

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

Second Class Postage Paid at Mammoth Spring, Ark.

Volume 12

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

September 1974

Number 45

The Religions Among Us

(CONTINUED)

By Glynn V. Purdy

THE LORD'S CHURCH IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES, AND NOW:

Jesus promised to build HIS church, Matt. 16:18. He purchased this church with HIS own blood, Acts 20:28. It is HIS blood which SAVES us now, I Pet. 1:18-19. This church is FIRST spoken of as a fact in Acts 2:47. It is here stated that those who believed, repented and were baptized (Acts 2), were ADDED to the apostles, then DAILY others were ADDED to this church!

EACH congregation of the Lord's church had MORE than one elder (or bishop) to "oversee" the work under instructions from Christ, Acts 14:23. Christ had ALL authority, and has today, in HEAVEN and on earth, Matt. 28:18. The duties and qualifications of elders, or bishops, are given in Titus I, and I Tim. 3. Under these elders in each congregation, were deacons to care for the material matters of the local group.

There is ONE body, just as there is ONE Lord, ONE God and ONE Spirit, Eph. 4:3-5. The ONE body is THE church of the ONE Lord, Eph. 1:22-23, Col. 1:18. So it is PLAIN that Jesus established ONLY ONE church and adds the SAVED to it. In New Testament times, and NOW!

THE church (ekklesia) means the called out of God, which makes up the saved of God. This church was, and is, "the pillar and ground of the truth," I Tim. 3:15. The FAMILY of God (I Tim. 3:15); The KINGDOM of God (Eph. 5:5) and the BODY of Christ (Col. 1:18).

The preachers were not "REVEREND," this word is translated only one time in the King James Bible and is an adjective with reference to God ONLY, NOT a NOUN, or TITLE for man, Psalms 111:9. Preachers were NOT "FATHER," for God forbids us to call ANY man "Father" in a religious sense, Matt. 23:9. NOT "DOCTOR," for ONE is the great physician, Christ (Matt. 9:12). Yes, I know that the "Doctor" is from an academic stand point, but where is the

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Two Powers In Salvation

By Harold Turner

For years we have recognized and preached that the gospel is the power of God to save the lost. In the first century of Christianity, this message touched the hearts and changed the lives of the vilest of sinners. Acts 2:47 speaks of a daily response to the gospel. Acts 4:4 gives a picture of thousands responding to this message. Acts 5:14 tells us that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." From Acts 17:6 we learn that those who preached the gospel are referred to as "these that have turned the world upside down." Nothing had so mightily affected the world as the preaching of the gospel.

But what about in our day? Has the gospel lost its power to turn men from sin? Truly there is not as great a response to this message as we desire. So many are obviously unmoved by its power. Even some who were once moved by it are now turned aside to the ways of the world again. Some who are saved express little excitement about it, and fail to use the opportunities to preach it.

Possibly we are overlooking something. Whereas the gospel is God's power to save, there is another power that must be used in saving the lost. In Luke 8:5-8 Jesus taught a lesson, illustrated by the sowing of seed. The seed, He tells us, is the word of God, and the soil representing the hearts of men. The first type of soil used in this lesson is called "the wayside soil." The seed did not penetrate this soil. Why? Not because there was no power in the seed. Not because this soil was unfertile. But because this soil was not prepared to receive the seed.

Just as soil must be prepared for the sowing of seed, so must the hearts of men be prepared to receive the gospel. God's power is in the seed, our power is in preparing the soil properly.

There are two things vitally important to preparing the hearts of men for the gospel. First we must live an example of the Christian life. Some are turned off because they see some church member living like God has burdened his life with misery, and who expresses his desire to do just as little as he can get by with. Some are turned off because they see no changes in the life of a friend who is

supposed to be a Christian—his speech, his attitudes, his ways are unchanged. There is great power in a godly life. When others see the joy expressed by a dedicated life, and the change from sin to holiness, they are influenced by the gospel. People aren't interested in seed until they can see what that seed will produce.

The second thing that makes the gospel more powerful upon others, is the relationship of fellow Christians. In Romans 12 Paul pictures the church as the body of Christ with each Christian being a member in this body. In v. 5 he shows the close relationship of each member, saying, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

The New Testament uses many expressions relating to this "one-another" relationship between Christians. Each expression shows the responsibility of each toward the other in developing and maintaining this beautiful relationship. Observe the following: "Love one another" 1 Jn. 4:11; "Pray one for another" James 5:16; "Bear ye one another's burdens" Gal. 5:13; "Forbear one another in love" Eph. 4:2; "Forgive one another" Eph. 4:32; "Minister one to another" 1 Pet. 4:10; "Use hospitality one to another" 1 Pet. 4:9; "Comfort one another" 1 Thess. 4:18; "Care one for another" 1 Cor. 12:25; "Edify one another" Rom. 14:19; "Receive one another" Rom. 15:7. This list goes on and on, showing the close-knit relationship of the members in the body of Christ.

