

MAGAZINE

TRUTH

Are You Billed, Worried, and Bored To Death?

Johnie Edwards

Winston Churchill was quoted in the April 29, 2002 *Time Magazine* as once proclaiming, "Human beings are divided into three categories: those who are billed to death, those who are worried to death and those who are bored to death." Let's take a look at these three divisions.

Billed To Death

There are those who have so obligated themselves financially that they are truly "billed to death." Do you know anyone who has to have everything he sees? Often times stuff is easier to buy than to pay for. We live in the "plastic age" where many can buy about anything they desire. The problem comes when the bills start rolling in. Paul taught the Roman Christians, "Owe no man anything, but to love one another" (Rom. 13:8).

We must not overspend and not be able to pay lest we be "billed to death."

Worried To Death

Then there are those who are "worried to death." Some seem to worry about everything. Jesus addressed this group saying, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink: nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.

Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" (Matt. 6:25). Jesus referred to one's stature, the lilies of the field, the fowls of the air, and the grass of the field to show there are some things we cannot change and there are those who are not worried, yet are taken care of. Then Jesus said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). Instead of being worried about things, we need to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Worried to death? It can kill you!

Bored To Death

There is too much for Christians to do to be bored. If you are among those "bored to death," let me suggest some things you can do to keep busy and not be bored. First, "search the scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11) that you might be noble minded and know if the things you hear taught are so. Jesus said, "Search the scriptures: for in them ye

see "Billed . . . to Death" on p. 633

*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"
(John 8:32).*

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How to Overcome Temptation

Kevin Maxey

We have all been faced with and fallen to the temptation of sin. Is it possible for you to defeat the tantalizing and persistent lure of the devil? Can you victoriously triumph over sin? God confidently affirms that you can. “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Cor. 10:13). You know what your strongest temptation is. Apply the following exhortations from Scripture to help you overcome your temptation.

Go to God’s Word

God’s word has the answer. “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23). God will guide you in your temptation. “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word” (Ps. 119:9). Overcome temptation by going to the word. “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!” (Ps. 119:11). God’s word will keep you from sin. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” (Ps. 119:105). Jesus used the Scriptures to overcome temptation. “It is written” (Matt. 4:1-11). Memorize Bible verses that will help you defeat the specific sins you are struggling with.

Serve God Now

Remember God in your youth. “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, ‘I have no pleasure in them’” (Eccl. 12:1). One statistic says that 95 out of 100 people who are converted are converted by the age of 25. It is foolish to delay and to develop stubborn habits. Satan wants you to “wait until you have sown your wild oats.” This is a lie of the devil. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life” (Gal. 6:7-8).

We have many examples of those who were righteous in their youth. Joseph was young when he was in Potiphar’s house (Gen. 39). David was a growing lad when he killed Goliath (1 Sam. 17). Daniel was a teenager

see “Temptation” on p. 633

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Brother Caldwell's Footnote

Connie W. Adams

In the June 20, 2002 issue of *Truth Magazine*, I published, in my column, a letter which James R. Cope wrote to Yater Tant, along with an editorial note from brother Tant, which outlined his hopes and plans for Florida Christian College under his leadership. I was a student, entering my second year, at the time brother Cope came to begin his presidency of the school. It was a good statement. It reflected clearly the principles on which the school stood and purposed to proceed. On July 2, 2002 brother Colly Caldwell, president of Florida College, sent me a copy of this "Footnote" which he had sent to Mike Willis in reaction to my publishing the letter. Here is what he said:

Footnote to brother Adams' editorial

The letter from brother Cope to brother Tant which brother Adams published in the June 20, 2002 issue of *Truth Magazine* (3-4) was truly significant.

I had the great privilege of talking by phone to brother Tant on Friday, just three days before he died on Monday, March 3, 1997. The morning he died, I received that very letter in the mail from brother Tant's son, David, who had found it among brother Tant's papers while moving his dad from Birmingham to Atlanta. The next afternoon, March 4, I read the letter to our faculty and administration in a regular meeting, told them that I intended to republish it, and stated that I hoped all would support that decision. A faculty member moved to adopt a resolution of present support for the principles stated in the letter. The motion was approved unanimously and the letter was published in the next official college publication and sent to all our constituents. I expect many readers of *Truth Magazine* received a copy.

Most of us who were present in that meeting are here now. That letter represented our position in 1949 and 1997, and it represents our firm commitment in 2002. I want to thank brother Adams for copying the letter and causing everyone to be reminded where Florida College stands. Many want this school's good influence in the lives of their children. As best we can, though we are fallible, we are working to maintain the principles and ideals upon which the school was founded. In brother Cope's words, I again declare, "We stand in constant need of financial support, personal good will, and the prayers of God's people. The road ahead is a rugged one, our problems are many, and our responsibility staggering, yet with the support of faithful brethren and the help of God, we must not, we shall not — we cannot fail!"

C.G. "Colly" Caldwell

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At the time I came across this letter while browsing through the bound volume for 1949-50 of the *Gospel Guardian*, it slipped my memory that this had been published in the April 1997 *Florida College Communique* and I thank brother Caldwell for jogging my memory.

All of us know that Florida College is a human institution. It is doubtful that any such institution remains loyal at all times to the noble principles upon which it was founded. There were lapses under the guidance of brother Cope. But we always found him to be approachable and willing to listen to criticism from friends. Some events in recent times at Florida College represent a departure from these well stated principles. I will be specific.

1. The episode involving Hill Roberts is not consistent with these principles. The manner in which this whole situation was handled did not conform to the noble principles which brother Caldwell says he, his staff, and the board are committed to. The “open letter” signed by nearly 70 brethren, many of whom were former students, some former teachers and parents and grandparents of former or present students, was not kindly received. These men expressed honest and sincere concerns for the school and its direction. I direct your attention to point number 4 in brother Cope’s letter.

4. Criticism. We purpose to profit by the constructive criticism of loyal brethren without counting them our enemies when they disagree with us in matters of judgment. We deserve their rebukes should we err in matters of faith.

2. The situation involving Shane Scott does not conform to these principles. His views on the non-literal days of Genesis 1 were published openly before he was hired. When questions were raised about it, there was a stone-walling. Some Bible faculty members threatened to quit if brother Scott were to be dismissed. Though his contract expired without renewal, yet his influence was such among students that they dedicated the yearbook to him after he had left the campus. While the administration was blind-sided by this event and should not be charged with making this decision, still the influence of this former teacher remains in the hearts of the students who made this decision. I remind you of point 3 in brother Cope’s letter.

3. Faculty. Every member of the teaching staff will be sound in the faith and in good standing with his home congregation.

3. The shameful treatment of Donnie V. Rader at the 2001 lectures still stands as a blight. It is inconsistent with the spirit of fair play which has formerly characterized lecture programs and speakers. After the exchange between Ed Harrell and Mike Willis a few years ago, I thought some comments made by Clinton Hamilton, who

moderated the exchange, were unfair and did a disservice to some younger preachers. I spoke with Melvin Curry and Clinton Hamilton about it and it was agreed that I be allowed to speak about the matter at the beginning of the “Open Forum” the next day. If I am not mistaken, that was the last “open forum” during the annual lecture week. Brother Rader’s integrity was challenged in the statement publicly read by Bob Owen and in the printed materials by Ed Harrell and Earl Kimbrough which were handed out, along with brother Caldwell’s note in the 2002 Lecture Book, an unprecedented occurrence. These unfounded charges stand on the record to this good day. Even during the hectic days when the issues of sponsoring churches and church funded private institutions were being heavily debated, fairness prevailed in such discussions as occurred during open forums.

4. The relaxing of rules for students has not been consistent with the high aims given in the letter and in the affirmation of the present administration. A visit to the campus and a casual viewing of the appearance of some of the students reflects this. Even in the *Communique*, the bulletin of the college, we have been treated to pictures (once on the front page) of students wearing shorts well above the knees while standing (it does not take much imagination to determine where they strike when the student is seated). In one *Communique*, we have a picture of one of the staff in similar shorts, standing on a table along with several students in the background. Also, some of the steps used in drama productions sure look like dancing. That is a change!

Are there some good teachers and administrators there? Of course. Are there good students there? Certainly. Has the school done much good? To be sure. But it strains credulity to insist that the school stands squarely in 2002 where it did in 1949! The school has aligned itself with the “unity-in-diversity” sentiment which is reflected in the board, the administration, and faculty. There are a few exceptions to this and I do not want to paint with too broad a brush. But every one of those exceptions knows full well that I speak the truth about this.

It is one thing to give lip service to noble principles and quite another to practice what is preached. For my part, I would like to see these problems corrected and see the school survive for many years to serve young people and their families. I had not intended to say more about this and was willing to let the Cope letter and the Tant editorial stand on their own legs. But brother Caldwell’s “Footnote” demanded some response and I pray that it will be taken in the spirit in which it is intended.

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The Chronology of the Bible (3)

Examination of the Chronologies

Those who believe in an old earth and in the Bible are forced to address the chronological data provided in Scripture. There are a number of different arguments that are made. There are three approaches to the chronological information in Genesis 5

1. The genealogy assumes an unbroken line of descent from the creation to the Flood. This is the assumption underlying the chronology of Archbishop Ussher and others. The twenty generations are twenty literal men. The advantage of this position is that it is the most natural understanding of the text.

