religious establishment) has, according to their stated plan, infiltrated the schools, churches, government offices, the judicial system (courts) with their godless, moral-less philosophy, and with the aid of the ACLU, have successfully, but unconstitutionally, banished many practices of religion in their efforts to make the land have only the religion of Humanism.

What can we Christians do about this situation? Shall we form some kind of establishment (organization) to fight the philosophy of the AHA? Force them out of schools-courts, etc.? Stop the practicing of their faith? This is not the answer. They have the same Constitutional right to promote and practice their religion as any other

# Blessed With All Spiritual Blessings

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Brian Anderson

In the beginning of the letter to the Ephesians, Paul, by the Holy Spirit, tells us that we have been given all of our spiritual blessings in Christ. Let's take a look at a few of those blessings we have in Christ.

## Chosen Us

“According as He hath chosen us in Him” (Eph. 1:4). We did not choose God, he chose us! Jesus said, “. . . I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (John 15:16, 19). As Paul exhorted the Thessalonians he said, “. . . because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.” What a great blessing! God has chosen us.

## Adopted Us

“. . . unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself” (Eph. 1:5). Paul says that he did this of his own good pleasure (Eph. 1:5). Many an orphan child awaits adoption into some family that will love him and call him their own. What a great blessing we have, through Christ, that we have the adoption from God. John, picking up this idea, said, “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him” (1 John 3:1-2). For

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establishment of religion.

Our schools of learning should be free to teach the theories, philosophies, and practices that have, and do exist in our history. The theories of evolution, big bang, and creationism should be presented in detail. Students would then be informed on the various theories, and could decide for themselves which is right (truth). It would be unconstitutional for the State to decide for its citizens and tell the schools to present one theory only and make it illegal for the school to teach any other.

People who believe in God, the Creator, and his revealed truth should make sure they continue in “the faith”, and teach their children God's revealed Truth and Ways.

Believers can wield a great power in the voting booth. I, personally, would never vote for an Atheist-Humanist, regardless of party. The big concern with me is whether the candidate is liberal or conservative. I use these terms according to their general dictionary meaning. LIBERAL — “One who is open-minded or not strict in the observance

of orthodox, traditional, or established forms or ways.”

CONSERVATIVE — “disposed to maintain existing views, conditions, or Institutions.”

Divine authority (God) and divine instruction (Bible) do not allow for additions, subtraction, or changes by man. Faith, truth, morality, righteousness, or set establishments and demand strict adherence — conservative.

When I see a candidate who shows no reverence for God and condones homosexuality, abortion, adultery, the Humanist doctrine of no right or wrong, but everything relative, he is liberal and unworthy of my vote.

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those of us who have obeyed Christ, we have been adopted by the most high God (Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 2:11-12; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom 8:15ff; Gal. 3:26; John 1:12).

### Made Us Accepted

Our sins separate us from God, (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1). But through Christ we are now accepted. “. . . wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6). There was a time when we were far away from the Lord and from the blessed relationship that we can have with him. “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13). Most want to be found acceptable to others in this life. Most want to be liked and allowed into a certain “crowd.” But through Christ Jesus, we now can be found accepted into the presence of God (Col. 1:20; Acts 10:35; 2 Cor. 5:9).

### Redeemed

“In whom we have redemption in His blood” (Eph. 1:7). We all have sold ourselves into sin (Rom. 3:23, 6:16), but Jesus paid the price that I might have my life back. David said that this was one reason why we should praise the Lord, “Bless ye the Lord . . . who redeemeth thy life from destruction” (Ps. 103:1-4). It seems like a very high price, but it took the blood of Jesus to purchase back for me what I had so willingly gave up for free (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 5:9; Mark10:45; Heb. 9:12). Thanks be to God.

### Forgiveness Of Sins

No other place can man find the forgiveness of his sins, except in Christ. “In whom we have redemption in His blood, even, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7). Many still look to the old law for authority or guidance to such ends, but Paul stated emphatically, speaking of Jesus, “. . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of

sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38). Although most in the world attempt to find it somewhere else, it is not possible to find the forgiveness of sins except through our Lord and Savior (Acts 4:12; Heb. 9:22; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5).

### Made Known Unto Us His Will

In Christ, God has revealed his will. “Having made known unto us the mystery of His will” (Eph. 1:9). God didn’t have to do this. But it was “His good pleasure” (v. 9) to reveal to man his plan. In other ages, man did not fully have revealed to him the eternal redemptive plan (1 Pet. 1:8-12; Eph. 3:3-5). What a blessed time we live in! Through Christ, God’s spokesman (Heb. 1:1-2; Matt. 17:5), we have God’s will revealed. Are you reading it (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3; Rev. 1:3)?

### Obtain An Inheritance

Finally, we have been given a hope of an inheritance. “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance” (Eph. 1:11). Through Christ Jesus, we have the hope of something more beyond this life. Many look to this world for their hope. Through Christ Jesus, the Father has given us our hope. “He hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible” (1 Pet. 1:4). Where is your hope today? We, as Christians, have the blessed hope of something much more glorious awaiting us after death, if we will but follow his will (Rom. 8:17; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:12; Acts 20:32; John 14:1-3). Do we really appreciate these great blessings?

---

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# Hospitality

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## Kathleen Rogol

**Be not forgetful to entertain strangers:  
for thereby some have entertained an-  
gels unawares (Heb. 13:2).**

The children of Israel were instructed by the law concerning their treatment of strangers in Leviticus 19:33, 34. “And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”

Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers: . . . We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow helpers to the truth (3 John 5, 8).

Peter instructed us as to what our response should be to believers who may be new to the congregation or community. He said, “Use hospitality one to another without grudging” (1 Pet. 4:9).

Let us follow the example set by Gaius. He was a believer whom the apostle John commended for his hospitality. He had entertained “strangers” who were servants of the Lord (3 John 5). He became a fellow-worker with them of the truth by extending such graciousness. But Diotrephes on the other hand resisted John’s authority and sought preeminence among the brethren. He even displayed hostility by putting people out of the church who welcomed strangers. Let us not be a “Diotrephes” but let us extend hospitality, love, and kindness to those we meet along the way.

Either the Bible will keep you  
from sin or sin will keep you  
from the Bible.

