

*Blovis Ragdale
R3 Mammoth Spring Ark*

Fulton County Gospel News

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NEWS

The Winona Church held their first service in their new building the first day of the New Year. Bro. Boyd Morgan delivered the dedication address. Quite a few visitors attended.

Having their own building means a great deal to the small but dedicated group at Winona. Much of the work done on the building was done by the members, both men and women. The church building is neat, very attractive, and speaks well for the efforts expended.

Young People's Meeting was conducted at the Hardy, Ark. Church of Christ, Dec. 15. The work of these young people in developing talent is very commendable.

A young men's training class is conducted at Mammoth Spring every Thursday evening at 6:15. These young Christians are now learning to lead public prayer. (Mt. 6) Wait on the table and dismiss the assembly.

Brother Hillard Story spoke at Pilot on Dec. 22, in the interest of the work in Italy. Any congregation desiring to have him visit them may get in touch with Bro. Story by writing him at Salem, Ark.

One was baptized and one restored

at Williford on the third Sunday in December.

If your name does not appear in the paper acknowledging your contributions it will likely be because the paper had been sent to press before the money arrived. Watch for it in the next issue.

We try to send the paper to the printers by the fifteenth of each month and to get the issue in the mails in about three weeks. Brother C. Ray Miller will hold a meeting at Alton, Mo. next May 22-30. Other congregations are advised to send in the dates of their meeting as soon as possible.

Hard To Be Understood

Boyd E. Morgan

Near the close of his inspired writings Peter spoke of the epistles of Paul and declared in which are some things hard to be understood. II Pet. 3:16.

Peter had absolutely no idea of indicating that we cannot understand, neither did he mean that God did not intend for us to understand. His effort was to impress upon his readers the necessity of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. verse 18.

He did warn against men that are "unlearned and unstable" who wrest these scriptures "as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." verse 16.

This forever does away with the popular notion that it doesn't make any difference what a man believes just as long as he is honest. If you, dear reader, have ever entertained this notion, you would do well to read II Peter 3:15-18. How could it possibly make no difference when "unlearned and unstable" mean wrest the scriptures to their own destruction? What causes them to be destroyed? It has to be erroneous conclusions drawn from false interpretations. These men have an opinion. To give scriptural tenure to their opinions (which opinions are the doctrine of men) they wrest the scriptures. This causes,

Peter said, their own destruction. It is wise to believe Peter.

These same passages make us know that there is a divine truth relative to the salvation of our souls. Peter mentioned this salvation in verse 15. If there is error then there is truth for if there were no real truth then there would be no error in wresting the scriptures.

The Church of Christ embraces this truth and refutes all error. We refuse to accept just a part of the scripture and refuse to substitute anything for any part of it. You will do well to study the Bible and check everything taught in the Church of Christ against it. When men do this they are always surprised to find that there is a church which teaches truth doing Bible things in Bible ways.

We urge you to investigate.

Moments With The Bible

By Joe K. Alley

The Bible does not teach Christians to have special days set aside to commemorate Christ's birthday or His resurrection. However, Christ did teach disciples to keep the Lord's Supper as a memorial of his death until he comes again (Lu. 22:19; I Cor. 11:23-26).

The New Testament teaches us that the church obeyed Christ and kept the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

If God had wanted Christians to have special days observing the birth and resurrection of Christ, he would have told them.

To have special religious seasons, fastings, and holidays, is to preach another gospel and to add to God's requirements for faithfulness. A curse is placed upon those who preach any other gospel than that which Paul and his fellow-disciples preached. (Gal. 1:8-9).

Read your Bible Get acquainted with it. It is God's message to you.

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EDITORS —

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Boyd Morgan

Do We Need A New Gospel for a New Age?

Orbie Robbins, Elizabeth, Ark.

This is a modern age, and for that reason some say we must not have an old fashioned gospel.

Others say this is an up to date world. If people and the things people use don't stay up to date, the world will pass them by. They say we must have an up to date gospel.

They say time does not wait for anybody. It leaves behind those who do not keep step.

Again they say, this is a changing world. Nothing remains the same.

(1.) Men are always changing things. Style of clothes change. Peg-legged pants are out of date. Political ideas change. Scientific theories change. Denominations revise their creeds and disciplines and their ideas of Conversion change.

Now let us notice some things that have not changed. Man's temporal needs have not changed. He still needs food, clothing, and shelter. Human nature has not changed. Sin has not changed. Eve and her temptation resulted in sin. The three avenues through which she was tempted were (1) the lust of the flesh, (2) lust of the eye and (3) the pride of life. Gen. 3:6. Christ was tempted in the same way. Mt. 4:1-11. Men are tempted the same way today. Jno. 2:16-16. Since sin the disease has not changed why should the remedy change?