2. The genealogy has missing links. The fact that ten generations exist from Adam to the Flood (Gen. 5) and from the Flood to Abraham (Gen. 11) causes some to think that the ten generations is a selective genealogy using ten as a memory device much like that which appears in Matthew 1 which divides the genealogy of Jesus into three sections of 14 names each. W.H. Green's article "Primeval Chronology" (*Bibliotheca Sacra* [1890] 285-303) is generally cited to document that genealogies frequently have missing links. Among the evidences cited by Green are the missing links in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus where three names drop out between Joram and Uz-ziah (namely Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah [Matt. 1:8]) and the omission of Jehoiakim after Josiah (Matt. 1:11). Another example is the omissions in the genealogy of Shebuel, King David's appointee as ruler of his treasures (1 Chron. 26:24), who is described as "the son of Gershon, the son of Moses," which is obviously abridged. Other comparisons of genealogies demonstrate omissions (cf. 1 Chron. 6:3-14 with Ezra 7:1-5). In response to this, one needs to note three things:

1. The fact that some genealogies have omissions is no proof that all of them do. We know that some genealogies have omissions, which omissions are known by other evidences, such as (a) comparison with other texts, (b) the necessity of additional generations known from chronological data drawn from other texts (for example, we know the approximate time from Moses to David; this could not be covered in two generations), (c)

the use of a memory device, such as specifically mentioned in Matthew 1:17 ("So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations."), and other indicators. *To assume that every genealogy has omissions is an unwarranted assumption.* To

assert that a particular genealogy has omissions without any evidence to sustain the assumption is dangerous exegesis. The burden of proof lies on the person who asserts that there are omissions in the genealogical table in Genesis 5. If there are missing links in Genesis 5 and 11, there is no evidence to prove it (except for Cainan as was discussed in my second article). One can readily admit that some genealogies have omissions and should be alert to that possible problem in any genealogy. However, one is mistaken to assume that, because some genealogies have omissions, all do.

2. A genealogy with gaping holes is no genealogy at all. The genealogy of Jesus would be meaningless if it were made to fit modern evolutionary theory. Let me illustrate what I mean. If the 75 generations of Jesus' genealogy in Luke 3, which traces Jesus' ancestors back to Adam, are to cover a mere ten million years (a low number for the evolutionary model), then each person in that genealogy represents approximately 13,330 years. What meaning does a genealogy have if it is extended that far? This is more drastically shown if the period between Adam and Abraham (twenty generations) covers ten million years. In that case, each person in the genealogical table represents 500,000 years. What meaning does a genealogy have if it is extended that far?

3. One should observe the difference between a genealogy and what appears in Genesis 5. I place the following texts side by side for this comparison:

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of Da-



vid, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren; And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram; And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon; And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias; And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa; And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias; And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias; And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias; And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon: And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (Matt. 1:1-16).

And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called

his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died (Gen. 5:3-11).

The difference in the two is noticeable. In a genealogy, the text simply says “x begat y.” The additional information

of how old the person was at the birth of the next person in the genealogical chain, how many years he lived after the birth, and how old he was at death are not part of a bland genealogy. Benjamin B. Warfield admitted that “when brought together in sequence, name after name, these notes assume the appearance of a concatenated chronological scheme. But this is pure illusion” (“Antiquity and Unity of the Human Race,” *Studies in Theology* 243). He asserts that the additional information given about each person is irrelevant parenthetical information that may be compared to a reading such as the following: “Adam was eight cubits in height and begat Seth; and Seth was seven cubits in height and begat Enosh; and Enosh was six cubits in height and begat Kenan” (244). I cannot accept that the information given is parenthetical information that merely gives an illusion of a chronology. The construction of this table consistently cites the age of the father at the birth of the son, which information is meaningless if one is not to understand a chronological sequence and if there are omissions in the list.

One should also recognize that the genealogies of the Bible are not all alike. One must look at the purpose that is served by each genealogy in the context in which it is written. A genealogy designed to show that one is from the seed of David is different from one that is showing the unbroken chain of priests from Aaron to the present. In the former case, omissions would be natural and expected; in the second, omissions would be a serious flaw.

One also needs to call attention to why some men are searching for more time in the genealogical tables. The need for more time is not based on Bible evidence that demands it. Rather, the need for more time is based on geological time tables, archaeological dating sequences, the evolutionary model, and such like presuppositions. The dating systems of such disciplines are far from absolute. One needs to be careful not to lay aside the only inspired and infallible account of man’s origins and creation in order to adhere to admittedly fallible dating systems, especially in disciplines of study with flawed presuppositions (such as those affected by the evolutionary hypothesis).

The advantages to the interpretation that postulates omissions in the genealogy are: (a) It explains why ten generations (completeness) are cited; (b) It allows more years for mankind’s existence for those who see some need for it.

3. The genealogy refers to dynasties, not individuals.

This interpretation explains the narrative as follows: Adam and his successors ruled for 930 years. At the end of 930 years, the dynasty of Seth began. In the 105th year of Seth, the family of Enos came to headship. Seth, after being at the head of the affairs for 912 years was succeeded by the family of Enos in the 1842nd year of man. The totals of the genealogies according to this interpretation is 8,225 years (Davis, *ISBE* 1:143). This interpretation has the disadvantage of not using the obvious meaning of the names involved; one most naturally thinks that the names cited are mere men, not dynasties. The advantages to this interpretation are that (a) it explains the longevity of the lives; (b) it

asserts no omissions. But even this interpretation will only add 6000 years to the age of the earth, much less than is needed by those who accept the pronouncements of modern science that the earth is 4.5 billion years old.

Conclusion

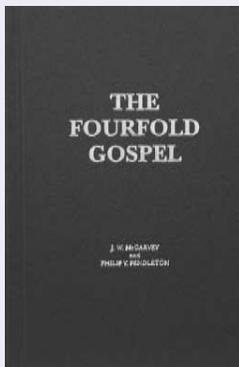
In conclusion, one must address the biblical material provided in these chronologies. If the earth is 4.5 billion years old, in what sense are Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies? Let's assume that the genealogies cover 100,000,000 years, which is still a mere pittance of time given the evolutionary model. The 100,000,000 years must be divided among the twenty men mentioned in the genealogical tables. Each person represents 5,000,000 years. If there is but one ancestor recorded for every 5,000,000 years, in what sense are Genesis 5 and 11 genealogical tables? Would anyone working on his family's genealogy accept such omissions?

However, let's suppose that there are omissions in the chronological tables provided in Genesis 5 and 11. Let's suppose that there are ten men missing between each entry. Still one is left with a young earth. Abraham was born approximately 2000 years after creation, assuming that there were 20 generations. But, if we insert ten generations of approximately the same proportion of years, we still would have a relatively young earth. The first ten generations occupied 1656 years. We will multiply that by ten to arrive at 16,560 years. The second ten generations occupied 420 years. We multiply that by ten to arrive at 4200 years. Adding 16,560 to 4200 years, we arrive at the figure of 20,760 years old. Compared to the evolutionary model of 4.5 billion years (that is: 4,500,000,000 years), the extremely minor difference of between 6000 years and 20,000 years is minuscule in the light of such enormous figures.

Those who postulate an old earth of 4.5 billion years find themselves in serious contradiction to the biblical evidence. The biblical record simply has no place for eons of time prior to Genesis 1. Those who teach that the earth is 4.5 billion years old cannot fit that amount of time in any place in the Bible after Genesis 1. They are left with one chapter in the Bible to find room for their 4.5 billion years — Genesis 1. If the evidence of a 4.5 billion year old earth is not found in Genesis 1, it cannot be found in the Bible! Those who believe in and teach an old earth are teaching a doctrine that cannot be harmonized with Scripture. To believe in the old earth and that mankind has existed on this earth for millions of years is to deny the historical account of man as related in Scripture.

Belief in an old earth undermines credibility in the biblical account of man: The Old Testament record omits millions of years of man's history, in an account that has the surface appearance of being a straightforward chronological record of man's existence. The truth is, according to those who believe in an old earth, the earth has existed for billions of years; mankind has been on this earth for millions of years. The earth was not created in six-literal days but over millions of years of natural evolution with periodic intrusions by the creative hand of God. If this is a true account of what transpired, the Bible account is untrue. Plainly and simply stated, the old earth theory is an attack on the inspiration of Scripture.

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“G” Rated — Not What It Used To Be!

I have recently been exposed to a web site that you may already know about. I strongly recommend that you visit

this site before you go to or rent a movie. It is www.screenit.com. This site gives you a detailed breakdown of the entire movie. From the plot to the scary scenes to the “imitative behavior.” It also lists questionable phrases in the movie as well as every curse word. This site has kept us from renting movies which we were told by others that our kids would love, and one in which we were assured there was nothing inappropriate. When, in fact, there were several parts to which I did not wish to expose my kids.