Please consider the following:

### I Shall Not Pass This Way Again

Through this toilsome world, alas!  
Once and only once I pass;  
If a kindness I may show,  
If a good deed I may do  
to a suffering fellow-man,  
Let me do it while I can.  
No delay, for it is plain  
I shall not pass this way again.  
If I can stop one heart from breaking  
I shall not live in vain;  
If I can ease one life the aching,  
or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
unto his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain.

Emily Dickinson

The acts of unselfish service and hospitality done to others are the gifts we lay before God. Our attitudes are wrappings. When we contemplate Jesus’ words, “Freely ye have received, freely give” (Matt. 10:8), I want to know the blessedness of being such a giver.

Let us remember Paul’s expression of appreciation for Onesiphorus. “The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto to me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well” (1 Tim. 1:16-18). Let us strive to become more hospitable.

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## “I Came Not To Destroy . . .”

Jim McDonald

**Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:17-20).**

This is a favorite text with Sabbatarians in their claims that the law was not really removed; all are bound to keep the “moral law” viz: the Ten Commandments. Consider the following key thoughts to see if better understanding can be had regarding the text.

Many passages state inequitably that the law (including the Ten Commandments) has been removed, see Romans 7:1-4, 7; Ephesians 2:14f; 2 Corinthians 3:8-11; Colossians 2:14; Galatians 4:1-31; Hebrews 8:13; 10:9f. To force Matthew 5:17-18 to teach that “the law has not been removed” succeeds in making the Bible contradictory. Men must reconcile what Jesus taught in these verses with other Scriptures rather than arraying them against them. Reconciliation is both possible and imperative.

Jesus’ declaration that he came not to destroy the law but to fulfill the law and the prophets was no assertion that they would not be removed. The principles of the law and the predictions of the prophets had to be fulfilled, and Jesus was the one who did so. He did not destroy the law; he did not destroy the prophets, he fulfilled it and them. That was the force of his statement: “Not one jot nor tittle shall pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.” He would fulfill them to the tiniest detail; then they would be removed.

Verses 19-20 sets forth both proper and improper attitudes toward God’s law illustrating it by the law then in force. Those who taught and did the least of those commandments would be great in the kingdom of heaven. Those who broke the least of those commandments and teach men to do so would be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Their righteousness must exceed that of the scribes

and Pharisees else they could not enter the kingdom. From these verses, certain truths emerge:

**1. Those to whom Jesus spoke were not yet in the kingdom.** They were being taught what spirit must prevail in order for them to enter the kingdom.

**2. The attitude toward God’s commandments were reflected in what they did and taught others to do.** Those who did and taught others to do the command would be great in the kingdom; those who did not do or teach others the least of these commands, would be least in the kingdom.

**3. The attitude of the scribes and Pharisees was an improper attitude and those with such were warned they would never enter the kingdom.** The Pharisees claimed to be keepers of the least of God’s commandments but their deeds proved otherwise. They acknowledged God’s laws “honor thy Father and thy mother” and “thou shalt not forswear thyself” but they circumvented his law and taught others to do the same. The command “honor thy father and mother” was set aside if one said “Corban” (Mark 7:11). Vows were to be remembered, but if one swore by the heaven instead of the throne of God, he did not have to keep his vow (Matt. 23:22). One with such a spirit would never enter God’s kingdom. “But” someone responds, “why did inspired writers, after the New Law was given, appeal to the ‘moral law’ (Jas. 2:8) to establish principles, if that law had been removed?” There is an adage which says, “That which proves too much proves nothing.” If allusion to certain moral principles prove the “moral law” (Ten Commandments) are binding, then appeal to the “ceremonial law” would prove the same thing, see 1 Corinthians 9:9. And if quotations from Old Testament passages prove them still to be binding, then quotations from pagan writers would prove the same (see Acts 17:28f; Tit. 1:12f).

Quotations of a truth written before in the Old Testament were cited as testimony to the truth the New Testament writer made wrote as were citations from pagan poets and writers. Citing the writings of a pagan was not endorsement of all he wrote nor did quotations of Old Testament Scriptures mean we are still bound by the law.

# The Importance of Bible Classes

Johnie Edwards

Our children are said to be “a heritage of the Lord” (Ps. 127:3). Children will only be what they have been taught to be. The wise man said, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6).

Every parent needs to know the importance of bringing their children to Bible study BECAUSE:

**1. Teaching children is a command.** Joel said, “Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation” (1:3). A good way to assist parents in this work is to be sure they are in a good Bible class. Are you bringing yours?

**2. Children and the future.**

What this church will be like in a few years depends on how our children are now being taught. A lot of churches are filled with only older people with no children coming on! Some get upset at the crying child, not me. I am disturbed when there are no children present to cry! No wonder the Bible says, “And, ye fathers,

provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). Bible study will help in carrying out this grave responsibility. Bring them to Bible study!



**3. To get them ready to obey.**

Many of our young people who obey the gospel are those who have been in Bible classes. Just observe and you will see! Not many young people are baptized who have not been in Bible study. The reason: One has to be taught before he can obey (Matt. 28:19). Will yours be ready?

**4. Of their influence.** Young people either have influence for good or bad. Often those who have not been to Bible study leave a bad influence on other young people.

Paul wrote a young man, “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Tim. 4:12). See that your children are in a good Bible class to help teach them the importance of being a good example.

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The attitude men had in Jesus’ day toward the law and prophets was a barometer of the attitude they would have toward God’s new law. And, should they have the scribes and Pharisees’ attitude, teaching men to violate God’s laws instead of keeping them, never would they enter into the kingdom of God!

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— author unknown



# Peace Protestors

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Marc W. Gibson

**I**f we are to have spiritual peace, it must be according to God's peace plan. No human peace plan will work. The enmity that exists between men and God is caused by sin (Jas. 4:4), and sin can only be removed by the pure blood of the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ (Rev.

This past February it was reported that six million people took part in peace protests around the world. Somewhere around a million of those people took part in cities around the United States. Their objective was to voice protest against a war against Iraq. Speakers at these protests spoke of their opposition to war while signs were carried that had messages for peace and against the leaders of the United States and Britain. Leaders of countries that support military action to disarm the defiant government of Iraq were singled out as warmongers and haters of peace. "Give peace a chance" was a slogan resurrected from protests past.

Aside from debating the merits of a war against Iraq, the philosophy espoused by many of the protesting individuals and groups is interesting. It is interesting because the worldly philosophy that opposes warfare for nearly any reason, and cries for peace no matter what, is the same philosophy found among many Christians in the church today who oppose religious controversy for nearly any reason, and cry for peace no matter what. A comparison of the two can uncover many similarities.