The devil has not changed. He was present in the Garden of Eden and in Job's time. Today he walketh about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. 1 Pet. 5:8. That's why Paul said be not ignorant of Satan's devices 2 Cor. 2:11. One of his devices is to try to destroy faith in the word of God. Lk. 8:12.

Another device is the transforming of himself as an angel of light, and his ministers are transformed as ministers of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works. 2 Cor. 11:13-15.

The Gospel was not designed for a change. Gal. 3:19. The law of Moses was for one race of people — the Jews and was temporary. The Gospel was planned from all eternity. Eph. 3:10-11. The church is to stand forever. Dan. 2:44-45. Eternal in duration. Heb. 12:22-23-23.

A new gospel would contain no new truth. Jno. 16:13. The one we have furnishes us unto every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16-17. It contains all that pertains unto life and godliness. 2 Pet. 1:3.

The Gospel always works when tried. The early church was the greatest clarity organization that the world has ever seen. Acts 2:44-45, Acts 4:32-33, Acts 11:27-30, 2 Cor. 8:1-5. The early church was the greatest force for evangelizing the world that we have ever seen. Acts, 2, Acts 6;7, Acts 13:1-3, Col. 1:23.

The gospel changes the character of men while they live. For example Peter and John. Lk. 9:54. It changed the murderers of Christ. Acts 2:32-37. It sustained the early Christians in death. Stephen Acts 7. Paul. 2 Tim. 4:6-8. It saves us eternally in the world to come. Rev. 22:14, Mk. 10:28-30.

Therefore the gospel should not be changed. The curse of heaven rests upon man or angel that would attempt to change it. Gal. 1:6-9. It will abide forever. Mt. 24:35, 1 Jno. 2:17, 2 Jno. 1:9-10. The Blood of Christ still saves. Rev. 1:5, Heb. 9:11-15, 1 Jno. 1:7. It is applied in the same way. Rom. 6:3-4, Acts 22:16, 1 Pet. 3:21, Eph. 2:13, Gal. 3:27, 1 Cor. 12:13.

The Christian life is taught in the golden rule and exemplified in the parable of the good Samaritan.

Another gospel could not save. Rom. 1:16, Rom. 3:24-26, Gal. 1:11-12. Eternal life is a gift. Rom. 6:23, Jno. 10:27-29 and God gives it on condition that we please him. Rom. 9:19-24. We cannot change the condition of it. 1 Cor. 4:6, 2 Jno. -, Gal. 1:8-9, Rev. 22:18-19.

In conclusion let us consider the importance of the gospel. We will be judged by it. Rom. 2:16, Jno. 12:48. So since we will be judged by it we need to obey it. 1 Pet. 4:16-17 and then live by it. Phil. 2:12, Phil. 1:27. The great invitation is for all to accept and obey it, and then live it. Mt. 11:28-30.

Have you accepted this invitation? Your acceptance or rejection of it will determine where you shall spend eternity.

The Word of Reconciliation

II COR. 5:17-21

by O. L. Grishan

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

In the very outset of our discussion I wish to ask my readers a question. "If God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; where will man have to be in order to be reconciled to God?" Before we go any further, let us define the word reconciliation. To be reconciled means to be made one again, on friendly terms, or be united with God. Paul tells us we are reconciled to God in Christ. Before one is in Christ there cannot be any reconciliation. Neither can we be reconciled to God upon any other terms other than those laid down in the "WORD OF RECONCILIATION". God is not reconciled to us, but we are reconciled to God by meeting the terms stipulated in His word. Sectarian preachers are running to and fro preaching that the world must be reconciled to God, but they never preach the terms whereby the world is to be reconciled; instead they pervert the very terms that we are reconciled by; THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST! If we must be in Christ to be reconciled to God; How do we get into Christ? We get into Christ just like those Corinthians to whom Paul wrote. Paul preached the DEATH, BURIAL and RESURRECTION of Christ and, declared it to be the Gospel of Christ. 1 Cor. 15: 1-5. Paul said he had obeyed the Gospel and that those Corinthians had obeyed the Gospel. Since it is impossible to obey the very facts of the Gospel, What did they obey?" They obeyed that form of doctrine, which was delivered them." Rom. 6:17-18. They were told to die from sin, be Baptized into Christ and to rise to a new life. Until these terms are obeyed man is not reconciled to God,

has not been made free from sin, is not a new creature in Christ Jesus and is still a bond-servant of sin and the enemy of God. See Rom. 6:1-18; Jn. 4:4; II Cor. 5:17. We are told by inspiration that to get into Christ we must be baptized unto Christ. "For as many of you that have been Baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3:27 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were Baptized in Christ were Baptized into His death" Rom. 6:3. To be in Christ is to be in His Body, which is the Church. Eph. 1:22, 23. And, we are baptized into one body. I Cor. 12:13. The only way man can benefit from the blood of Christ, His death, burial and resurrection is to be baptized into Christ, or into His death where Christ shed His blood. Rom. 6:1-4; Jn. 19:34.

