

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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Mammoth Spring, Arkansas

July, 1957

THE CHURCH AT HEART

Clovis Ragsdale

This congregation began in 1912, meeting in the school house for a time, then in a private home. In 1924 a new building was built which has served as the home for the church for most of the time since then. Brother Tom Tucker and John Weaver served as elders for many years. Many able preachers have preached at Heart. Among them were: Brother Bryan, F. A. Bailey, Joe Blue, Laey Holt, Monroe Lemmons, J. A. McNutt, Joe Pruett, Leroy Miller, Frank Gould, Owen Stroud, Boyd Morgan, Orbe Robbins, Joe Grissom, Ado Osborne, M. S. Gabbert, Eugene Foyler, and John Weaver.

The church has an average attendance of from 25 to 35 each Lords Day. Bob Clinton, Truman Benton and Carol Benton serve as leaders. The church supports Southern Christian Home and has a meeting each year as well as monthly preaching. The building has recently been remodeled and painted. The writer recently attended a service in which the building was full. Brother F. A. Bailey of Whitney, Texas was preaching. The congregation has gained in numbers in recent months due to people moving back into the community.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Dalton, Ark. — July 22, Arthur Blackwell
Salem, Ark — July 21, Harlin Hurd
Sturkie, Ark. — July 31, Harlin Hurd
Burks Chappel, — July 22, Charles Coil
Liberty Hill, — July 27., Edgar J. Dye
Camp — August, 5 W. E. Bingham
Hatfield — August 12, Raymond Bailey
Pilot — August 1, Lowell Blasingame

This paper is very grateful to brother Marion Farley of Dallas, Texas for contributing an article each month and for the \$5 dollars per month the congregation where he worships is sending to support the paper.

"YE DID RUN WELL"

Marion Farley _____ Dallas 17, Texas
Gal. 5:7

There are many in both Old and New Testament this scripture may be applied to, and suggests at one time, they were in complete harmony with God's will but are no longer subject to Him with whom we have to do.

The first Old Testament character whose life we wish to study, is that of Solomon.

When it pleased Jehovah to make Him king over his people Isreal in the room of his father David, it pleased the Lord very much to hear him request "an understanding heart," that he might be able to rule this great multitude of people wisely, and not to ask for riches honor, long life, or the life of his enemies, this he willingly granted, and promised all these other blessings also, if he would but serve him, as did David his father.

We see him as he starts his reign, following in the steps of h's illustrious father, by wholly serving the Lord God of his fathers, meting out justice and mercy to those respectively to whom it was due.

And although he displayed unequalled wisdom in many ways in the early part of h's colorful and dramatic reign, (did run well), yet in later years he let his "strange wives," turn his heart from following God, who had elevated him to this high station in life, and because of this, He told him the kingdom would be taken from Him and given to another, but would not be done during his lifetime, and, so ended the career of the most brilliant and talented man ever to grace God's 'footstool'.

Coming on down to the days of Christ we read of another, Judas started out with the other Apostles and seems for a time, was faithful, for Peter in addressing the assembly after the ascension of the Savior said, "Judas by transgression fell" (Acts 1:25), indicating that for a time he was faithfully discharging h's duties as an apostle of the Lord un-

CONTRIBUTIONS

R. R. Hicks, Mammoth Spring \$2.50
Name Withheld \$1.00
Vista Wisemen, South Bend, Ind ... 2.00
O. C. Martin, Oxford, Ark \$2.00
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Barrett \$10.00

The church of Christ in West Plains, is offering a Free Bible Study Correspondence Course. Send your name and address to Lavern Stewart, Box 82, West Plains, Mo.

til his greed for money caused him to betray the Son of God for about \$15.00 the price commonly paid for the meanest of slaves.

Making a modern day application of the text "Ye did run well," it isn't hard to find a number who have started out, but have fallen by "the ways de."

So many have let negligence get the upper hand, possibly by first missing a service or two, and before long several at a time, and then finally, by going just now and then, or not at all.

Some have an unbelieving make who resents regular church attendance, and therefore many are drawn away in this manner.

Others are pleasure seekers caring not for the Lord who bought them with his own precious blood he shed on Calvary's cross.

There are many other ways in which Christians have become entangled again in the things of the world, and their love to Christ have grown cold, but these will suffice to show that the Christian must be ever on guard, and to keep in memory the warnings of the great Teacher, "Love not the world—if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him", and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." also, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth."