## **The Desire for Peace**

Of course, no one should desire conflict. Peace is the ultimate goal of every relationship, and God is the source of that peace, "for God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints" (1 Cor. 14:33). It is then incumbent upon

us to "pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19). If we are to have spiritual peace, it must be according to God's peace plan. No human peace plan will work. The enmity that exists between men and God is caused by sin (Jas. 4:4), and sin can only be removed by the pure blood of the perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:5).

Ironically, Jesus came to bring peace by the violence of the cross (John 14:27). This is where man finds true and lasting peace with God and his fellow man (Eph. 2:14-18). It cannot be enjoyed outside of Christ, or by any other peace plan. The preaching of the revelation of Christ is the preaching of the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). Conflict ends when men and women stand together in the truth of God. There is peace and tranquility within the fellowship of the faithful. This is a blessing of the peace of God "which surpasses all understanding" and will "guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

## **The Necessity of Spiritual Conflict**

We must recognize, though, that there are times in which conflict is unavoidable and even necessary. Jesus, who brought peace to those who would follow him, also said, "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword" (Matt. 10:34). He explained in the next few verses that this sword would be the conflict



that would result between those who follow him and those who do not. Teaching and standing for truth will cause conflict with those in sin, even with those who are members of our own family (vv. 35-37).

Conflict is not the fault of those who seek the peace of God's truth, but of those who "cause division and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned" (Rom. 16:17). Paul wrote that such ones will deceive the hearts of the simple "by smooth words and flattering speech" (v. 18). It is those who threaten souls with false teaching and hypocrisy that upset the harmony that we enjoy in Christ. Ahab blamed the prophet Elijah for Israel's troubles, but Elijah answered him, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and you have followed the Baals" (1 Kings 18:18). The blame for disturbing the peace of brethren should be laid at the feet of those who tolerate, fellowship, or teach doctrinal error. What should be done? If we ignore evil, it will go away? No, the Scriptures teach us to strap on the armor of God (Eph. 6:10-18) and to wage the good warfare (1 Tim. 2:18-20; 6:12). "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:4-5). Those who cannot stomach spiritual conflict had better not read their New Testaments, for it is a call to arms to fight the good fight of faith. While we enjoy peace among faithful brethren, we must courageously fight the evils that constantly threaten that peace.

### Results of the "Peace Protest" Philosophy

In spite of these dangers of evil, there will always be those who will protest for peace at any cost and avoid any appearance of religious controversy. As they did in Jeremiah's day,

they preach "'Peace, peace!' when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14). Note the following disastrous results of this "peace protest" philosophy:

**1. No exposure of error — its deceptions, tactics, and dangers.** The protestors find no good reason at any time for exposing error, teachers of error, and those who uphold their hands. Therefore, lessons distinguishing the true church from denominationalism, morality from immorality, or true doctrine from false doctrine will not be tolerated. The "peace protestors" fail to realize that the enemy will not quietly go away, or keep to himself, but has a snare by which he takes us captive to do his will (2 Tim. 2:26; cf. 1 Pet. 5:8). Those who are kept ignorant of the dangers around them provide easy targets of evil. The only way to deal with evil is to expose it, resist it, and defeat it with the word of God (Eph. 5:11; 1 Pet. 5:9; 2 Cor. 10:5).

**2. Aid and support for error.** Though nearly every "peace protestor" will say they do not support that which is evil, their refusal to openly oppose it actually works out as aid and support for evil. As long as the error remains unopposed, it can continue to practice its deception. While publicly smiling and talking about "getting along," teachers of error privately spread their false teaching

and turn brethren against those who are openly opposing the error. While we think all is nice and peaceful, the work is quietly being done to crumble the foundations of scriptural unity and faith in the word of God. We must not give the devil such opportunities (Eph. 4:27).

**3. Fellowship of error.** Oftentimes, men call for peace because they have a fellowship with error that they want to continue. Important decisions about fellowship may not be easy, but Jesus said spiritual conflict would touch our closest relationships (Matt. 10:34-37). Pretending that problems do not exist just makes this worse. Do not compromise truth for any person or group.

### Conclusion

You want peace? So do I. But peace cannot exist at any cost. It can only be found among those who stand for truth. This peace is preserved through strength — the strength to confront the threat of evil and defeat it. Our nation must exhibit this strength against the current earthly threats to our freedom! Even so, we soldiers of the cross must stand strong for our freedom in Christ — *Soldiers of Christ, arise!*

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# Seeing Ahead by Looking Back

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## H. Osby Weaver

It is hoped that we can see where

we are going by looking back at where we have been and avoid allowing an adverse history to repeat itself. In this article and my response to it, some of the statements some brethren would make in an effort to justify their departure from the faith, can be seen. This article was written over 50 years ago. I have deleted the name of the author.

Being interested in all that God has said to us, the article headed a “Warning from God” challenged my attention. It began by saying: “We should stop teaching that doing what the Bible says do is all there is to Christianity.” My first impression was that this brother must have some connection with God that I do not have, in order to get such a warning as that.

For a number of years, I have been preaching that “not everyone that says Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that *doeth* the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matt.7:21), only to learn now that *doing* all that God says is something that I ought to stop teaching. I have always been under the impression that “every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). It had never occurred to me that one needed anything more than enough to make him complete. It has always been my belief that when a thing was complete, to change it in any manner by additions, subtractions, or perversions would render it incomplete. I just did not know that something complete was subject to improvement, but now this brother comes along with a “Warning from God” that we should stop teaching that *doing* what the Bible says to *do* is all there is to Christianity. Wonder where the brother was when he received this warning? He surely was not looking at 2 Peter 1:3, “seeing that his divine power hath granted us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, through the *knowledge* of him that called us by his own glory and virtue.”

An honest mistake is no less harmful in its effect than an intentional one. Any punishment due as a result of a lack of knowledge may be mitigated (Luke 12:48), however what

this brother said was intentional, and he offers to “back up every word he says or make a statement correcting it.” We shall see.

He obviously knew that he was standing on a wobbly foundation when he said what he did and attempts to brace himself for a fall by saying, “Some of you will naturally misquote me, that is, take what I’m saying here out of its context while others will call it a ‘wild statement.’” He knew himself that it would not stand much criticism, but what a sweet opinion he has of his brethren to accuse them of “naturally misquoting” him. I imagine he knew that he was due to get slapped around a bit for being so careless in his thinking as well as his writing.