The beauty of this relationship is a powerful influence in our world. When we look back to Acts 2:47 where there was a daily response to the gospel, we see in the context this beautiful relationship, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common . . . Praising God and having favor with all the people." God's power linked with the influential power of the early Christians touched the hearts of thousands in every community.

God's message is still the power to save the lost. It has not lost any power over the years. It still can turn the vilest

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The Fulton County Gospel News

... is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name be SURE to include the Zip Code Number. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know of its financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request.

EDITORS: Erwin Cowen
and Harrold Turner.

Tribute For Grandmother Cordie Harrell

Just over the river

I could see Him waiting
by a gate that was covered
with pearl.

Just over the river

A little way farther
A land that was not
of this world.

I started my journey,

He walked out to meet me—
How sweet was the smile
on His face.
Just over the river
Peace there awaits me
A home in that wonderful
place.

Afraid no longer—

My step grows stronger
For now He holds my hand

I hum — "Over the River"

Over the river,
I'm now in the Promised Land.

By Carol (Deaton) Shaw
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This poem was prompted by the death of my grandmother, Cordie Harrell. She passed away on August 11, 1974, a Lord's day evening.

Close to the end she asked for her Bible, showing that the love of God's word was foremost in her life. A light humming was heard and she softly sang these words—"Just over the River".

Going to Heaven

By Ted Knight

Do you really want to go to heaven? "Oh, yes!" you say, "anyone in his right mind wants to go to heaven." I feel sure that almost every person would respond in that way when faced with that question. I wonder though, if we are really serious about this matter of going to heaven. Let's put this desire to a test.

1. Do I want to go to heaven enough to put the Lord first in my life? This means that I am willing to put the Lord's work ahead of my own.
2. Do I want to go to heaven enough to be patient and longsuffering with my brother? Am I willing to forgive him when he wounds my feelings or do I carry a grudge against him?
3. Do I want to go to heaven enough to make any sacrifice I am called upon to make in order to go there?
4. Do I want to go to heaven enough to become a soul winner? I know that my going to heaven may depend upon my taking someone else with me.
5. Do I want to go to heaven enough to love my brother even when he is somewhat hard to love?
6. Do I want to go to heaven enough to control my tongue? Am I determined to use it for the glory of God and to edify others?
7. Does my desire to go to heaven exceed my desire for personal gain?
8. Do I want to go to heaven enough to forget the past and reach forward?

I am convinced that no person will go to heaven by accident! That person who is allowed entrance there will have been determined to go there after death. I am also convinced that the desire to go to heaven must be the supreme desire in our life. It must exceed our desire for wealth, fame, or success according to the world's standard of success. It must be strong enough to motivate us to overcome the barriers and difficulties that will be in our way. It must be strong enough to motivate us to overcome the barriers and difficulties that will be in our way. It must be powerful enough to remove any obstacle that stands in our way. When we want to go to heaven that much we will see the church moving forward as it has never moved before. **DO YOU REALLY WANT TO GO TO HEAVEN?**

"No man needs sympathy because he has to work, because he has a burden to carry. Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

Lest Ye Be Wearied

Sometimes hardships, affliction, griefs, or persecution cause some to become fainthearted and weary. There are others who grow weary because results from much work and preaching do not appear immediately. Not many of us have escaped attacks of discouragement and despondency. In either case it is folly. We should be very grateful to our Father in heaven for the prescribed remedies to be used as preventatives and cures.

First: "Consider Him Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin." (Heb. 12: 3,4.) Considering Jesus should make us ashamed to become faint and weary. He resisted unto death. We have suffered little. "When He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." (I Pet. 2:23.) He is our great example.

Next: Read this and believe it: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) One can't fully believe that and become weary in well-doing.

Next: Read and believe that the trial of our faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth. (See I Pet. 1:7; Jas. 1: 2,3.)

Then remember that Paul, who suffered much affliction and persecution, said, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." (Gal. 6:9.)

Brother, sister, is your burden heavy? It may be, but it isn't as heavy as the cross that Jesus bore. Are you persecuted? If so, remember that no nails have been driven through your hands and feet, and you have worn no crown of thorns. Does your teaching fall on deaf ears? Remember that Jesus saw men turn away, and that Paul heard opposers mock. Some obeyed. Some obey now. One soul is worth all effort.

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Two Powers In Salvation (Cont.)

sinner from their wicked ways. It still can build us up into useful instruments in the hand of God.

When Christians band themselves together into the beautiful relationship of "one-anotherness" in the body of Christ, and each lives an example life, which shows the joy of the Christian life, then the preaching will show forth its great power as God designed it to do.