Christ died upon the cross that he might reconcile both Jew and Gentile unto God in one Body, or the Church which Christ shed his blood for. Paul tells us before man obeys the Gospel, he is without God, in the world and has no hope. Eph. 2:12-16. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." By meeting the terms of reconciliation, we are made one in Christ. "Where there is neither Jew, Greek, bond, free, male nor female; for we are all one in Christ." Gal. 3:28. We are reconciled, made one, and are united with God in Christ, or the Church, which is the body of Christ. Eph. 2:16.

Who Can Forgive Sins But God Only?

Cliff Stewart, Gainesville, Mo.

I have before me a Knights of Columbus add under the caption "YES . . . A PRIEST CAN FORGIVE YOUR SINS!" According to this add "Christ Himself instituted the Sacrament of Penance which includes confession when He said to His Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them: Whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:22-23) . . . They and their disciples went everywhere proclaiming the doctrine given them by Christ, establishing churches and appointing bishops and priests upon whom they conferred the same authority."

Notice first, it is argued that the apostles received a commission to personally forgive sins, second, that they conferred this authority to others. Now if it be proved that the apostles re-

ceived no such authority then logically the second promise must be false. Thus, all that is needed is to disprove the doctrine that the apostles received the authority to personally forgive sins.

The passage of scripture used to support the above doctrine is John 20:22-23. By no fair handling of the text can one come to any conclusion but that Jesus was speaking with reference to the terms of remission of sins being committed into the hands of the apostles. This is recorded in Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-20; Lk. 24:45-49. Luke (24:49) tells that Jesus sent them to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit which was to guide and teach them in what they were to speak. (See Jn. 14:26; 16:13). When the Holy Spirit came they spoke as he gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4). The apostles were ambassadors for Christ (II Cor. 5:20), speaking FOR Christ. Men are saved by the gospel Rom. 1.16, I Cor. 4:15; 15:1-3), or lost because they do not obey the gospel (II Thess. 1:8). In Acts 2:40 Peter exhorted "Save yourself from this untoward generation." How were they to save themselves? By forgiving their own sins? No, they were to save self by obeying the gospel that Peter preached unto them. If they could save themselves by obeying the gospel as preached by Peter, then why could it not be said by the same method of logic that Peter remitted the sins of about three thousand (v. 41) and retained the sins of those who would not obey?

The word teaches us to confess our sins (I Jn. 1:9). "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" Prov. 28:13. We are to confess "one to another" then "pray one for another" (Jas. 5:16). This does not match the Romish doctrine of confessing to a priest and he personally absolving sins. In Mk. 2:7 when Jesus said to the man sick with the palsy "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" the scribes reasoned, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?": They were correct in saying "Who can forgive sins but God only" (See Dan. 9:9; Isa. 43:25). Their error was in thinking of Jesus as only "this man". No man has the power to personally forgive sins. "Who shall law anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" Rom. 8:33. "And the scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith . . ." Gal. 3:8 "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake

hath forgiven you." Eph. 4:32, see also Col. 3:13. We are taught to forgive others for what they have done against us, (Mt. 6:12, 14; Lk. 17:3-4). Can I forgive someone else for what they have done to you? Then how much less could man forgive man for what he has done against God!

Christianity Is Costly

Since God expressed his love for man through the medium of sacrifice, he has chosen to measure man's love for him according to that criterion. The rule of self denial taught by Jesus is rooted in the sub-structure of reality. "A man's life," said he, "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." All material possessions being perishable, the only enduring treasure that man can accumulate is that which he lays up in heaven by making sacrifice on earth. Since the average person is enthralled by the illusion of the permanence and value of earthly possession, he is offended by the command to deny himself. The rich young ruler who sought eternal life at the hands of Jesus was informed that his morality alone could not save him. "One thing thou lackest," said the Lord: "God, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And come, follow me! But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful, for he was one that had great possessions." Why was he sorrowful? Obviously, he was disappointed because the Lord was not dispensing salvation at a cut-rate price. It was quite a disadvantage to his earthly operation to enter into a spiritual venture that was so costly as to require the dissolution of his estate. But he it is noted that the young ruler went away. Not all those who have rejected the terms of discipleship have gone away. A numerous throng have remained either to bargain with the Lord or to steal their way in by offering an inferior or inadequate sacrifice. The Jewish priests tried this once but they were apprehended and severely rebuked by the prophet of God. (Malachi 1:6-9). Instead of offering the finest and best as required by the law, they sought out the lame and sickly — the worthless animals — and offered them to God. In doing so they got rid of their trash and their obligation to worship at the same time. This garbage-can conception of sacri-

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CHRISTIANITY IS COSTLY

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fice which represents the proneness of man to spend the most and best upon himself and to give God the scraps, is despicable in the sight of the Father Malachi argued that their governor would be insulted and dishonored by such treatment, and why should they be appalled if God felt that he had been treated with scorn.