He further adds, “I believe that a person can do everything the Bible says to do and be lost.” Somehow; even after reading that, I am not inclined to throw up my hands and conclude that salvation is a hopeless situation! Since one can “do everything the Bible says to do and be lost,” I am wondering if he can leave undone anything the Bible says to do and be saved?

After one does all the Bible says to do, just where is he then to turn to get this additional information that he must have in order to be saved? Well the brother points to his publication and says “please subscribe and I will try to help you some more.” Surely he does not believe that he is inspired. There is enough infidelity in the world today without this brother inciting more with such rash statements.

Listen to his effort to explain what he meant when he said a person can do everything the Bible says to do and still be lost: “What I mean is you do not do faith, you do not do love, and so on.” Then we are going to have to stop asking a person who desires to be baptized, “Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of the true and living God?” He might think he did and say, “I do,” and run afoul of this “Warning from God” which this brother has received and declares that “faith is not something that you do, and love is not something that you do.” However, before he finished the article, he said, “If God tells you, and he does, to give as you are prospered and to love your neighbor as yourself and

# Hailey Versus Hailey: Who Can Believe It?

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John Isaac Edwards

This study shows a change in thinking of

Homer Hailey concerning the nature of eternal punishment. The full impact of Hailey's influence remains to be seen.

**1. A Matter of Revelation.** In an article entitled, "Hell and Who Will Be There" published in *Hailey's Comments* in 1985, Hailey said, "The doctrine of the state of the dead and of eternal punishment is pre-eminently a New Testament doctrine. It is *a matter of revelation* by Jesus Christ; to reject the New Testament concept of hell is to reject the integrity and Godhood of Jesus." A matter of doctrine is not a matter of indifference! John said, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God . . . If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not" (2 John 9-10).

**2. Everlasting Destruction.** Hailey comments concerning 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, "The 'destruction' is not annihilation. . . . Those who would make Paul's 'eternal destruction' mean annihilation, eliminate the Scriptural teaching on the subject" (*Hailey's Comments*, Vol. 2, 710). "Annihilation" is defined as, "The act of reducing to nothing or non-existence" (*American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828). Hailey has just

annihilated his own teaching on annihilation!

**3. Literal Meaning.** Hailey wrote of the word "eternal": "When it pertains to the age beyond the judgment and the passing of this present order of time, it has the literal meaning of eternal or never-ending" (*Hailey's Comments*, Vol. 2, 710).

*a. A Matter of Indifference.* In the preface of *God's Judgements & Punishments* by Homer Hailey published in 2003, Hailey said, "The comment on Revelation 20:10 in my *Commentary on Revelation* is correct to an extent. . . . Only one point was established in my mind and that was: there is an eternal punishment in store for the wicked. Whether that eternal punishment is extinction, annihilation, or a continuous consciousness in a lake of fire for ever and ever, was *a matter of indifference*." Just because a thing may be a matter of indifference in the mind of a man does not make it so in the mind of God!

*b. Annihilation.* In *God's Judgements & Punishments*, Hailey taught those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire, "exist no more" (142), "are totally consumed" (144),

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you know you are not *doing it*. . . . (emphasis mine, HOW) his grace will no more touch you than Jesus touched the graveclothes of Lazarus." Why my dear brother, you said in paragraph two of your article that love isn't something that you do, and in next to the last paragraph you said, "If God tells you to love your neighbor and you know that you are not doing it . . ." How can you do it if love isn't something you do? God tells us to do a thing, then warns this brother to pass the word along that it can't be done, yet if we do not do it, God's grace will no more touch us than Jesus touched the graveclothes of Lazarus. Yet, if you will just subscribe for his publication, he will try to help

you some more.

This is not an effort to keep people from reading his paper, but a warning (not from God) that you should not take its contents too seriously. Just read your Bible and do what it says and despite all these "warnings from God," I expect you can go right on to heaven without them.

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“nothing left . . . which could possibly be tormented” (144), “existence came to an end in the lake of fire” (178), “second death would bring the individuals to extinction as it did death and Hades” (179). Hailey reduces the wicked to “the darkness of nothingness . . . the darkness of nonexistence” (184). If this is not annihilation, I don’t know what is!

*c. Symbolical or Metaphorical Meaning.* In *God’s Judgments & Punishments*, Hailey said, “The expressions ‘unquenchable fire’ and ‘eternal fire’ are evidently used symbolically or metaphorically . . .” (143).

*d. Eternal Existence, Suffering, And Torment Of Wicked Humanity.* Hailey’s comments on Revelation 20:10: “It should be observed that ‘they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.’ Torment conveys the idea of torture, severe distress, and pain of body and mind . . . and those who worshiped the beast would be tormented with fire and brimstone, and the smoke of their torment would ascend for ever and ever (14:10). . . . There are many who question the eternal duration of this torment, but these must explain away biblical teaching. Jesus said that at the judgment those on His left hand would be told, ‘Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels . . . and these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life’ (Matt. 25:41, 46). Both the punishment and the life are eternal. In Revelation it is said of these two groups that those before the throne ‘serve him day and night’ (7:15), and the wicked ‘have no rest day or night’ (14:11), and that with the devil they are tormented (25:41, 46), a torment which is ‘day and night, for ever and ever.’ There is no day there, for it is ‘outer darkness’ (Mt. 22:13; 25:30). Since the day is in heaven and the night in hell, and since the one group serves Him day and night while the other group is tormented night and day, it follows that the night endures as long as the day. But since God is the light of the eternal day, the day (and, consequently, the

night) will never end. The period of this torment, ‘for ever and ever,’ is the same in duration as God, for He lives ‘for ever and ever’ (4:9). If there shall be total annihilation of the devil and the wicked it is not revealed” (*Commentary on Revelation* 398). To this is added the statement, “The materialists who bring hell and eternal punishment to an end, bring the wicked, the righteous and God to an end. Who can believe it?” (*Vanguard*, Vol. 8, Num. 12, 18).

**4. Temporary Existence, Suffering, and Torment of Wicked Humanity.** Hailey’s comments on Revelation 20: “‘And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever’ (20:10). This verse is often quoted to prove the eternal existence, suffering, and torment of wicked humanity. It should be mentioned of whom John spoke: Satan, the beast, and the false prophet. Wicked humans are not mentioned here, but are dealt with in the verses which follow, 20:14-15. The beast and false prophet were cast alive into the lake, as was the devil. It was these three who would be tormented day and night for ever. . . . Death and Hades and the wicked, those whose names were not written in the book of life, existence came to an end in the lake of fire” (*God’s Judgments & Punishments* 177-178). Hailey has just explained away biblical teaching!