Let us be careful to "Run well," all the way, for Jesus said, "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved," and, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

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Published Monthly

Free Subscription

Sponsored by Welcome Hill
Church of ChristSupported by Moten, Welcome
Hill and Union Hill churches

Editors:

Arthur C. Blackwell
Clovis Ragsdale**EDITORIAL**

I would like to call your attention to the number of meetings now in progress or which will soon start. A big meeting is one of the highlights of a congregation's work and to be successful, requires a concentrated effort on the part of each member. A meeting is held for the primary purpose of reaching the people of the community who are not members and leading them to Christ. The meetings that I have attended in recent years have been well attended in numbers, but most of those in attendance were members of the church. The people that the meeting was held for were not present. Twenty years ago this was not the case, for when a tent was put up, or an arbor was built, large numbers of people would attend who were not christians. It was not uncommon for there to be ten or fifteen or even more people converted to Christ. What are the reasons for this change.

There are several things that would have to be mentioned. People had more time in which to go to church in the past, but now the economy taxes our time to such an extent that only faithful christians will put forth the effort necessary to attend a gospel meeting. Entertainment is more accessible to all today. Persons who might be only interested in religion had rather go to shows, or stay at home and look at television, or engage in the various others forms of entertainment. Good cars and roads may hinder some from going to church. We would think that this would be a help, but the fact remains that many people would rather drive in the cool of the evening or just plain sight see, than to attend a church

service. Prejudice is a great reason that attendance is down at big meetings. People in this section of the nation have become familiar with the teaching of the restoration movement and have formed opinions, many times unfavorable, which causes them to shun even mentioning Bible subjects in the presence of members of the church. These and other reasons have cut the attendance in many places to the point that brethren are searching for ways to remedy this problem. The Editor knows of no sure answer. I will pass on to the readers a few suggestions which might help in some places.

Personal contacts of the individual members with their friends in the every day walk of life offers a fertile field for leading someone to Christ who might never be reached in any other way. We are told that the early christians went everywhere preaching the gospel, today we leave too much of the teaching to the preachers.

Every Christian should regard himself as instrument in which someone can be lead to Christ. It might be that the right example of christian living on the part of the individual would be the means of saving a soul, certainly the world expects this of us and we must not fail in this respect, for one of the most common excuses given for people not becoming christians is that there are too many church members who are not living up to what they preach.

The other way in which this problem might be eased is to use the press and radio more. The history of many radio programs are noted for the people who came asking to be baptized because they had learned the truth in the quiet of their own homes listening to some gospel preacher sending the word forth on the airways of this country. No one thing is going to alleviate this hindrance and the Elders of every congregation need to give much study to this problem. — Clovis Ragsdale.

Man is saved by his belief, not by Baptism. This is the question that was sent to Billy Graham (Nobody in our family has ever been baptized. Now that I have been converted, I want to, but my parents forbid me. What shall I do.)

We want to call your attention to the last part of Mr. Graham's answer to

this question. He says (Being a Christian always is a condition of the heart and mind. We take Christ by an act of faith, and the Bible teaches that a "man is justified by faith.") It is an evident fact that before one can be a Christian his heart must be right. But that heart is not made right until it has obeyed the truth. Peter says, Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit into unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart frequently. Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for us. I Pet. 1:22-23.

No one's soul or heart is right in the sight of God that has not obeyed the truth or gospel of Jesus Christ. Compare Mr. Graham's statement to that of the apostle Peter's and see how they contradict. (Mr. Graham says we take Christ by an ACT of FAITH and the Bible teaches that a man is justified by faith.) Yes, but Paul did not teach that anyone was right in the sight of God by the act of faith only as Mr. Graham tries to leave within the minds of those who read his article. Who believes that the apostle Paul contradicted himself? Mr. Graham quotes from Paul in Rom. 5:1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. His conclusion is the moment one believes he is saved. But that is not Paul's teaching about faith. Hear him in the very next chapter. Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made, free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Rom. 6: 16-18. Paul when did you say that our heart was made right in God's sight? I said when one's faith is strong enough to obey the doctrine of the beloved Son of God. Now hear Mr. Graham: (The act of being baptized is an act of obedience. You disobey God only when it is possible to obey Him and you refuse to do so. We are not saved by baptism or by any other religious form or ordinance. We are saved by Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.