Also, while checking a movie entitled, “The Rookie,” that is rated “G,” I found that it contains *six curse words*. It uses several biblical terms, such as, “hell” and “damn,” in a profane fashion. It also uses exclamatory phrases which take the Lord’s name in vain during the film. This information is per “screenit.com.” I really don’t know what led me to check a movie that was “rated G.” Since “G” movies are supposed to be like “Snow White,” “Ole Yeller,” and those without any “questionable” material, I assumed they were “safe.” I suppose that the world around us is changing so rapidly that taking the Lord’s name in vain and swearing have become acceptable behavior for your three-year old to do in public. As we all know, kids are like little sponges, they soak up what they hear and see, and then they give themselves a squeeze, and it all comes back out larger and louder than life itself (and usually in a very inappropriate place).

I don’t know why I am really surprised. Things have been headed this way for years. Television stations have been leaving in coarse phrases like — well, if you’ve watched much television at all, you know what I’m talking about! Other such “small” and “insignificant” curse words have been used for 15 years now, and I’m not talking about stations like HBO or Cinemax. I mean TBS and FOX and CBS and ABC and NBC, not to mention the “Documentary” of September 11 that left in the “real and raw emotion that embodied this day” (their

reasoning for leaving in all of the “usual” curse words and for allowing the airing of the most foul word to describe sexual immorality). You can use that awful word in a movie twice and still get a “PG-13” rating (as long as the word is not describing the act and is “simply” being used as an exclamation). And as long as you only show a person’s posterior or pectoral area (female) for less than five seconds, and as long as it is not during a simulated sexual situation, then you can still receive a “PG-13” rating.

So, what is my point you ask. My point is check into things for yourself. See what’s really in the movie (by using informative sites like screenit.com and others like it). Watch it first or watch it with your children and don’t be afraid to turn off the video/dvd or to get up and walk out of the theater if the movie is not proper — either way the money is spent — you must set an example for your children and for those around you and do what is right!



Some people say that ignorance is bliss. But, willful ignorance is just plain ignorance. It is what it conveys . . . stupidity . . .

. laziness . . . and a complete lack of concern for yourself and for those over whom you have an influence. Others will say, “You can’t protect your kids from everything — they’re going to experience it sometime.” Well, I say, “Protect them from what you can while you can, and teach them about the perversion that they *will* be exposed to and teach them what is right, and teach them to tell the difference between the two.”

Listen, observe, care, interact, try, choose, help, rule, discipline, share information, be strong, explain why, expose error, and lead by example. Kids and adults are like sponges — (you know the rest).

Have more of an influence on the world than the world has on you.

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Jere E. Frost

Where “We” Are Going

One dear friend was impressed with Sewell Hall’s article on “Where We Are and Where We Are Going” and e-mailed me a copy. I had already read it in *Truth Magazine*, but I read it again. Another friend was disturbed by the article and asked me about it. Yet another wanted my thoughts about it, upon which he then asked that I commit them to writing. By reason of this interest and encouragement, and my own deep concerns, I have done so. I am pleased to herewith share my thoughts in the hope they will be of some value to others.

I am presuming that the reader has read Sewell’s article. I agree with his first four paragraphs, but as he gets into the substance he draws a flawed parallel and misses the point of the fundamental issues confronting brethren today. I will be specific.

His view notwithstanding, the present conflict is not at all a matter like the Corinthian “I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas.” The dispute among brethren today is over clearly definable differences in doctrine. A big part of its core is the philosophy that was popularly introduced by, and championed in, *Christianity Magazine* by Ed Harrell. Forasmuch as Paul, Apollos, and Peter all believed and preached the same thing, a parallel today would have to reference preachers who stand together. It would be like the readers of the now defunct *Christianity Magazine* saying, “I am of Harrell, I am of Bowman, I am of Earnhart, I am of Hall.” There is no known doctrinal issue between these brethren, just as there was no doctrinal issue between Paul, Apollos, and Peter.

But there is a big doctrinal issue involved in the current controversies. It is not a matter of holding to a preacher preference. Thus there is no parallel. The doctrinal issue between those who believe in, and preach, unity-in-diversity, and those who oppose it, is real and significant; it is not a matter of personality. And those who take no position except to criticize any opposition as “biting and devouring” are enablers of the doctrine. The only ones being bitten or devoured are those who oppose the doctrine. Those who oppose the doctrine are straight-up about a doctrinal difference. But those who defend or enable it, as in Sewell’s article, do not straight-

up discuss the doctrinal position, but rather charge those with scriptural objections with biting and devouring. Thus the scriptural objections are ignored, and those who offered scriptural objections are personally impugned. That is not fair or right.

Hang the personalities; the introduction of instrumental music in the 1800s was *not* an “of Paul, Apollos, Peter” thing. There was an *issue!* Faithful brethren were “wrestling against spiritual wickedness,” false doctrines and practices. It did not matter *who* was teaching it as to their resistance and opposition. Opposition to instrumental music and the Missionary Society was not predicated on *who* taught it. It was opposition to the doctrines and practices. It did not matter then *who* was for and *who* was against the instrument. But it *did* matter then, and it matters *now* as to what was believed on the subject. Ditto when the premillennial tide broke and later when the institutional battle raged. It was not a personality fight. Personalities were necessarily involved, but it was not a personality conflict. There was a definitive issue.

And so it is now. There is a definitive doctrine that Ed Harrell taught in *Christianity Magazine*. Ed called it — it was Ed’s expression — “unity-in-diversity.” There is no biting or devouring in using his terminology to describe his doctrine. *Unity-in-diversity* is *Christianity Magazine*’s legacy. That was the banner under which Ed argued. On that ground he argued that whereas he believed it was adultery to divorce and remarry without a scriptural cause, and he believed Homer Hailey was wrong on that count, he could still fellowship both the adulterer and the defender of the adultery. That rationale has been expanded to other errors. There is a definitive issue.

The other editors of the magazine said nothing opposing Ed’s articles or views, but rather enabled him. When his series of articles originally appeared, they said nothing. Thus they enabled him by being silent, which constituted a tacit approval. When it was republished, again the other editors said nothing. Thus they continued their enabling. And even now, when it is opposed after the years of harm that it has wrought, Sewell seeks to dismiss opposition as

a “Paul, Apollos, Peter” personality conflict. That is not even close to what is troubling Zion.

No, it is not a personality conflict. It does not matter *who* introduces the instrument and Missionary Society, premillennialism, institutionalism, or unity-in-diversity — they are all substantive, doctrinal matters of serious import. The conflict is between these philosophies and divine truth, and *who* the personalities are has nothing to do with it. I am saddened that Sewell chooses to still be an enabler.

Who Are the We?

Sewell was right on target by noting that where we are going depends on who “we” are. Let me be bit more precise.

If by “we” you mean those in league and step with David Lipscomb University, since they are already on the outer edges of the radar screen, they are headed out of sight. After all, they already have had a full-page ad in *The Nashville Tennessean* welcoming Billy Graham in his last campaign there. They have promoted “hootified gospel music” and “rootsy rock” (those are their terms) that challenge “traditional” beliefs of churches of Christ (again, that’s their representation). One of their celebrated preachers (Jeff Walling) has been preaching for nearly two decades that instrumental music is “a gray area” (that’s his expression). The head of the Bible Department says they have “crossed the tracks,” are pretty much like their religious neighbors, and many of their number would be appalled to hear salvation being tied to being in the church of Christ. Yes, they are headed off the radar screen. Many of us thought they were headed that way when we read Batsell Barrett Baxter’s widely circulated tract back in the 1960s (I still have a copy). You cannot but be saddened by what the preachers from that environment have been preaching. You cannot but shudder when you think of what is going to be preached across the country in days and years to come by the preachers now entering or emerging from Lipscomb’s halls.

Opposition to it is not “biting and devouring” one another. Objections are not personal, but doctrinal; they are not petty, but substantive; they are not sarcastic put-downs of anyone’s person, but a courteous although straightforward repudiation of Lipscomb’s doctrines, philosophy and departures from God’s word.

If by “we” you mean the *Christianity Magazine*/Florida College mentality, first consider where this “we” is. As to adultery, well, you can fellowship the adulterer *and* the preacher who defends the adultery (ala Homer Hailey). There is a considerable chorus from these quarters echoing the same spirit regarding other errors.

For example, as to creation, a conflict began with a professor teaching students that the segment of time that

Scripture calls a “day” in Genesis may in reality have been billions of years. It does not seem to bother them a bit that the Bible says that a day in the creation consisted of day-night, light-darkness, and evening-morning (Gen. 1:5), making clear exactly what constituted a day. But no matter, the academic spin was that it “coulda” been billions of years, and thus accommodate theories demanding a billions of years old earth.

Now to represent opposition to such as a “Paul, Apollos, Peter” personality conflict, and a “biting and devouring” of one another, grossly misrepresents and obscures the real issue. A floodgate wide open enough for this to pass through will be powerless to stop smaller departures from Scripture that are certain to follow. And since Ed’s CM logic says “consistency demands” that we fellowship adulterers, it will certainly demand that we fellowship those guilty and impenitent in respect to the already-commenced and certain-to-come departures. It does not take Solomonic wisdom to see where this “we” is headed.

If the “we” are those who oppose what Scripture will not support, and who call for book-chapter-and-verse for all that is taught and practiced, then they are headed back to The Book on an almost daily basis. They will be found opposing instrumental music and adultery — by the way, if I must accept the one and oppose the other, kindly roll in the organ but spare me the role of enabling fornicators and adulterers. This “we” will embrace neither. They will be preaching the existence of the kingdom and opposing premillennialism. They will be found teaching that the church is all-sufficient to do its work and will be opposing institutionalism. They will be vigilant and set to oppose anything that alters the gospel of Christ. They will be advocating “unity of the faith” and “unity of the spirit,” both being Bible expressions, and earnestly opposing the ruinous philosophy of “unity-in-diversity,” a human expression that makes truth incidental and unnecessary to unity, and replaces truth and conviction with speculation and compromise as the glue of unity.