The Climax Of Life

G.K. Wallace

The prodigal son desired to confess his sins notwithstanding the warmth of his father's welcome. (Luke 15:20.) To admit wrong is the climax of any life. The night is over and the day is dawning. Confession is made after the hardest and most stubborn battle in one's life. "I have sinned" are the hardest words for any man to say. Man will seek to hide, justify, dodge and minimize his sins rather than confess them. Yet confession is the only way out.

Confession is the key that will unlock a stubborn heart. It will heal family troubles. It will cure church difficulties. It will save the sinner and restore the wayward child of God. We are told that if you give a monkey a rock and pitch him into deep water that he will hold the rock and sink rather than turn loose and swim. Man it seems, in this respect, is like a monkey. He had rather hold to his sins and die the eternal death than to confess them and live forever.

Confession should be motivated by true repentance and a desire to correct all wrongs. Judas confessed but made no correction. (Matt. 27:3-4.) He confessed to those who shared his crime and not to the one whom he had wronged. Pharaoh confessed because he was beaten at his own game. He wanted to rid Egypt of the plagues. (Ex. 10-16.) Achan confessed when he could hide the matter no longer. (Josh. 7:20.) He was sorry he was found out. The prodigal son was at home—welcomed by his father and yet he wished to make an open confession. In his confession there was no "if." He did not say "if I have sinned" but "I have sinned."

It is impossible for man to undo all his sins. He can make restitution for some of them but others he can only confess. "He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy." (Prov. 28:13.) It is folly to think that wrongs may be corrected by mere confession. The writer of Proverbs says, "Whoso confesseth and forsake them shall obtain mercy." A true confession is based on genuine repentance. It is without a plea.

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

—Charlotte Elliott

"People who fly into a rage always make a bad landing."

Sons of Adoption

By Terry S. Frizzell
Monett, Mo.

Once there was a young woman with a baby son. Because of circumstances they were without the care of a husband and father.

Then the woman met a man that she loved and he in turn loved her. After they were married he provided for both her and her son, even to the adopting of the young boy.

As the years passed the young boy, even though knowing of the adoption, thought of himself as a son by birth to this man he called dad. The father also seemed to feel the same as he taught the young boy, as a godly father should teach his son.

Often, as the years passed, people would comment about the likeness of the father and son, even though their physical stature was quite different. In fact many people did not know that he was only a son of adoption.

The likeness people saw was the result of the love the son had toward the father. Every time someone would mention a likeness of the two, the son would stand tall with much pride that people thought he was like his father.

In 2 Cor. 6:17-18 we read, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

Just as the young boy was adopted, so are we that are Christians. Just as he loved his father, so must we love God. As this boy became like his father, because of his love for him, so the Christian will become in the image of God, and have characteristics of godliness by the love that he has for God.

By obedience to Jesus Christ we become the sons of God. (gal. 4:4-5). In fact he has chosen those that obey Christ to be His adopted sons (Eph. 1:4-5.).

Christians should become more godly as they grow older because of the influence of the Father upon their lives.

What about you? When people see you do they know who your Father is by your actions, or must they ask?

They should be able to see God by the life you live as His child.

"Christians who hunger and thirst after righteousness do not have to be begged to attend all services of the church, they want to attend."

Thirteen Baptized in Meeting at Winona

By Clovis Ragsdale

In a recent meeting at Winona, Missouri, thirteen were baptized and three restored. Corda Underwood of Burlison, Tennessee did the preaching.

The congregation at Winona was established less than twenty years ago through the efforts of the Mammoth Spring and a few other congregations in this area. Progress had been slow until this meeting. Lord's Day attendance ran about twenty-five. Attendance and the number of members were about doubled from the results of the meeting.

Results like this among small congregations were common years ago but have become rare in recent years. Results like this should encourage others to not give up and to redouble their efforts to win souls to Christ. Did not Isaiah say in Isaiah 55:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

CONTRIBUTIONS

Sitka Church of Christ	\$ 5.00
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SILENCE

The silence that is in the starry sky.
—Wordsworth.

Wise men say nothing in dangerous times. —Seldon

Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep. —Henry VI.

He said that he had often repented speaking, but never of holding his tongue.
—Maximus.

"A wayward child is sometimes straightened out by being bent over."

Accountable As Stewards

All men must give an account to the Lord at the judgement, II Corinthians 5:10. Even though there are many things that everyone will be accountable for, yet there are some phases of responsibility that everyone will not share. For instance, elders and preachers will give an account for duties that are peculiar to each group. However, the phase of accountability of paramount importance, and often overlooked, is the stewardship of parents over their children.

According to Ezekeil 18:4, all souls belong to God. While He entrusts parents with their children, they actually belong to Him and He has merely made the parents stewards over that which He owns. Notice Psalms 127:3, "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Further, Paul said stewards must be faithful, I Corinthians 4:2.