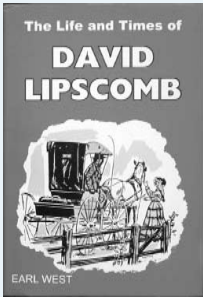
**Conclusion**

Some may misconstrue this as an “unheroic assault on a warrior” or that Hailey was “the victim of unjust vilification for taking unpopular positions” or “suffered from fellow churchmen short on knowledge and small in spirit.” I wonder, were Hymenaeus and Philetus victims of unjust vilification for taking unpopular positions on the resurrection, when Paul identified and exposed them (2 Tim. 2:16-18)? Was Paul short on knowledge and small in spirit when he delivered Hymenaeus and Alexander unto Satan (1 Tim. 1:19-20)? Do you display a superior knowledge and a bigger spirit when you charge men with being short on knowledge and small in spirit? Will this matter concerning eternal punishment be added to the list of matters of considerable moral and doctrinal import where, in spite of disagreements, we can work and worship together, or would this be outside the bounds of Christian unity? Consistency demands that those who maintain fellowship with those who teach the Hailey position on marriage, divorce, and remarriage must maintain fellowship with those who teach the Hailey position on eternal punishment. If one would have fellowship with the MDR man, but not the EP man, on what scriptural basis does he receive the former but not the latter?

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# Proper Use Of Church Funds

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Larry Ray Hafley

“May the money in 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2,

which was collected ‘for the saints,’ be used for any other purpose?”

The answer is that it cannot be used for any other purpose. The collected funds of that text were “for the saints.” For any of the messengers or churches to have used them for any other purpose would have been a misappropriation of funds.

The next question is this: “But, isn’t that what brethren are doing today? Aren’t they taking a collection based upon 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 and using it to support gospel preachers and provide meeting houses?” No, no one is doing that. Let me explain.

First, suppose 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 were not in the Bible. Take it out for a moment. Now, is there any authority for a church to support and send out preachers? Yes, Acts 11:22; 1 Corinthians 9:1-14; 2 Corinthians 11:8; Philippians 4:10, 15-17; 1 Thessalonians 1:8. Next, are funds needed for such work? Must a church have money in order to support and sustain a preacher and to do the work such as is described in the passages cited? Obviously, yes. Remember, now, we have taken 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 out of the equation. We cannot use it. Yet, is there scriptural authority for the church to have funds with which to do the work described? Yes.

Note a parallel, again, excluding the collection of 1 Corinthians 16. Is there authority for a meeting house of some kind in which to assemble? Yes, the fact that the church is to “come together in one place” and that brethren are not to forsake the assembling of themselves together shows that a place is essential (1 Cor. 14:23; Heb. 10:25). As the command to build the ark provided authority for hammers and saws, as the command to sing provides authority for song books, as the authority to take the Lord’s supper provides authority for utensils to contain the physical elements, so the need to assemble requires a place (Acts 20:8). In order to have such a place to assemble and worship as the Lord has commanded, is money required to provide that place? Certainly. So, we see that the church must have funds with which to operate and to perform the duties prescribed by

the Lord.

Thus, even without 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2, we see authority for the church to have funds, to have a treasury from which to work. That is necessarily implied. Now, how shall the church obtain those funds? Without 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2, we are left to our own devices. As such, we could have pie suppers, pancake breakfasts, sell trinkets and baked goods, and start a church run business. All of those things would be authorized if all we had was the need for money but without any description of how that money is to be raised.

However, in raising money “for the saints,” Paul gives the only description of how a church may obtain funds to do a work which it is authorized to do and that is by each saint “laying by him in store” “upon the first day of the week” (1 Cor. 16:1, 2). Now, get this, please, 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 is not the passage that authorizes support of gospel preachers, nor is it the authority for a church building, but it is the only place that tells us how and when to raise the money to do a work which God has given it to do. Like Acts 20:7, it is the only text which tells us “when,” it does not tell us “what for.” Think about that. We are told to take the Lord’s supper. We are told to eat and drink. Mention is made of the “communion” or fellowship of the bread and cup of the Lord; mention is made of taking it “as oft” we do so and of the fact that we “do show the Lord’s death till he come,” but not one passage speaks of when or how often, except, of course, Acts 20:7. Acts 20:7 tells us nothing about the nature or significance of the Lord’s supper. It gives it no “meaning.” It simply tells us the time when it was eaten. By combining 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17; 11:23-28 and Acts 20:7, we have the apostolic pattern for the Lord’s supper in all its essential details.

The same with the collection of 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2. It does not tell us all the ways a church may use its funds, nor does it tell us that they may be used for any other purpose, but it does tell us when and how a church is to raise the funds necessary to do a work which God has assigned.

# Some Suggestions to Elders on How to Keep Preachers From Leaving

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Royce Chandler

Just as the local work seems to be getting off to a good start and the future harvest appears promising, the preacher calls together the elders and informs them of his intention to move. After all the time spent in searching for a replacement and the money spent in moving him, it still takes, usually, at least a year or more for the church and the new preacher to adjust to each other, and for things to level out to where they were (if, indeed, such is possible) before the former preacher resigned.

The new man must start from scratch to win the confidence and respect of the local saints; programs begun by the former preacher are discontinued, often in mid-stream; contacts made by him are forgotten; fruit that was almost ready to show itself will not be harvested, for that accumulative influence which the former preacher would have exerted during the next several months is aborted, and the hidden sprouts of faith in sinners' hearts, which with only a little more work and support would surely blossom forth into obedience, silently die. Those indifferent saints just being inspired to interest and zeal by the example and influence of the preacher are suddenly deprived of that motivating personality and, having not yet developed the independence to stand on



their own devotion, lose that surge of growth as the “prop” moves to another local church.

With the new preacher comes a new stress in the local program; while the former stressed local edification through improved classes, special series of instruction, training sessions, etc., the new emphasis is placed on those areas which especially suit the new man. Thus, the entire local program often takes a good amount of time to readjust, and much damage has been done in the vineyard by churches having to readjust far too often.

How many are the elders who have not had to wrestle this problem? How many have not often asked, in frustration, “What can we do to keep this man?” “Why do preachers so often just get things going smoothly, and then leave?”