The “we” that oppose these innovations are not biting and devouring. They are simply having no fellowship with error and are rather reproofing it. Those that have the conscientious conviction that adulterers will not inherit the kingdom of heaven are on infinitely safer ground than those that advocate their fellowship.

Where are *you*, dear reader, and where are *you* headed?

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Solving Church Problems

Bobby L. Graham

Why do brethren sometimes do nothing, either out of fear of problems, ignorance of what to do, or apathy about the Lord's work? Brethren, prepare yourself to serve and then serve the Lord! Know that problems will arise, but they are not usually unsolvable.

Jerusalem a Church With Problems

While it is true that Corinth is probably the church that most often comes to mind in connection with problems, it is also correct that Jerusalem was the first church with problems. The chief difference is that Corinth was a “problem church,” where problems were not soon addressed, while Jerusalem apparently took care of her problems quickly. Early in her history Jerusalem had the problem of caring for the physical needs of the saints staying there for further instruction and training (Acts 2, 4), and the problem of some lying members also arose in connection with the solution of the earlier problem (Acts 5). Another problem, one of neglecting certain ones in this physical relief, arose in Acts 6, and to it we shall give special attention in this study. We might learn a lesson from this consideration — namely, that problems do not need to become a blight on a church. In the case of Corinth the problems did become a blight, to the extent that the apostle Paul needed to write a letter based much on her problems; but in the case of Jerusalem the people took care of the problems with more attention to the existing needs.

The Problem of Neglect of Certain Widows

The number of disciples was then multiplying (Acts 6:1). During the endeavor to relieve the physical needs of some widows, possibly a part of the larger effort to care for needy ones in

general in the Jerusalem church, there arose a complaint. The complaint was voiced by the Greek-speaking Jews, otherwise called Hellenists, because their widows were being neglected in the daily meeting of physical needs. The Hebrew-speaking widows, whom we might refer to as the natives of the area, were receiving the relief. It is clear that there was discrimination based on ethnic identity, whether intended or not. As a consequence, there was a natural division of the people into two groups. There very well could have been an explosion in the congregation, but wise men spoke and acted to “defuse the powder keg.”

Two lessons stand out in this area. First, problems often arise when growth in numbers is taking place. Sometimes the sheer presence of more people contributes to problems, though it is often their spiritual immaturity or diverse backgrounds that bring the problems. Whatever the cause, it is a time for special attention to be given to the conditions that can cause such problems, to make sure that the problems not arise. Second, it is wise to investigate complaints. While some might be constant complainers, it is better to be sure and to prevent problems that have the potential to destroy a church. It is for this very work that elders are qualified and needed.

Solving the Problem

That the problem did not grow or cause an explosion in the Jerusalem

church is explained by the care that was given to solving it. Such an accomplishment is no accident, but the result of dedicated followers of Christ acting as they ought to act in relation to the Lord's will and to each other. The brethren involved in this local-church situation were not content to "let matters slide." Why do brethren sometimes do nothing, either out of fear of problems, ignorance of what to do, or apathy about the Lord's work? Brethren, prepare yourself to serve and then serve the Lord! Know that problems will arise, but they are not usually unsolvable.

It is interesting and edifying to note what happened in the solution of this problem.

1. The problem was not allowed to hinder the work of Christ being done by the church (Acts 6:2). The apostles understood and wisely advised concerning the need for them to continue what they were doing over the work of relief, which could be done by others in the congregation. Problems can loom so large that they stop all work being done, but this must not happen!

2. This problem was solved under apostolic direction (6:2-4). We can never do any better in our problems than to turn to what the apostles have written. We enjoy the same apostolic guidance that the first-century Christians had. The ideas of men, even those presented in the self-help books or those of exalted brethren, can never rival what the apostles have said on behalf of Christ.

3. The church was involved in the solution of the problem (6:3, 5-6). Apostles guided to this end, and all had opportunity to participate in the selection of qualified men for the task.

4. The solution outlined by the apostles depended upon seven men of good report, filled with the Holy Spirit and wisdom (6:3). Such men

are crucial to the welfare of any local church, especially to overcoming problems that arise.

5. The willingness of the members of the church to yield to apostolic direction was also essential (6:5). However excellent the Lord's plan in any particular area, it works only when people of faith trust the Lord's way to be best and submit to it.

6. The plan apparently included a deliberate attempt to include men from the group with the complaint (6:5). Such move, indicated by the Greek names of several of them, helped to assure the acceptance and success of the plan. When it is possible to obey God and also to placate offended brethren, wisdom dictates such a course. Brotherly kindness is still in style with the Lord (2 Pet. 1:7). Let us never forget, however, to obey God rather than men.

7. The Christians then sought the Lord's help in prayer (6:6). Nothing good can ever be accomplished without the blessing and help of God. Why do we not more often seek him in our times of problems?

8. The men installed in the special role of servants in this distribution of food enjoyed the confidence of the church (6:6). The kind of endorsement seen here showed their acceptance by all involved in this matter. Workers in a local church will more

likely succeed in their work when the entire church has participated in their selection and approval.

Progress Continued

Luke also speaks of the progress of the gospel continuing, after the problem had been solved (Acts 6:7). It ought not to surprise us that progress followed on the heels of this problem, especially its solution. The Lord designed his word to accomplish good, even in its application to problems. It is when problems continue, without sincere efforts to overcome them, that the progress wrought by the gospel stops.

Sometimes brethren fear that correcting wrongs in a congregation will bring problems, more specifically that using corrective discipline taught in the New Testament will cause problems, in the form of hurt feelings, broken relationships, and loss of members in a church. All must recall that such thinking betrays a lack of trust in God's way. When this kind of thinking rules, problems linger, fester, and grow larger because apostolic direction is not being followed. Is it not far better to follow God's will and remove the problem, thus eliminating the hindrance to progress? When we solve church problems with the use of God's plan, we make progress possible by removing the barriers to it. —
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Aaron Erhardt

Is There New Revelation From God Today?

That important question leads to much confusion in the religious world nowadays. Many denominations teach

that changes and additions in faith can be made because their church leaders have new revelation from God.

For instance, I recently had a Bible study with a Catholic doctor who listens to my daily radio program. During this study, I asked him if he was familiar with Vatican II. He said he was. (Vatican II was an event that radically changed the face of Roman Catholicism. Dramatic changes in faith were made.) I then asked him where the authority was for such changes in faith? He replied by saying that church leaders had new revelation from God to do so.

This article is intended to see what God's word says about this important issue. Is there new revelation from God today, or was the faith once delivered for all time?

The first passage that needs to be considered is Jude 3. Jude wrote, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

In that passage, Jude says that the faith was once delivered unto the saints. Just as Jesus died on the cross one time for all time, the word was delivered unto the saints one time for all time. It is not some on-going process. Despite what some denominations may teach, God's word is a permanent deposit. It will never be superseded, amended, updated, or modified. The word of God is perfect, adequate, and totally complete as it is.

The next passage that needs to be considered is 2 Peter 1:3. Peter wrote, "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

In that passage, Peter says that we have been given all

things that pertain unto life and godliness, and therefore need nothing else. Just think about it. If we have been given all things that pertain unto life and godliness, what else do we need? Nothing! If we have been given all things that pertain unto life and godliness, why would we need new revelation from God today? We wouldn't! Therefore we must conclude that there is no need for new (or continuous) revelation from God today. He has already given us everything we need!

The next passage that needs to be considered is Galatians 1:6-9. Paul wrote, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

In that passage we see that if someone comes claiming to have additional revelation from God, even if it is an angel, we are to reject it. As Paul said, those who pervert (or change) the gospel are to be accursed. In other words, If it is not already in the word of God, it is not the word of God.

The next passage that needs to be considered is John 16:13. In this passage, Jesus was speaking to his disciples and said, "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth."

In that passage, Jesus promised his disciples that the Spirit would come and guide them into all truth. Did that promise come to pass? The answer is undoubtedly "Yes" (1 Cor. 2:12-13). However, if you believe in new (or continuous) revelation from God today, you would have to answer "No." The fact is, the Spirit has come and has guided us into all truth!

Things That Will Not Wash Away Sin

The apostle John writes, “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4).

The Bible defines sin as the personal transgression of the law of God. One sins by violating the will of God. The word of God also says that “all have sinned” (Rom. 3:23) and that sin separates man from God (Isa. 59:1-2).

Man is in need of forgiveness, or remission of sins. Forgiveness of sins comes to man through the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16). Those who have never obeyed the gospel can have their sins forgiven by submitting to the Lord’s conditions. To those in need of forgiveness on the Day of Pentecost Peter said, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Paul was told to, “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). For the one who has already obeyed the gospel, there are different conditions for forgiveness. The Christian who sins is told to, “Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you” (Acts 8:22). Christians are promised that “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

The New Testament clearly defines the conditions that one must meet in order to have his sins forgiven, or

washed away. However, we often act as though we are not aware of those conditions at all. Instead of trusting in the Lord and meeting his conditions for forgiveness many will seek other ways to wash away their sins. Many people look to the following things to wash away their sins.