As much as you can, obey God, but do not feel that your situation is dependent upon any outward form. Now note he says (baptism is an act of OBEDIENCE, but you disobey God only when it is possible to obey him and you refuse to do so.) Only those who obeyed the ACT of baptism in the apostle days became children of God, and so it is today. Only those who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Gal. 3:27. Because this person's folks objects to baptism Mr. Graham tell this one that it is not possible for him or her which ever it may be to be baptized. He in other words tells this one to obey its parents who stand in rebellion to God instead of obeying God. He again states, (we are not saved by baptism or by any other religious form or ordinance.) Peter what do you say about the matter? The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now SAVE us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I Pet. 3:21 I am going to take my stand with the word of God and be sure, what about you friends? Next he says (we are saved by Christ who died for our sins and rose again for our justification.) Yes, we are saved by Christ, but for anyone to be saved by Christ he will have to accept the Gospel turns of pardon to be forgiven of his sins. The word of God says, Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Rev. 22:14.

Yet Mr. Graham teaches that baptism is an act of obedience though one is saved or justified with out the act of obedience. Certainly we are saved by Christ if we obey him, but, those who refuse to obey have no promise in the state of eternal bless when we come to stand before him. Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. Heb. 5-8. Mr. Graham has it Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all them that do not obey him.

He says as much as you can, obey God, but do not feel that your salvation is dependent upon any outward form. He is saying that one obeys God without an outward manifestation of obedience to the commandment of our Lord. Read Rom. 6:3-5, Gal. 3:26-29, Acts, 22:16, and see if such could be

so. What will men say in order to get away from the act of baptism. It is an impossibility for Mr. Graham to prove his teaching by the word of God.

by Arthur C. Blackwell.

THE SHAME OF IT

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, is folly and shame unto him." (Prov. 18:13.)

Often we are called upon to commit ourselves upon a matter before we hear what that matter is. "I'll tell you something, if you will not tell it," one hears so often. It is folly and shame to so commit oneself. It was such rash decision that brought grief to a victorious warrior in Old Testament days. So elated over victory, he said that he would offer as sacrifice "Whatsoever cometh out" of his house upon his return. But it was his daughter that came out first! This man was much grieved because of his "folly," but we can imagine that he was more cautious in making vows thereafter.

We describe a matter like this described by Solomon as prejudice judging without properly considering facts. Many a person closed his heart to the truth because he makes up his mind before hearing the truth. "He answereth a matter before he heareth it." How many times have we heard men say, "I would not change (my religious state) if I knew I was wrong." This one has answered before he hears, and thus he engulfs himself in "folly and shame." No one can do justice to his soul by making his decisions without hearing first. Let every heart be open to the truth at all times, and let every heart be ready to hear the whole truth.

When Peter reached the house of Cornelius, having been sent to him to tell him "words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved, Cornelius said, "We are all here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God." This man did not make up his mind as to what he would do before hearing, but he desired to hear first, and was resolved to do whatsoever he heard commanded of God. Thus being commanded to be baptized, he did as commanded. Have you, friend?

The wise man is positive and constructive, hence, he builds on the rock—Christ.

DIVINE MEDICINE

"A merry heart doeth good like medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." (Prov. 17:22.)

God has placed within our reach the things that are necessary to our well being. Man was made upright in the beginning, and God gave him the things essential to a continued state of well being. It is the abuse of our God-given rights that has brought the unhappiness and misery upon us that we suffer today. Had mankind used properly what God gave us, we would be happier, and our lives would be longer upon this earth.

Today the world is sick. Few homes one finds without a medicine cabinet filled with various kinds of medicine, or boxes and bottles indicating the use of the same. Few, however, realize that in most cases the cause of sickness lies within the disposition of the individual. Dissipation, worry and vexation cause more of our ailments than do "germs." Such it is that reverses the gear of our organism, and causes a cessation of the proper function, often producing the exact opposite in function, and sickness follows.

I believe that it is said that it takes **thirteen** muscles to **smile** and about **sixty four** to **frown**. Does not this agree with Solomon's statement, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine?" It is the "broken spirit" that "Drieth up the bones." But some one will say, "I would be happy if it had not been for the failures of others." This is but natural that we "pass the buck," and offer excuses to justify ourselves: this is a common weakness of mankind. But possibly there is some truth in the statement. My disposition and conduct can affect the other person, and for that reason I should do something to help others be merry.

David said, "Blessed (happy, merry) is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." (Psa. 1:1) One is promised happiness **only** in walking "in the law of the Lord." But when one walks in the "law of the Lord," he avails himself of the things God has provided for his good.

BABES IN CHRIST

1 Cor. 3:1-2, Heb. 5:13, 1 Pet. 2:1-2

Erwin Cowen Moten

The living of life is a serious business, and in as much as the duration is uncertain it behooves everyone to live well, and to begin early in the directing of energy.