This article is not inclusive to the point of exploring the faults of preachers in upsetting local works by foolish, selfish and ill-considered decisions to move; we desire only, for the present, to offer some ideas on how to prevent such moves. In keeping with this one-sided theme, then, let us suggest that local elderships could prevent many preachers from moving by giving due regard to this statement: “. . . for the sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of light” (Luke 16:8); i.e., they are more mindful, more prudent concerning the matters of everyday life.

Can we not learn from the sons of the world? How do successful businesses prevent within their ranks this same upheaval, which surely would destroy them? Are we to refuse to learn all we can from what practical wisdom the world so prudently employs? To do so is an evident sign of folly. How, then, do successful businesses retain their most qualified men for many years of service with little fear of

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I trust this is clear to you. For further study, I strongly encourage you to secure a copy of two books by Roy E. Cogdill. They are: *The New Testament Church* and *Walking By Faith*. You may secure those inexpensive books by calling Truth Bookstore at (800) 428-0121.

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their leaving in favor of another company? If there is a general statement to explain it, perhaps it is this: the sons of men have learned that when a man is made to be happy in his work, and when this happiness and his productive efforts are reinforced with positive rewards from those around him, there is little motivation for leaving. This one small bit of secular prudence could often enable an elder-ship to retain a hard-working, productive preacher for many years, resulting in an abundant harvest that can hardly be matched by churches which regularly must be searching for new preachers.

### Acts of Kindness

In one sentence, elders could frequently secure a continued and fruitful work simply by showing genuine consideration to the preacher with whom they work.

As this article must be brief, let us now suggest some simple acts of kindness — of consideration — that would greatly aid a preacher in his work and would in most cases disarm the ever-present temptation to leave. This list of suggestions is necessarily brief, and should be used as a springboard to other suggestions.

**1. Do not ask a preacher to leave unless there is a strong and pressing reason for such.** Giving in to the baseless idea that a preacher should move every four or five years promotes an atmosphere of insecurity and futility, to say nothing of the unsettling effect it has on his wife and children. Knowing that they might be told to move at any time does nothing to give a preacher's family a sense of belonging and of security. Children do not need to be shuffled around, always having to leave friends and to change schools, sometimes at a moment's notice. Would you want your family to be treated that way? The emotional impact can sometimes be devastating on both the preacher and his family. Be considerate; be fair.

**2. Realize that a good preacher is just really getting started after his first two or three years.** Give him the support and the security he needs to spend several more years building on the foundation of the first few. This is a major key to local growth.

**3. Periodically, tell both the preacher and the brethren how much you appreciate his work.** Every man needs to know that his work is beneficial, and the brethren need to know that the elders are well aware of what work is being done, and that they are solidly behind it. Encouragement breeds more diligence.

**4. Send your preacher to "training" or study situations which will help him to grow.** Maintain his support and pay his expenses to go study; this is for his benefit; but mainly for that of the church, as he can return to teach those things which he learned. Especially would this sort

of work be good for young preachers, who have not yet had the time to study, in detail, certain subjects. If business organizations recognize the great benefit of such programs to their employees and leaders, why cannot we use a little of that same wisdom?

**5. Look for things to do to encourage him and to make things comfortable for him and his family.** Don't make him ask for every little thing that needs doing to the house, if the church owns it; be considerate enough to purposely notice things that could improve his situation. Provide him with study space and efficient equipment, such as a typewriter, an overhead projector, etc., to be used in his work.

**6. Show some initiative in the local work.** Many times there will be no organized program of work unless the preacher thinks it up, organizes it, and drives everyone into helping with it. This is shameful. The elders ought to constantly be thinking of ways to improve and to expand the local work; let the elders shoulder the task of providing new and better methods, concentrated studies, etc., instead of just sitting around until the preacher comes up with another "hot idea." If the church's program of work moves away with the former preacher, the brethren see a distinct picture of figureheads, not of true elders. And, they also may see the reason why they cannot keep a preacher — at least, not a good one.

**7. Why not give your preacher a set amount of money year specifically for books.** There is nothing more valuable to a preacher's work than a good library. Good books are expensive, and most preachers have enough to pay for without having to sacrifice unduly to purchase the best study aids. Since the books are used primarily to benefit the brethren in the classes and sermons, why cannot churches give \$100-\$200 each year, unrelated to his regular support, for providing your preacher with what he needs. The benefits will far outweigh the cost.

**8. Provide, automatically, a cost of living adjustment every six months.** Inflation hits a preacher, too. Any man worth keeping is worth showing this consideration. He has



no union to bargain for him, so the brethren must take the initiative. Is it “Christian” to let the world be fairer to its own than brethren are to the local preacher? This should be completely unrelated to any raise that might be given.

**9. Do not make the preacher beg.** How many businesses retain employees by going on and on, offering no raise until the employee finally comes in and asks for it? Consideration and fair play ought to eliminate this problem. If the world can recognize the need to increase productive workers’ salaries on a regular basis, why can elders not profit from this understanding? Is it so hard to go to the preacher, sit down with him, and open-mindedly discuss his increased financial needs on a regular yearly basis? Do you treat the preacher any less considerately than your company treats you? It is hard to leave a church where the preacher knows for a fact that the elders are constantly thinking of him, are aware of his needs and are willing to be fair with him.

**10. Understanding that preachers have no fringe benefits like most workers have, recognize that an inflation adjustment is not a raise.** If a man receives only enough increase to meet inflation, he simply treads water at the same buying power he had when he first moved among you. If a man is worth keeping, he is worth an increase in his support on a regular, fair basis. If he is not worth that consideration, he should be asked to leave. And surely all would recognize that when a new child is born in his family, it takes more to support that family than it did before. Be considerate; be fair.

These suggestions are offered in a meek and humble spirit; it is hoped that they will be considered in the same spirit. They are, admittedly, one-sided; perhaps some good elder would help us preachers by offering a list of suggestions from the other perspective.

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by Mike Willis

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## “Lying” continued from front page

“A righteous man hates lying, but a wicked man is loathsome and comes to shame” (Prov. 13:5). Many people enjoy lying to some extent. Even many religious people like to lie at least on occasion, or in order to get out of a difficult position. But the one who is truly righteous takes a very different approach. The righteous man must not enjoy lying even a little. He must hate it. As the psalmist exhorts, “You who love the Lord, hate evil!” (Ps. 97:10). Lying has no part in the life of a Christian, but instead belongs to the old life of sin that the child of God has left behind. Paul writes, “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds” (Col. 3:9).