1. Time. Many seem to believe that if they will just keep quiet about their sin long enough and wait long enough, then somehow their sin will be forgiven. The idea must be that, if enough time has passed, then the sin will be forgotten and if forgotten, then surely forgiven. But the Hebrew writer says, “Exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13). Time will never wash away even one sin. Instead, the one who relies upon time will find his heart gradually hardened against the prospect of ever truly meeting the Lord’s conditions for forgiveness. Time offers no hope to anyone. As the apostle Paul puts it, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).

2. Ignorance. Many feel that their sins will automatically be washed away since they were ignorant that they had done anything wrong in the first place. Some will say that God would never hold this sin or that sin against them because they never even knew that it was wrong. But the

And the Verdict Is . . .

The Bible makes it clear that there is no new revelation from God today. As Jude said, it was “once delivered.” As Peter said, it already contains “all things that pertain unto life and godliness.” And as Paul said, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”

The Catholic Pope may claim to have authority to make additions or amendments to the word of God, but he doesn’t. The Mormon founder, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, Ellen G. White, and others, may claim to be modern

day prophets with modern day revelations, but they aren’t. The word of God is all-sufficient. It has everything we need. It is both complete and perfect (Jas. 1:25).

As Paul wrote, “All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be thoroughly (completely) furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

From Bible Talk Newsletter, South End Church of Christ, Louisville, Kentucky

Carla Shipley

“Dearest Young Christians”

(So begins the letter Carla Shipley wrote to the young people’s class she taught here in Baytown, Texas. I trust

that others will find it as useful, helpful, and encouraging — LRH.)

As I was preparing the lesson for our Sunday morning study on counting the cost of being a Christian, I began to think about all the struggles you face in this present world. Several emotions stirred in me that I feel compelled to share with you. The first was pride. I have rarely seen as fine a group of young people in a congregation as the one here at Pruett and Lobit. Others who visit our services, as well as faithful members who attend here, comment on your attention to the preaching of God’s word with open Bibles. I have been blessed to hear countless stories of your standing for the truth in the face of ridicule, and I share in your joy because of it (Jas. 1:2). You have no

way of knowing how much increase will come as a result of the seeds you are planting when you live as that kind of example for your friends, teachers, coaches, and family members. I thank God daily that you have each other to look to for encouragement in these endeavors when so many in the world have come to view as acceptable, those things that our Father finds abominable (Prov. 6:16-19).

When I considered the battles you now endure and the ones you will encounter in the future, I also felt a desire to shield and protect you. That is a feeling that all of us parents must watch carefully because it is only through enduring those temptations that you can be “proved” and “receive the crown of life” that God has promised you (Jas. 1:12). I will always pray for you, that you will look to God for

Bible says that “we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10). God has not promised to excuse anyone based upon ignorance. It is our responsibility to search the Scriptures so that we will “understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:17). Ignorance is never a substitute for obedience when it comes to meeting the Lord’s conditions for forgiveness.

3. More sin. Some attempt to get rid of their sins by committing more sins in an effort to cover up the wrong they have done. This is seen when a man tells a “little white lie” in order to hide some other “really bad” sin that he has committed. In the Old Testament we read that King David attempted to rid himself of the sin of adultery by subsequently lying and committing murder (2 Sam. 11). Rather than remove the first sin, these additional transgressions added to his guilt. It was only when he finally met God’s conditions for forgiveness that he was pardoned (2 Sam. 2:13). One can never wash away his sins by committing additional sins.

4. Good works. Others act as though they believe they

can wash away their sins by doing good works and acts of kindness. The idea in the minds of many is that God will accept a person as long as his good works outweigh his evil works. Some seem to think that by doing enough good works they can cancel out and remove their sins. But sin is not removed on the basis of subsequent good works. “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). One cannot accumulate enough good works to wash away even one sin he has committed. Instead, he must obey the Lord’s conditions for forgiveness (Mark 16:16).

Conclusion

God loved us enough to send his Son to provide a way for us to have forgiveness of sins (1 John 4:9-10). And, he has clearly laid out the conditions we must meet in order to receive forgiveness in the gospel. Have you met those conditions? Or, are you looking for some other way to wash away your sins?

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strength and trust in him (Ps. 18:1-3). He is the one who will never let you down.

I also felt some remorse for those times that I have not been the example I should have been. I stayed in a job far too long that kept me from attending services that I should not have missed and from doing things for my brethren that I should have done. It took precious hours of time away from my family and my Bible study. Those hours can never be returned to me or my children, and I am so thankful that they and my dear husband have been as forgiving as they have. Please learn from my mistakes. Ladies, make it your number one priority to be pleasing to God in your roles as mothers, wives, and Christians. Look for those young men who desire and seek the wisdom to be spiritual leaders in your family. They are those who will love you “even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her” (Eph. 5:25). Young men, strive to be just that kind of husband and look for the young ladies who put God first in all they do. She should be one who has the humility to submit to you. Her desire must be to love you and your children, to be discreet, chaste, a homemaker, and good (Tit. 2:4, 5). Does this mean that she will be timid and weak? NO! I can think of no other job on earth that requires more strength and courage.

Finally, I felt hope. You all are well on your way to becoming the next generation of elders, deacons, preachers, and faithful members who will determine the status of the Lord’s work in our area and in other places. I believe and pray that you will remain true to God’s will. You must never compromise God’s standard in the slightest. Remember those precious souls that will someday be born into your care and the responsibility you have toward them. If you water down the truth for them, they could perish and many more generations after them. On the other hand, if you take a firm stand, you will play a major role in their salvation as well as countless souls who will follow.

Thank you so much for the encouragement you give me. You are truly blessings in this local congregation. I think I am safe in speaking for others, as well as myself, when I ask you to please remember to pray for us as parents and grandparents that we may be positive examples to you as you have been for us.

Attached to this letter is a little poem that I wrote with some of these thoughts in mind. I’d like to dedicate it to the young Christian soldiers at Pruett and Lobit and if I can ever be of service to you in your battles, please call on me.

In Christian love,
Carla Shipley

Victory

Carla Shipley

~~The weapons consist of guns, swords and knives.~~

Instead, we must use the sound words of truth,
And the soldiers must fight while still in their youth.

This war is the one against Satan’s devices
For the saving of souls that his evil entices.
At stake are the lives of our family and friends
And a home with our Savior when the war finally ends.

Don’t fight alone on this earth’s battlefield.
Take with you the faith to use as your shield.
The true word of God you will wield as a sword.
Follow every command of your leader, our Lord.

Remember the ones who fight by you there.
Are they needing someone to help them by prayer?
Do they seem overcome by their losses and fear?
Lift them up. Let them know that they can persevere.

Maybe you’ll be discouraged one time or another,
And you’ll need to lean on a sister or brother.
They’ll be there for you as you stand for what’s right,
And you’ll both find a home in eternity’s light.

There may come a time when it seems you’re alone,
But remember the one who’ll be bringing you home.
God’s always there when you’re fighting for Him.
When He’s in command a sure victory you’ll win.

Life and Lessons of J.W. McGarvey

by John Waddey

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Choices!

He was known as the “Teflon Don,” for his ability to escape a series of federal prosecutions. He was acquitted in three federal trials before finally being convicted.

He was also known as “Dapper Dan,” because of his habit of wearing \$2,000 suits and dining in New York’s most expensive restaurants. In his trials, his attorneys depicted him as “a \$60,000-a-year plumbing contractor” (*Beacon Journal*, 06-11-02).

He “inspired strong loyalty” among the people of his neighborhood. He was regarded as “an inspirational figure” in his community, holding an annual 4th of July barbecue for his neighbors. Even today, there are computer web sites which honor him.

He was mobster John Gotti, who died on Monday, June 10, 2002, in a federal prison hospital in Springfield, Missouri, at the age of 61.

In his heyday, Gotti presided over a mob empire that brought in about \$1 billion dollars annually. Narcotics, pornography, gambling, labor racketeering, stolen cars, and fraud were his business. He rose to his powerful position in 1985 when he orchestrated the gang-land execution of his predecessor, Paul Castellano, on a New York sidewalk. Gotti was ultimately convicted of that murder, along with five other killings. His reputation as a ruthless killer made him a target of federal officials who finally convicted him in 1992. He spent over ten years in federal prison, “largely in solitary confinement,” until he was diagnosed with the throat cancer that took his life on June 10.

John Gotti was not the only member of his family who landed in prison. His younger brother, Gene, is serving a 50-year sentence for heroin trafficking. His son, John Jr. is serving six years for racketeering and gambling. Only a week before Gotti’s death, his older brother, Peter, was arrested, with two other family members. This crime family and its sensational empire has “captured America’s imagination for much of the twentieth century.” However, now this Mafia influence is “ebbing nationwide” with the death and arrests of these criminals.

The Point?

Simple! These high profile criminals all had *choices* to make. They chose crime and lawlessness and landed in prison. Our prisons are almost filled to capacity across the land with convicted felons who have made the same *choices*. Officials in some states have to release lesser offenders from prisons, to make room for the more violent criminals being convicted every day.