Stewardship involves more than providing the material needs of children: Ephesians 6:4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." "Admonition" implies the giving of warning or counsel. However, the most effective lesson taught is by example. Many parents should consider Paul's question, Romans 2:21, "You that teach another, do you not teach yourself?" How successful will a parent be in teaching children if they don't practice what they teach? A child is quick to sense and resent inconsistency.

Fathers and mothers, how well are you doing with the "precious goods" committed to your trust? What will be the results of your stewardship in his awful day of judgement?

By Lavern Stewart

"Sympathy is for the one who tried and failed; pity is for the one who failed to try."

The Coming Generation

Why is it that preachers continually emphasize the importance of Bible study? Have they just run out of other things to say, or is it really that important?

Perhaps one thing to remember is that apostasy lurks just one generation away. It has been true in the past and it is true today. In the days of Joshua, God's people were highly successful. Joshua was such an influence that "the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua." But then, when this great man died, "there arose another generation which knew not the Lord". Ju. 2:11.

One generation served the Lord -- the next does not. How swiftly things can change. What brought it all about? Someone allowed a crop of children to grow up without proper instruction. And eventually they had to reap destruction. Note the order of Israel's digression.

- (1) Spiritual illiteracy. They "knew not the Lord." Judges 2:10.
- (2) Forsaking of God. "And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers." Judges 2:12.
- (3) Serving false gods. They followed "the gods of the people that were round about them". Ju. 2:12. They gave in to pagan ideas, pagan practices, and customs. Immorality abounded and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." 17:6.
- (4) Punishment of God. "and the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them." Judges 2:14.

There is no hope if spiritual illiteracy prevails. Heathen altars will abound, tidal waves of iniquity will arise and destruction will follow.

We must not fail the youth of today. We must diligently teach them the truth, lest it be said once again, "there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord. --John Gipson

The Religion Among (Cont.)

AUTHORITY from God to "Set apart" a preacher ABOVE the rest of His people? To God, preachers are just "preachers," "servants," or "ministers" which MEAN SERVANTS. When we call a man by SPECIAL titles this is SINFUL and where Romanism came from! Rom. 1:1, 2 Tim. 1:11; 2 Cor. 3:6.

The members of the Lord's church were, and are, JUST "CHRISTIANS," no more and no less, Acts 11:26, I Pet. 4:16.

The worship of the Lord's church, was, and is SIMPLE! The contribution is from EACH member, purposed in his OWN heart, as God PROSPERS him, and given to the Lord "upon the first day of the week," I Cor. 16:2. NO MAN tells another HOW MUCH to give, and there is NO "tithing," 2 Cor. 9:7. The Lord's supper is observed by the members of the church "upon the first day of the week," Acts 20:7. The word of the Lord is PREACHED, Acts 20:7. They PRAY, Acts 2:42. They SING, Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19. It was MORE than 600 years LATER before mechanical instruments of music were introduced into the worship by the ROMAN CHURCH! The Lord's church today, can, and does follow this same pattern of worship. HOW CAN IT BE WRONG?

To become a member of the New Testament church one must HEAR the Gospel, FIRST, Mark 16:15; Rom. 1:16; Rom. 10:17. Then he must BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, Heb. 11:6. The BELIEVER must THEN REPENT, Luke 13:5; Acts 17:30. He must then CONFESS CHRIST WITH THE MOUTH, BEFORE MEN, Matt. 10:32-33; Acts 8:37. He must then be BAPTIZED (Mark 16:16); in WATER, Acts 10:47; by a BURIAL in water, Rom 6:3-5; for the REMISSION OF SINS, Acts 2:38. This puts one "into Christ" and makes him God's "child," Gal. 3:26-27, and if a child then an "heir" with Christ, Rom. 8:16-17. If he is IN Christ, he is IN the church, as they are ONE and the SAME, Col. 1:18. EVERY THING MENTIONED CONCERNING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH, CAN BE FOUND IN THE HARVEY DRIVE CHURCH OF CHRIST TODAY! Should you not investigate it?? End of 8 articles.

New Editor for Paper

Brother Harold Turner has moved from Forsyth, Mo. to work for the church in Mammoth Spring. He will also become co-editor of Fulton County Gospel News, replacing Brother James Henley who has moved to Salem, Ark. to work with the congregation there.

Brother Turner is a native of Mtn. Grove, Mo. and has been preaching for the past thirteen years. He is married to the former Miss Mildred Mullanee of

Norwood, Mo. They have two sons, Mike, who is in medical school, Bobby, an eighth grade student, two daughters, Lesa, third grade, and Sandy, a second grader.

He is no stranger to this area, having preached five years at Gainesville, Mo., and three years at Forsyth, Mo. Fulton County Gospel News is fortunate to secure the services of brother Turner to compile and edit the paper.

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