**3. A poor man is better than a liar.** “What is desired in a man is kindness, and a poor man is better than a liar” (Prov. 19:22). There is no doubt that a man can advance his social and economic standing through lying. Many fortunes have been made through deceit and dishonesty in business dealings. Those who advance through lying are often regarded as upstanding members of the community. But all of the wealth and prestige that may be gained in this way is worthless. God’s word tells us that a poor man is better than a liar. Though he may lack material things, the poor man can still please God. The impenitent liar cannot.

**4. A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it.** The Proverb writer says, “A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin” (Prov. 26:28). It seems most people today view lying as something that is generally harmless, and sometimes necessary. This is reflected in the notion that one can tell a harmless little “white lie” in order to get out of trouble or to spare someone’s feelings. But the truth is that lying has consequences. The proverb makes it clear that someone will ultimately be hurt by the lies that are told. While lying may be viewed as harmless, it is a product of hate. The one who lies demonstrates his hatred toward those he is seeking to deceive.

**5. He who speaks lies shall perish.** “A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies shall perish” (Prov. 19:9). Lying is looked upon much more favorably than many other sins. Those who would never yield to the temptation to commit murder, commit adultery, or get drunk will yield to the temptation to tell a “little” lie when caught in a difficult situation. Perhaps we forget that the sin of lying will cause the liar to perish. “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

## Conclusion

Contrary to the view of lying that is commonly portrayed by the world today, the book of Proverbs gives us the in-



struction we need to help guard against this abominable sin. Liars will not be granted entrance into the everlasting joys of heaven (Rev. 22:14-15). Let us join with the Psalmist in saying, "Let the lying lips be put to silence" (Ps. 31:18).

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## **"Atonement"** continued from page 2

The New Testament church assembled each Lord's day to remember Jesus' death. They continued steadfastly (not sporadically) in breaking of bread (Acts 2:42); they assembled on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). Consequently the first day of the week became known as the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10). Paul's letter to the Corinthians implies that they assembled on the first day of the week to break bread (1 Cor. 11:10; 16:1-2).

The person who leads in the observance of the Lord's supper has a responsibility to focus attention on the sacrificial death of Jesus for redemption and, thereby, to remind us that salvation is by grace, not human merit.

Ironically, the brother who charged that we have neglected the atonement in comparison to the denominations praises those denominations who observe the Lord's supper with much less frequency than the Bible requires for keeping the Lord's death the central focus of worship. But he condemns those who remember his death week by week as a central part of its worship.

### **Bible Study**

The Bible classes taught in local churches also focus one's attention on the atonement. The verse-by-verse study of the various books of the Bible will keep the focus where God himself placed it. Those churches with a good program of Bible study cannot help but focus on the atonement as they study through the Old Testament preparation for the atonement and the New Testament account of the life, ministry, and death of Jesus of Nazareth. The New Testament epistles translate the significance of the atonement into the daily lives of churches and Christians.

Ironically, some who have so little Bible preaching and Bible study are thought to keep the atonement focused in the lives of its members better than those faithful churches who have superior programs of Bible study. Something is wrong with such an assessment of both the denominations and brethren.

### **Preaching**

Gospel preaching should focus attention on the atonement. Every preacher should periodically review his preaching and assess whether or not he is preaching the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Such a review should

especially check to see whether or not the atonement of Christ is preached. Paul said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:1-5). Paul preached Christ and him crucified as the central message of the gospel.

However, preaching the cross involves much more than teaching the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. When Paul wrote that he preached only the cross, he does not mean that was the only thing that he preached. Rather, he means that everything he preached is related to the message of the cross. Look at the messages in the book of 1 Corinthians to see what is included in preaching Christ and him crucified: (a) the sinfulness of division (1-4); (b) withdrawal of fellowship from the immoral (5); (c) going to law with brethren (6); (d) fornication (6); (e) marriage, divorce, and remarriage (7); (f) eating meats sacrificed to idols (8-10); (g) wearing the covering (11); (h) the Lord's supper (11); (i) spiritual gifts (12-14); (j) the resurrection (15); and (k) collecting funds for the poor saints. Paul did not quit preaching Christ when he wrote 1 Corinthians; rather, preaching Christ involves preaching all of these subjects. Preaching that is Christ-centered is not solely about the life and ministry of Christ. Rather, it ties everything that one preaches to the authority of the risen Christ.

One cannot preach water baptism, singing in worship, and godly living without tying those subjects to the risen Lord. The entire gospel message is related to the authority of Christ which came to him as a result of his death, burial, and resurrection.

The statement that brethren preach more church-centered lessons than Christ-centered lessons creates a false dichotomy. Jesus is the king of his kingdom. How can one preach that Jesus is king without preaching something about the kingdom over which he reigns. The word "kingdom" occurs 119 times in Matthew-John. How can one preach what Jesus preached on earth without including the subject of his kingdom, his church? If one preaches Christ without his kingdom/church, he does not preach the Christ revealed in the gospels.

### **Song**

The centrality of the atonement is also a primary focus in the songs that we sing. Think of titles such as the following which make the cross a central part of almost every service we attend:

- Beneath the Cross of Jesus

- I Believe In Jesus
- Mended and Whole
- Nailed to the Cross
- Near the Cross
- Room at the Cross for You
- The Old Rugged Cross
- The Way of the Cross Leads Home
- When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
- Are You Washed in the Blood?
- There Is Power in the Blood
- He Bore It All
- I'm The One

You get the idea. So much of our music has as its theme the atonement of Christ.

### Prayer

Every prayer that is prayed acknowledges that we approach the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. We close every prayer saying, "in the name of Jesus we pray." We recognize in this statement that we have access to the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:19-20).

Most of our prayers express our thanksgiving and praise to God for what God did in his grace to make our redemption possible, to plead his mercy for forgiveness of sins, and otherwise acknowledge our dependence upon Christ



Jack Wise, Jr.

I have been preaching for about five years. I want to tell you of the circumstances that have led me and my family to the work I am currently at.

Without naming names and going into too much detail, I was supposed to preach for a church. We left Texas with the high expectations of working with these brethren. We paid for all the moving expenses due to an older member telling us they were poor and had no money. I later found out by another member that they had approximately \$30,000 in the bank. Upon arriving Sunday morning and after the services were over, I approached a brother (the son of the older member) and asked him when I might begin to unload my material in the office. He told me they had another meeting and changed their minds and didn't want me. I asked him why they changed their mind and he said that it was because of the way I organized my lessons! And this

for salvation.