I readily confess my naivete about a lot of things, but I am confident that no hardcore criminals will ever read these words. Most who read them are God-fearing people, struggling to conduct themselves in life as the Lord commands. Are they going to make “Gotti-like” *choices*? No, not likely. They are law-abiding folks, just trying to make it through life daily, in the best way they can.

However, like the Gotti family, *we do have choices which we must make*. Hopefully, we will be wise in our decisions.

Consider Some Necessities

Being A Christian: Perhaps there are some in the world who know nothing about being a Christian, but you readers are fully aware of this requirement. God’s people are Christians (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16). Everyone must make the *choice* or decision about becoming a Christian. The requirements are simple: *hearing the gospel* (Mark 16:15); *believing in Christ* (John 8:24; Mark 16:16); *repentance of sins* (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38); *confession of faith in Christ* (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10); and *baptism for the remission of sins* (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16).

Folks, it really is that simple. This is exactly what God’s word tells sinners to do to be saved. Each of us makes a *choice* about obedience to these commands.

Living Faithfully As A Christian

Once one has obeyed the commandments cited above, the requirement is that one live a faithful life throughout the remainder of his days (Rev. 2:10b). *Worship* is required (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Eph. 5:19; Heb. 10:25). *Working* in the kingdom is another requirement (Jas 2:18, 22, 24). *Living a godly life* is a requirement (Gal. 5:22-23; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).

Preaching in Meetings in the Early Years — 1948-60

This thirteenth essay, of an indefinite number of intended such attempts, is appearing under a new

heading. The twelve previously published articles were entitled, “Where We Have Been — Where Are We Now — Where Are We Going.” In order to preserve printing space and to be more succinct, this change in the “headline” is being made, and will be varied in subsequent articles. I would remind the readers that these writings are mine; they reflect my experiences, reminiscences, observations, and conclusions. I speak for no one but me.

In essay number twelve I told of the first gospel meeting (“old-time” preachers and brethren referred to them as “protracted meetings”; our denominational neighbors called them “revivals”) that I participated in was in hot August 1948, fifteen days over three Lord’s days, with two conversions to Jesus Christ as “visible results.” (“Visible results” can be seen by people in an audience when folks respond publicly to the gospel invitation at

the conclusion of a service, to be baptized into Christ or to make confession of sins. “Invisible results” are seen only by our God in heaven and are known only to him and to sincere persons who, by faith, resolve in their hearts to conform to his will.) In early August 1949, I held a second meeting for this same small rural congregation, Millersburg, in Rutherford County, Tennessee, eleven days including two Sundays, with one erring child of God restored to duty in the kingdom of Christ.

Nearby was the lovely, sleepy little town of Christiana, with a congregation of some one hundred or more Christians and their four elders: Willie Miller, Frank Robinson, R.E. Young, and Clifford Brothers, Sr. They invited me to hold a meeting, August 19-29, 1949, eleven days, with day services (their meetings then were always in August, one meeting a year, ten or eleven days, two services a day). There were five baptisms in that meeting. I stayed with

There are things a Christian must do to remain in God’s favor. Each of us makes a *choice* about obedience to those commands.

You and I Must Choose

When Joshua, successor to Moses, drew near the end of his leadership over the nation of Israel, he assembled the people together and issued a charge to them. He said, “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, *choose you this day whom ye will serve*; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: *but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*” (Josh. 24:15).

Friends, that same challenge echoes down through the ages, until our days. We must *choose* whom we will serve. Hopefully, our *choice* will be as wise as Joshua’s. Hopefully, we will *choose* to serve the Lord. We need the blessings of that *choice*, as do our families, neighbors, and friends. Eternal life will be determined, based on the

choices we make. *Choose* wisely and right. You will never regret the correct *choice* of serving God.

John Gotti has made his *choices*. He lived in splendor and fame for six years as head of the Gambino crime family. He also lived over ten years in a federal prison, deprived of the most common of freedoms. He died in that awful place and now goes before the judgment seat of God for his sentence. The word says that Gotti, and his kind, will hear God say, “. . . Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). Gotti’s troubles did not end on June 10. They only began!

Whatever you do, neighbor, don’t make a Gotti-like *choice*. *Choose* to serve God, and live!

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brother and sister Miller (“brother Willie” and “sister Mae Love”). That effort was the beginning of a lovely friendship and fellowship with that church and with the Millers, and the other elders and their wives. They all dealt with me, a young preacher with a beautiful, godly wife, as they would have treated a beloved son. They asked me back for meetings in the summers of 1950, 1952, 1954, 1956, and in early 1958 they canceled a meeting we had scheduled for August of that year. (I will later come to the years of cancellations of meetings.)

In the years of 1948 through 1955 or so, it was a beginning preacher’s paradise among the churches and brethren. People were zealous for the Lord, for his truth, for his church. Preachers were respected and appreciated for their work’s sake. Many men wanted to preach. Preachers and brethren were of a high-quality, high-standards mentality, and mind-set. Godly and righteous living, unquestionable morality and spirituality, were demanded of the leaders (elders, deacons, preachers) of the churches. Divorces were very few and far between, rare among brethren then. There were no divorced elders and/or preachers, nor men in responsible leadership roles whose wives had been divorced. If a man had the misfortune of family problems and troubles, with divorce and/or remarriage, he just didn’t preach or serve as an elder. A high degree of unity prevailed among brethren and churches.

“Going to meetings” was pretty much the prevailing activity for brethren in the evening hours in those days. “Big crowds” characterized gospel meetings. In rural areas meetings would be in the summer, July and August, “after the crops were laid by.” Automobiles were beginning to be manufactured in great numbers and people were making wages and income to afford them. There was no television. Movies at the theaters were decent and wholesome but folks, especially in small towns and rural areas of the south, were just not movie goers. Such people were “worldly” if they attended the movies. Most preachers preached against the movies. Larger city churches had regular preachers but most rural, country congregations had brethren to come in on Sundays to preach, men who made their living in “secular work.” Some rural churches did not have Sunday evening services but gradually began to do so when electricity came into the more remote, rural small-town areas, and cars with “headlights” were available and people could “drive at night” and the country was becoming a more highly industrialized society and less of an agricultural-based economy. (The church at Deason in Bedford County, Tennessee, where I preached for two

years, my first regular preaching work with a church, began to have Sunday evening services in 1948 after I bought a car, could preach on Sunday nights, and could drive back to Nashville at night after services.)

In just about every meeting there would be baptisms and restorations. People had come through the war years and were serious minded and spiritually inclined, break-ups of homes and divorces were relatively rare, folks were not living together without benefit of marriage, “trial marriages,” “live-in” boy friends and girl friends, and “co-ed college dormitories” were unheard of, homosexuality (“gays” and “lesbians” were unknown words, with such people known as “queers,” if they were known at all, and “gay” meant a person was happy, joyous, filled with mirth, and a pleasure to be with and around) was forbidden not only by God’s word but by civil laws, with the military services immediately “mustering out” and dishonorably discharging any individual found guilty of such perverted behavior. Worldliness, then, was at a minimum, with women wearing shorts or “bathing” suits, people going to a dance or to the movies, or drinking a bottle (cans had not come along) of beer, being the extremes of worldliness, which activities were condemned by all faithful preachers, such preaching and writings being endorsed by all faithful elders and brethren! There were no drugs, pot-smokers, hippies, alcoholics, sex-perverts, child molesters, and addicts to pornography, at least not openly and known publicly. Such folks were dealt with harshly by the laws of men and disfellowshipped by brethren, if such conduct was revealed.

The baptisms were joyous occasions during gospel meetings. Due to a lack of “regular preaching” in rural, country churches (where most of my meeting work was done in those early years), folks would wait until “the big meeting” to obey the gospel. It was not unusual to have five, ten, or fifteen baptisms (“additions”) in a meeting or to have similar numbers of “restorations.” Few rural churches had baptistries in their meeting houses then, so we would often go into town, to the county seat, to the city church building, to have the baptisms. Many trips were made for baptisms to the Main Street church building in Shelbyville, or to the East Main Street building in Murfreesboro, or to “the big church on the hill” building in Woodbury, or to “the main church in Cheatham County” building in Ashland City. But sometimes at night we went to the creeks and rivers in Bedford County, Rutherford County, Cannon County, or Cheatham County, and by lighting from automobile headlights, flashlights, and coal oil lanterns we would have

the baptisms of penitent believers into Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Luke 24:46-47; Gal. 3:26-29; Rom. 6:1-7, 16-18; 1 Pet. 3:21). Sometimes the waters of the creeks and rivers would be cold or somewhat polluted but that made no difference to truly penitent sinners and sincere brethren. Sometimes folks would not want to be baptized in a baptistry, even though “there was much water there” (John 3:23), but wanted to be baptized in “running water,” like it was in the Jordan River (?) when John baptized Jesus! So we would go to the creek or river, regardless of the time of the year or hour of the night, or water temperature. Or we would turn the water faucet on and let the water run into the baptistry, and open the drain slightly so water would drain out of the baptistry, and then we had the “running water” which sometimes would satisfy the mind of a person wanting to be baptized in “running water.”