You as well as older persons, know that if your congregation continues to carry on the work of the Lord in your community, we must look to you for the work. The old ones will soon be gone, and the middle aged ones will soon be inactive. You must be trained, taught, and you must learn. You need not fail to develop into strong working Christians. (There is a great responsibility for failure.)

If there be such a failure who is to bear the blame

1. The ones who fail, of course.
2. Anyone else- That depends.

If the church, its members, elders, preachers and teachers fail to do what they can to develop and help Babes in Christ to grow, then they, we each of us must share the responsibility.

Let us remember there are two ways in which we can teach. 1. Knowing God's truth and importing it to them. 2. Settling before them the proper example.

If we neglect the Bible study can we expect more of them, the assembling together, can we expect them to be more interested than we.

There are three key words for life's program which are essential to Christian growth.

1. Study.
2. Pray.
3. Obey

We shall notice each of them:

STUDY — We do not hope for any calling life without study but we persuade ourselves that we can succeed in the greatest, most important of all enterprises, becoming like Christ without any special effort, but please note and read the following (II Tim. 2:15, I Thess. 4:11-12.

Study to know the will of God.

It will be to your advantage in time and eternity to avail yourself of every opportunity to know more of the teachings of the Blessed Book. If you will resolve and keep the resolution, I will

never miss a lesson taught from Gods word. (Except something arises over which I have no control.) You will succeed.

There are two groups in the matter of teaching. Teachers and learners. Jesus says "Learn of me.

In Acts. 20:28 the elders are instructed to feed the flock," this necessarily implies that the flock assemble to be fed. Then if the teaching be ever so efficient, each must learn for himself, showing interest and attention is very import.

PRAY — To live the Christian life without prayer is as impossible as to live our animal life without breathing.

Prayer the outlet to the human heart, outlet to all our woes, heartaches, and sorrows. Do not expect to live without heartaches but when they come do as the disciples who "Went and told Jesus."

Prayer the inlet of joy and peace. It will never leave thee." Heb. 13:5, h's forgiving love.

OBEY — There is no lesson more important to the young christian than that of obedience and constitutes authority. The first commandment with promise is obedience. Eph. 6:1-3. Let the sentiment of your heart be, Lord what will thou have me do.

Our frequent assembly for worship, exhortation, and edification, is a part of God's plan for our safety. We are warned against neglecting the assembly Heb. 10:25. But, says one I have heard some good person say we have no command to eat the Lord's supper. Let us study I Cor. 11 chapter especially verse 23-26. No authority for observing every first day! The primitive church under the direct guidance of the apostles is our pattern, on the first day of the week the church specially assembled I Cor. 16:2 on that day they were to give of their means as they were prospered. Break the bread eat the Lord's supper (Acts. 20-7) Say some it does not say every first day. We must give more earnest heed to the things we hear. If they failed to give heed under the law they were punished.

"Remember the Sabbath," Every time the Sabbath returned there was the commandment to keep it holy. Therefore everytime the first day of the week returns there is the example to eat the Lord's supper.

Romans 14:23 — Clovis Ragsdale

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

This verse of scripture is one that concerns each christian as an individual very greatly. Paul had been instructing the brethren at Rome on condemning one another in respect of such things as the eating of meats sacrificed to idols, and of the observing of Jewish festival days.

The lesson for us today is that if we do anything which we might have reason to doubt whether or not it would be right to do, then to us it would be sin.

Paul said that whatsoever is not of faith is sin, thus we need to be careful not to violate our conscience. This also teaches that we need to be careful not to condemn others on matters which are not mentioned in the Bible, but which we might think would be sinful, and indeed would be for us as they could not be done in faith. The things that God has specifically commanded, we have no choice but to obey. They are some things which come under liberty and it is these that this verse is concerned.

Brother Claude Hall of Houston, Texas has time for one meeting and would like for it to be in North or Eastern Arkansas, during this summer or fall. Any congregation who has not already secured a preacher would do well in contacting Brother Hall, his address is 722 Fostoria, Houston 9, Texas.

Brother Arthur Blackwell has been conducting a meeting in Grants Pass, Oregon.

Brother Woody Woodward preached at Mammoth Spring on the fourth Sunday in June.

Marvin Powell of the Hatfield, Mo., community will conduct a singing school at Pilot, beginning July 15.

Many visitors have been in evidence at services this summer. Most are brethren who formerly lived in this county, but now live in distant places.

A task without a vision is drudgery; a vision without a task is a dream; a task with a vision is victory. —Anonymous.