The proneness of man to make the supreme sacrifice in behalf of lesser causes while he is closefisted with God, is almost inexplicable. During the Civil War, Southern women gave their most treasured jewelry to sustain the failing cause of the Confederacy. The churches in Jackson, including the Lord's church, gave their bells to the Confederate Government to be used in making canons. Having been convinced of the urgency of their mission, millions of the world's finest men have sacrificed their lives on the altar of liberty. Is the Christian cause any less urgent? Is the preservation of the light of democracy any more important than the saving of a soul from hell? These are questions that probe the depths and pin point our deficiency. At this very moment there are one hundred thousand gaunt and ghastly faces pressed against the cold windowpane of Death, peering fearfully into the darkness trying to see what is beyond. What will it cost to put these desperate souls in touch with the gladdening of God? The answer comes ringing across the centuries from the lips of Jesus — self denial!

—Alonzo D. Welch

CHARITY

Clovis Ragsdale

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not chairity I am nothing. I Cor. 13:1-2. We see from these two verses that charity is to be the greatest characteristic of a christian. Many people today have a distorted idea of the meaning of the word charity. It means to many providing the necessities of life for someone who is in need of help. The true meaning of the word as it is used in the King James Version of

the New Teastament means love, a love that suffereth long, that envieth not, and a love that endureth all things.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. I Cor. 13:13. From this verse we can grasp the greatness of love as love is placed above faith. We realize why, when we consider how useless is faith, if faith is void of love. One cannot be a christian without love. He that loveth not, knoweth no God, for God is love. Some people are born with the tendency to love all whom they come in contact with. They are unselfish and think of others before themselves. Many people are not so fortunate and they have to spend a lifetime cultivating and acquiring the tendency to love.

Christians have constantly before them the greatest example of love the world will ever know. No sweeter words are to be found in all the holy scriptures than John 2:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." All that we might do in our entire lifetime becomes pale and insignificant when compared with the great love God has shown for all mankind. There is no greater way of showing love for our fellowman than teaching him how to care for his soul, so that he may someday live with God in that great forevermore. Christians who fail to do this are failing to show the necessary love for God and for their fellowmen. Love is the trademark of a christian. Love is the Church's most effective weapon. It is the most powerful force in the universe. The great love shown by christians of the first century enabled them to carry the gospel to all the then known world. When we obtain the degree of love they possessed (and only then) shall we be able to place the gospel before all people of the earth.

Yes, There Are Some "Antis" Here

The word "anti" is being kicked around a great deal these days. Webster says the word "anti" means "against." Certainly there are many things which the Christian must oppose and be opposed to, so the term "anti" does not always carry a bad meaning. The child of God must oppose all evil and be for

everything that is right. However a Christian must not be opposed to anything that is both scriptural and expedient; yet there are some members of the church in every congregation who indicate by their actions that they are a "bunch of antis."

ANTI-ATTENDING MEMBERS. There are some members of the church who seem to be opposed to attending the services of the church. The reason why we think this is because we seldom see them there.

ANTI-BIBLE CLASS MEMBERS. Yes, we have some brethren who are "anti-class". They have their "reasons" for not attending the classes. Now, some of these people are "anti" Sunday morning Bible class brethren—they just will not come to the 9:45 classes. However the majority of the "anti-class" brethren "anti-Bible class conducted at some other time except on Sunday morning." They just will not attend classes on Sunday night or Wednesday night, or any other time. Yes, we have some of these among us.

ANTI-GIVING BRETHERN. There are some among us who are opposed to giving, evidently, because they are seldom guilty of giving very much of their money to the work of the church. This is probably the largest "anti" group among us. Of course they have their money which they can get their cigarettes with, money enough to take in a show, enough money to buy a nice suit, car, and television, but they don't believe a person should give over a dollar per week to the Lord regardless of how much they are making.

ANTI - COOPERATION BRETHERN. Yes, there are some anti-cooperation brethren among us. They refuse to cooperate with the elders, preacher, teachers, and other members in doing the work of the church. These are the parents of the above mentioned brethren. They refuse to help in the work; they just belong. Their sons and daughters are anti-attenders, anti-giving and anti-Bible class.

We are sad to mention these "antis." They hold the work back. How we wish they would repent and become active in the work of the church of the Lord. We are afraid they will be lost in hell if they do not change their actions. (Please read Revelation 3:15-17)

Selected from Way of Truth