All of us who were privileged to preach in gospel meetings in those years and be among so many different people of varying backgrounds had many unusual, interesting experiences. In 1950, some brethren in Bedford County wanted me to hold a meeting in an abandoned school house in the Longview community, which is in the northwest area of the county. The hopes were that we could baptize some people and perhaps establish a congregation in that area. Several brethren participated in this effort, agreed to pay me three hundred dollars, and we would have a nineteen-day meeting beginning Wednesday, July 12, and continuing through Sunday, July 30. I preached twenty-three sermons in that meeting. Brethren and visitors came from all over Bedford and Rutherford Counties. On the three Sunday mornings, I preached at Crescent church, New Zion church, both in Rutherford County, and at Deason in Bedford County. We had Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening services in the school house and services every night of the week, except the first Saturday night, but had services the next two Saturday nights. We had one baptism during the meeting. No church was established. Brother Horace Lamb of the New Zion church, a natural-born singer but untrained and untaught, led the singing. He was an outstanding song leader, with a booming, baritone voice and sang “Beulah Land” at least every other service! He could not read music; he sang “by ear” and occasionally missed the melody, but people would sing with him and the portals of glory seemed to open wide when Horace led the singing. I loved to sing with Horace Lamb leading us in the hymns of Zion. He could “make the rafters ring.” Never did a song “drag” or be “pitched” too high or too low, when he led those beautiful old hymns that everyone knew and loved.

I stayed with brother and sister Dorris Powell during this meeting. Her name was Lera. They lived on their farm of about 125-150 acres, a dairy farm, with many cows to milk. They had a large house, not air-conditioned, and it was a hot July. My bedroom was the middle bedroom of

the three bedrooms on the north side of the house, one window in the room. They slept out on the screened-in back porch, on the west end of the house, the front of the house facing east. He was hard-of-hearing and partially deaf. The second or third night of the meeting, as I was about to drift into sleep, something “brushed across” my head and face and ran across my bed. I was startled and frightened, was immediately alert, and lay still upon the bed my heart pounding. Soon I heard some kind of little feet running across the floor, from my room into the dining room and kitchen, and back. I believed it to be rats. I turned on a light, slipped on my trousers, and awakened brother and sister Powell, telling them I was sure there were rats in the house. He assured me I was mistaken, that they had not seen any signs of rats in the house. But I was to awaken them again if I heard any more noises! Seeing a broom in a corner that I might use as a weapon, I went back to my room and to bed, and remained awake and still. In a short while, I heard the “pitter patter” of little feet running in and out of my bedroom. When I was sure that the varmints were in the room with me, I took the broom from my side and reached over to the bedroom door and closed it. Then I turned on the light, went and again awakened brother Powell, telling him that rodents were in the room with me. He came with me, we closed the bedroom door, turned over a couch or love-seat which was in the room, and, nestled snugly in the “ticking” of that sofa, were two rats. They could not get out of the room so at midnight we were chasing, hitting, killing, and disposing of two rats. The Powells honestly did not know rats had come from the barn into their house. They were my friends, i.e., the Powells, as long as they lived. I was with them at other times but only this once did I do battle with four-legged rats. I have occasionally encountered and done battle with the two-legged variety, which are much more dangerous and damaging!

Growing out of this Longview meeting, I preached in two meetings for the New Zion church. The first was July 22-29, 1951, Sunday through Sunday, preaching fifteen sermons with two adults baptized and one adult restored. The meetinghouse was in poor repair, bad shape, with the old wood heating stove still sitting in the middle of the floor, between the pulpit and the pews, with the chimney going straight up through the opening in the ceiling. We had a ten-day meeting in 1952, Monday, August 4, through Wednesday, August 13, services twice daily, eighteen sermons. The building was still in terrible shape, broken window panes, literature scattered on the floor, song books on the pews and floors, in real disarray, no efforts having been made to clean and “spruce up” the building prior to the meeting. On Tuesday evening I went to the building early to draw a chalk outline on the board. The stove still sat in its permanent summer and winter place. A terrible storm came up, I was in the building by myself, and I began rushing around trying to find pasteboard or something to put

over broken window panes to keep the rain out. And then I stopped. Why should I be doing this if these brethren didn't care enough about their meetinghouse to keep it repaired and tidy? So I waited out the storm, wrote nothing on the board, waited for people to arrive, and then preached them a stiff sermon on the "Parable of the Talents" (Matt. 25:14-30). I was upset with them; I tried to "clean their plow." A number got upset with me. Horace Lamb wept, saying that the old building was good enough for his parents and it was good enough for him. I pointed out to him that they came to worship there in a buggy drawn by a horse, and he was driving a new Ford pick-up! The "visible results" of that meeting were: eleven were baptized, one was restored, two good men, brethren Houston Jones and Billy Poplin, were appointed elders, and crowds filled that building every night. Within a year the brethren had completely reworked and remodeled their building, putting in gas heat, installing new windows, painting inside and out, sanding and refinishing the floors, and very soon replacing the old pews. Many later commented that the sermon on the "talents" was the

most needed sermon they ever heard and received. Most of those brethren were prosperous farmers and/or workers for wages. They lived in nice homes and drove new vehicles, but had let the meetinghouse almost go to ruin. That was a good meeting, but they never asked me back again!

I have a point to make in relating some of my true experiences as a young preacher. Opportunities were multiplied. Invitations to hold meetings were more than could be fulfilled and, at the same time, do regular work with local churches. I want to relate, in another article, other interesting experiences in those years leading up to 1956 and 1957, when the *Gospel Advocate's* "quarantine" began to work in the churches, and preachers, like me, called "antis" began to be "black-balled," "quarantined," and "canceled out."

~~(To be continued.)~~

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Max Lucado and the Oak Hills Church Versus the Bible On Baptism

John Isaac Edwards

There is a big difference in what Max Lucado and the Oak Hills church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas teach concerning baptism and Bible teaching on the subject of baptism. All quotes are taken from "Baptism: The Demonstration of Devotion," a study published by the Oak Hills church of Christ based on a sermon preached by Max Lucado.

Too Sublime

The study says, "The human mind explaining baptism is like a harmonica interpreting Beethoven: the music is too majestic for the instrument." Does Mark 16:16 need any explanation? Do you have any difficulty interpreting Acts 22:16 or 1 Peter 3:21? Instead of trying to explain it or interpret it, why not just believe it and obey it?

Accepting Sprinkling For Membership

The study continues, "We have many potential members who were baptized by sprinkling, usually as infants. This paper will help you see why we baptize by immersion. It also explains why we don't baptize infants. We urge you to read the paper and consider adult baptism. If you choose

not to be immersed at this time, we still welcome you as a member. We ask only that you respect our teaching position and not be divisive." This teaching has people thinking they are members of the body of Christ when the only way one becomes a member is by being baptized (immersed) into Christ (Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:41, 47).

A God-Ordained Sacrament

The paper reads, "Christians participate in two God-ordained sacraments that celebrate what God has done for us: communion and baptism." They have left Bible doctrine for Baptist doctrine! The Baptists teach that baptism and the Lord's supper are church ordinances, emblematic and commemorative rites enjoined upon Christians (*The Standard Manual For Baptist Churches* 18-21). Baptism is not a church ordinance or sacrament; but rather to put one into the church (1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:24). Baptism is not for a Christian; rather it is for becoming a Christian!

Demonstration of Devotion

The material teaches that baptism is "a declaration of devotion to God." This is just another way of saying that

baptism is “an outward sign of an inward grace.” The idea is that one is saved before baptism and that baptism is a step taken to “proclaim to heaven and earth that he is a follower of Christ.” “Baptism is the first step of a believer.” Jesus put salvation after baptism, not before (Mark 16:16). This teaching reverses the divine order.

Teaching Before Baptism

According to the study, “You need to realize only that you are a sinner and that Jesus is your Savior.” A person must know more than that before he is baptized! One must be properly taught to be scripturally baptized. Jesus said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them” (Matt. 28:19). “Baptizing them” refers back to the taught. In Acts 8:12 people were baptized “when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ.” A person must be taught concerning the New Testament church, the authority of Christ, and Bible baptism before he is baptized!

Denominational Baptism Acceptable

According to the material, it makes no difference where you were baptized, whether “in a Baptist church or Pentecostal camp.” “Those who have already been baptized before coming to Oak Hills don’t need to be baptized again.” An individual baptized into a denominational church simply has not been baptized into the one body. To enter the one body, they must be “baptized into one body” (1 Cor. 12:13).

Many are being influenced by Max Lucado as he has written more than 100 books, many of which are on the best-seller lists. This should be enough to show that Max Lucado is a false teacher and the Oak Hills church of Christ is not the church of Christ we read about in the Bible.

“Billed . . . to Death” continued from front page

think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). Second, visit the sick, those sorrowing, widows, orphans, the lost, the old, and friends (Matt. 25:36; Jas. 1:27; Luke 15; Gal. 6:1). Still bored to death? Try teaching your children about God and his word, if you have children (Eph. 6:1-4). Write an encouraging note to one who is discouraged. Take a walk to observe “the glory of God” and observe “his handiwork” (Ps. 19:1). Need something else to keep you from being “bored to death”? What about doing some spiritual exercise? Paul penned, “exercise thyself unto godliness” (1 Tim. 4:8). The Hebrew writer exclaimed, “But strong meat belongeth to them are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Heb. 5:14). Along with all these things, “Provide things honest in the sight of

all men” (Rom. 12:17). You can “labour, working with your hands the thing which is good, that ye may have to give to him that needeth” (Eph. 4:28). Attend all the services of the church; preparing your Bible class lessons and helping your children do the same will take time. Is this enough to keep you from being “bored to death?”