### Conclusion

To hear someone accuse gospel preachers and churches of Christ of not focusing on the cross appears to me misguided. I have attended worship since I was born. I have been exposed to the kind of preaching and teaching that is common in churches of Christ. To accuse our brethren of neglecting the atonement is a startling accusation and wholly unjustified.

What I suspect the case to be is that some are preaching messages that brethren do not want to hear — messages such as the oneness of the church, the identifying marks of the New Testament church, baptism is essential for salvation, baptism is by immersion and for the remission of sins, instrumental music in worship is unauthorized, etc. To try to curtail the preaching of such messages, one accuses brethren of not preaching the cross when he preaches such themes. The charge is based on the assumption that one preaches on these subjects without tying them to the cross when, in fact, what one preaches on these subjects stems from the authority of the resurrected Lord. We are preaching Christ when we preach the implications of his authority, just as Paul was when he wrote 1 Corinthians. Let's not allow an unjustified criticism to drive us away from preaching themes that need to be preached.

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decision was made while we were on the road traveling! What makes this even worse is that my wife and I traveled about 1200 miles to this church to preach for them when trying out. They asked me to stay another week and they flew my children from Texas to meet them. So I was there for two Sundays and one Wednesday and they met the whole family and I thought all was well. Not once on the phone before I left Texas to move or at any time did they say not to come. It was even agreed as to how much a week they were going to support me.

Their decision put us in a bad way. If it weren't for my aunt, and she is not a Christian, who lived in Indiana, my family and I would have been in the streets. We spent what we had to get to Indiana. My wife and I had no success in finding work and we cashed in our only retirement that we had. So we decided to move back to Monteagle, Tennessee because we owned some land and a trailer there. If we were going to be in poverty, we had rather be at home. This was in May of 2002. I want to say at the time that we had no desire to go back home, then or ever. It was not in our future plans.

After arriving home, we settled in and decided to worship in our house and try to teach the area we lived in. The nearest church was in Manchester, Tennessee which is about thirty

miles. After a few months, I told my wife that I wanted to visit a small congregation in Midway, Tennessee. It was only about three miles from Monteagle toward Sewanee where the University of the South is located. So one Wednesday evening we went to visit them. My wife went in and met with some of the members and I was talking with Bill Singleton who greeted us at the door. After about ten minutes he asked me if I was a preacher. I told him that I was. He said that this was the last night for their current preacher and they didn't know what they were going to do. He asked me if I would preach for them. I told him yes I would be glad to. Inside myself I was ecstatic. I couldn't believe I was asked to preach and I was never asked how I stood on any issues. A few weeks went by and a comment was made that they didn't know anything about me, preaching wise. I only told them I had preached in Vernon, Texas. They didn't ask anymore and I didn't reveal anything. But I should say that most of these people either knew me or they knew of my family because I was born in Sewanee and lived there at one time. They just didn't know about me as a preacher.

I spent the next three months teaching them general subjects in the Bible. I never hit directly on Bible authority. I wanted some time for them to get to know me and for me to get to know their practices. I found out that they were giving \$50 to Tennessee Children's Home, \$50 to a liberal brother who traveled to the Philippines, and \$50 to a foundation. Around the second week of December 2002, I decided to jump right into Bible authority. I spent every sermon and every class talking about it. At first they were surprised and even said that no one had ever taught them like I did. But I stuck to the Bible and gave a book, chapter, and verse for every decision we ever had and so they were more ready to accept the teaching on authority. By the first week of January I called a men's meeting. I told them that for me to stay they would have to make some changes. I explained the difference between liberal and conservative churches and that I was a conservative preacher. I also told them that if they decided to be conservative that other churches would not like it. One brother said that it didn't matter what other churches thought because they weren't going to get us to heaven anyway. And another brother said that he wanted to do the right thing. Dear reader, I want you to know that when I spoke to these brethren I spoke in such a way that they would not want me to stay. I was direct and left no room for discussion as to whether it was right or wrong on how they should stand. I received a key to the building that day!

I have now been preaching full time with the Midway church and we are conservative, or better put, we are scriptural in work, worship, and organization. I have had resistance thus far from two liberal brethren. One liberal brother was angry and told me that all the churches of Christ knew of me and that I was an anti and it would be best if I left the mountain. I am currently writing in a local paper in Sewanee. My goal is to write in another local paper and to get on a local TV station and to have Bible lessons on two radio stations.

I believe in the providence of God, and I believe I have seen it at work. If the church where I was told didn't want me had accepted me, then we would not be here. If we had found acceptable employment, we would not be here. If we had not inquired of the church there in Midway, we would not be here. So many variables that could have interfered with us being here, but God had a hand in this work. But because nothing hindered us, there is a sound church amongst many liberal churches, one in every town, where there was not one before. We are surrounded by false teaching, but we are strong and Lord willing, we will teach them.

I am currently receiving support from other churches. They heard of my efforts and are helping me. I have had many churches help by sending Bible tracts. The church here has never understood what it means to be active in teaching the community or in the way of knowing what to do locally. We are changing all that. They are sound and are studying with me on all issues. I am still in need of support. I am looking for those to help for the long run, but I understand that many places cannot help long term so I am asking for one time support as well. We got behind on our bills because of what happened and the one time support would help sustain us until we are fully supported. I would like to make mention here that I had a job, after I completed training, which I did, that was going to be very lucrative. In just three to five years I was going to be making approximately \$50,000 a month with this fire safety company as a regional salesman. But the brethren asked me to stay and teach them. My wife and I talked about it a lot and decided that, if we left the brethren, they would not be sound and would be lost. So for the love of the gospel and for the love of brethren, I turned down the job. If I had kept this job that I had spent many long days in training and which I had completed, we would be set financially for life. But when it really boils down to it, there is no comparison to material blessings with spiritual blessings in heavenly places! I will take the spiritual blessings any day! My wife and I have sacrificed everything to work with these brethren. No regrets. As a matter of fact, it has been the best work I have ever done.

Brethren we petition your prayers for the church here and for me and my family that we might be strong and have our strength in the Lord (Ps. 118:8). If I can be of any further assistance, please contact either by phone: 931-924-3744; or by email: [tennesseejac@blomand.net](mailto:tennesseejac@blomand.net), or by snail mail: P.O. Box 101, Monteagle, TN 37356. God bless.