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“Temptation” continued from page 2

when he refused to defile himself in Babylon (Dan. 1:5-16). Jesus was only twelve when he was busy about his Father’s business (Luke 2:42-49,52). “Now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).

Guard Your Heart

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). Thoughts control your actions. “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45). Do not set your heart on the world (1 John 2:15-17; Rom 12:1-2). “Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:1-3). We go to great lengths to protect our earthly possessions. We should go to even greater lengths to protect our heart. Guard your heart as your most valuable possession. “Sow a thought and reap a deed; sow a deed and reap a habit; sow a habit and reap the consequences!” If your heart is filled with the word of God, you will be able to fight off the temptations of the devil.

Worship Regularly

You need to fill your time with worship and Bible study. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another” (Heb. 10:25). Attack the house of Satan by worshiping among the house of God.

Keep Good Company

Choose the right companions. “Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits’” (1 Cor. 15:33). “He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed” (Prov. 13:20; 1:7; 15:5). Learn to say “No” to ungodly social pressure. One reason so many give in to foul language, tobacco, alcohol, drugs, and sexual immorality is because of peer pressure. Determine to say “No!” “My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent” (Prov. 1:10).

Watch and Pray

“Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation” (Matt.

26:41). Be alert to the problem and refuse to walk into a difficult situation. "Considering yourself lest you also be tempted" and are "overtaken in a trespass" (Gal. 6:1). "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). If you pray before, during, and after the temptation you will conquer it! Pray for deliverance from falling into temptations. "Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:13). Seek God's provided "way of escape" (1 Cor. 10:13).

Prove Yourself

Ask yourself these questions: (1) Does the Bible prohibit this activity? (2) Would I want to be doing this activity at the very moment Christ returns? (3) Does this action destroy my mind or body? (4) If Jesus were literally with

me in person, would I feel comfortable asking him to join me in this activity? (5) Will this activity interfere with my duty to win the lost to Christ? (6) Does my conduct cause others to stumble (Luke 17:1)? (7) Does my conscience already question it (Rom. 14: 23)?

Do Good Deeds

Do something positive for God. If you fill your time with godly things, you won't have time for the devil. Look around for opportunities to serve your brethren, help your neighbor, and join in with the work of the church. Get busy about your Father's business (Luke 2:49).

temptation. God and his word and you will overcome

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Cooperation Between the Church and Denominations

"We find more and more who are pitching in with the denominations. Many brethren think they are a denomination. They do not love the truth and consequently do not know the truth. They will by no means live the truth. The following is an example of compromising programs that are going on all around us. Here is another example of 'read it and weep.'

"The Men's Seminar 2002 on April 20th '21st Century — The Battle for Your Mind' was a tremendous blessing from our Lord.

"On Saturday, April 20th almost 1400 men from across the city of San Antonio and representing 23 churches attended Oak Hills for this first-of-a-kind conference for men. Twelve dynamic speakers from the San Antonio Christian community addressed six of the most difficult and controversial subjects now facing men in the twenty-first century; how to cope with stress, overcoming anger, dealing with sexual temptation in a sexual society, overcoming fear, dealing with difficult people, and how to receive God's acceptance.

"Speakers	Church
Max Lucado	Oak Hills Church of Christ
John Hagee	Cornerstone Church
David McNitzky	Alamo Heights United Methodist Church
David Walker	Alamo City Christian Fellowship
Robert Emmitt	Community Bible Church
Rander Draper	Maranatha Baptist Church
Peter Spencer	Harvest Fellowship Community Church

Robert Pena	Church of Acts
Steve Troxel	Wayside Chapel
Randy Shapiro	Congregational Leader of Congregation Beth Simcha
Buckner Fanning	Buckner Fanning Ministries, former pastor of Trinity Baptist Church
Rod Pruitt	Head of Through the Storm Ministries

"Pictures of the event include those of: Pastors and Prayer — The Men — Worship and Teaching — The Altar Call.

"Don't forget this last statement on the page:

"Through the leading of the Holy Spirit and for the Glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, this seminar was presented by the Men's Ministry of Oak Hills Church of Christ" (Seek The Old Paths [August 2002], 60-61).

Decision to Defrock Priest Creates Rift in U.S. Episcopal Church

"Pittsburgh (AP) — A rift in the U.S. Episcopal church is widening over a bishop's decision to defrock a priest who says the church has become too liberal on issues such as ordaining women and recognizing same-sex unions.

"The day after the Rev. David Moyer was deposed, he celebrated Communion at the cathedral as a priest of the Pittsburgh diocese. The Anglican province of Central Africa had granted Moyer temporary clergy status.

"Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, the leader of the world's Anglicans, also said he will receive Moyer if he wants to be a priest in England, Carey's spokesman said.

"Bishop Charles E. Bennison Jr., leader of the four-county Diocese of Pennsylvania, made the decision to oust Moyer, who is the North American president of Forward in Faith, a movement that has proposed him as a special bishop for conservative

congregations within the church" (The Intelligencer, Wheeling, W.Va [September 14, 2002], 20).

Anglican "Flying Bishop" Rejected in Dispute Over Same-Sex Blessing

"Vancouver, British Columbia (AP) — British Columbia's top Anglican churchman says he will never allow an outside bishop to serve church conservatives who are protesting same-sex blessings.

"Archbishop David Crawley said if conservative Anglicans in Vancouver operate under a so-called 'flying bishop' they would 'effectively cut themselves out of the Anglican Church of Canada.'

"Crawley was responding to a visit by four Anglican Communion bishops who traveled from other nations to show support for eight congregations that walked out of a June meeting where delegates approved blessings of same-sex unions" (The Intelligencer, Wheeling, W.Va [September 14, 2002], 20).

New Top Anglican Receives Mixed Reviews

"United Kingdom — Conservatives in the worldwide 70-million-member Anglican Communion are cautiously greeting the selection of Rowan Williams as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury. . . . Prime Minister Tony Blair chose him in July.

"Married and the father of two school-age children, Williams, 52, supports the ordination of homosexuals and women and opposes abortion. He has also spoken out against the United States — led war on terrorism and against the commercial exploitation of children. A Welshman, Williams is the first Archbishop of Canterbury from outside the Church of England since the 16th century.

". . . Jay Greener of AMIA (Anglican Mission in America) told Christianity Today: 'However, Williams seems to be less clear and orthodox on social and moral issues that affect us today, and seems somewhat ambiguous on the role of Scripture to speak to these issues in an authoritative way'" (Christianity Today [September 9, 2002], 27).

Moms Can Delay Teen Sex, Study Says

"Washington — Teenagers who have close relationships with their mothers wait longer to begin having sex, according to an extensive study of American adolescents made public Wednesday.

"But researchers also concluded the relationship must go beyond telling teens to abstain from sex or warning them of the dangers.

"Mothers need to communicate their values and also know their teenager's friends and the parents of their friends if they want to delay teen sex, the study found.

"We need to be tuned in to what's happening in our children's lives,' said Dr. Robert Blum, director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Adolescent Health and Development and the study's author.

"The message to parents is: You Matter,' said Sarah Brown, director of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 'You have not totally lost your teens to peers and popular culture'" (The Indianapolis Star [September 5, 2002], A15).

Born Alive Infants Protection Act

"President Bush signed the Born Alive Infants Protection Act in August. It guarantees that infants born alive after an attempted abortion have full legal rights of personhood under federal law. The bill, which passed the House in March, passed unanimously in the Senate. Family Research Council President Ken Connor said the July 18 Senate vote 'is a vindication for Jill Stanek, the courageous obstetrics nurse who first blew the whistle on the so-called "live-birth abortion" procedure' at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, Illinois (CT, Oct. 22, 2001, 11)" (Christianity Today [September 9, 2002], 19).

Partial-Birth Abortions

"On July 25 the House of Representatives voted 274-151 in favor of H.R. 4965, which bans partial-birth abortions. The legislation is in response to a 2000 ruling of the Supreme Court that invalidated Nebraska's ban on the procedure. The ban faces an uncertain future. In the Senate, majority leader Tom Dashle, D-S.D., will not support the bill. But President Bush says he would sign it. 'If there was a clean up-and-down vote on the bill passed by the House, the Senate would approve it,' says Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee" (Christianity Today [September 9, 2002], 19).

United Nations Population Fund

"Pro-life leaders hailed the Bush administration for withholding \$34 million from the United Nations Population Fund and redirecting the money to other programs. The fund, according to Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee, 'is a cheerleader and facilitator for China's birth-quota program, which relies heavily on coerced abortion.' The administration says the fund comes under the sanctions of the 1985 Kemp-Kasten anti-coercion act, which Congress enacted in response to China's abortion policies. In 1986 the United States Court of Appeals upheld a Reagan administration determination that China was violating the provisions laid out in the act. Congress has renewed Kemp-Kasten annually, but the Clinton White House did not enforce it. The European Union, calling the Bush decision 'regrettable and counterproductive,' says it will give an extra \$32 million to the fund" (Christianity Today [September 9, 2002], 27).

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