

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

Volume 10 NUMBER 12

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK. 72554

JULY, 1969

## WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT IF I ATTEND A CONGREGATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

by Glynn Purdy

There are hundreds of people who read the REVEALER who have never attended the services of a congregation of the church of Christ, so for these this is written.

### THEY ARE PEOPLE JUST LIKE YOU!

The members of the local congregation of the church of Christ are your neighbors, good neighbors. They love their community, county, state and nation, but MOST of all they love GOD, the LORD and YOU! They have nothing to sell you, just wish to SERVE you in any way possible. As each member is trying to serve the Lord, they try a little harder than most people to prove to you, through friendship and service to the whole community, that Christianity has something to OFFER you and that it can DO something for you and that you NEED the Lord. They try real hard to let others see Christ LIVING IN THEM. YOU ARE NOT A STRANGER EVEN THE FIRST TIME YOU ATTEND! You are an honored guest, a WELCOME visitor and you will soon KNOW that this is true!

### DO—THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST THINK THAT EVERYONE WILL BE LOST BUT THEM?

Well, of course I can not speak for what every one thinks, but no Christian or no RESPONSIBLE person, would usurp the prerogatives of the Lord to judge His servants! The Lord does have something to say about who WILL and who will NOT be saved and this we BELIEVE and teach, but spend NO time in JUDGING others! The Gospel of Christ IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE, Rom. 1:16. Those who

OBEY it will be saved, Mark 16:15-16. Those who do NOT obey it WILL BE LOST. 2 Thess. 1:7-9. Therefore we believe and teach that the ONLY SURE WAY of being saved is to DO the Lord's will! We TRY to get EVERYONE to READ, UNDERSTAND and OBEY THE BIBLE ONLY! I just KNOW that you will agree with us on this. WE HAVE NO RULE OF FAITH EXCEPT THE BIBLE. So we believe that ALL MEN must obey Christ to be saved because Christ says as much. Heb. 5:8-9. But ONLY the Lord can KNOW who is to be saved and who is not to be saved. This is NOT our job. OUR job is to TEACH all nations, the Lord does the saving, Matt. 28:18-20.

### CAN THOSE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS EAT THE LORD SUPPER WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

IF THEY WISH TO DO SO, YES! The Lord's supper is in the church for Christians, but NO ONE has the right to EXCLUDE any one else from eating it. The Lord's supper is passed up and down the pews each Lord's day and EACH PERSON is to "EXAMINE HIMSELF" whether he eats or not, NO MAN ON EARTH has ANY right to say who CAN, or who can NOT eat the supper of his LORD, I Cor. 11:28. When he does he is PLAYING God! God forbid!

### MAY I CONTRIBUTE, OR AM I EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE?

You are NOT expected to contribute, as the churches of Christ are supported by the FREEWILL offerings of the members, I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7. Each Sunday morning the collection plates are passed up and down each pew, and like the Lord's supper, you MAY contribute if YOU WISH TO DO SO, You are WELCOME to do so, but that is UP TO YOU! Sunday night the Lord's supper is

served to those who did NOT get to eat it at the morning service and THEY are given an opportunity to contribute. NO collection is taken from others. During Gospel meetings, or at NO OTHER TIME, except "the first day of the week" is collection taken. There is NO tithing like the law of Moses taught, and No selling of anything, no bills sent out and no pressure put on ANY ONE, member, or non-member, to contribute. EACH person must PURPOSE in HIS OWN HEART concerning giving, 2 Cor. 9:7.

## Conscience

While a person should do what his conscience approves, a good conscience is evidence only that one has done what he thought was right and is no proof that he actually is right. For example some of us can engage in war for our country: others are conscientious objectors. One man's conscience approves what the other's condemns. The conscience of one approves when he gives a blood transfusion: the conscience of a member of Jehovah's witness condemns him for the same thing. Thus we can see that a good conscience is the result of doing what we believe to be right and is not to be taken as evidence of what actually is right.

The World Book Dictionary defines conscience as "the sense of right and wrong; ideas and feelings within a person that tell him when he is doing right and warn him of what is wrong" and then it illustrates that meaning by saying, "Let your conscience be your guide."

As we have seen, conscience will approve or condemn according to how our actions relate to what we believe to be right and so the definition must be accepted with limitations. And the illustration, of course, must be altogether misleading. You could "Let your conscience be your guide" only if the conscience were always unerringly right.

That a person must act according to a good conscience we all agree. If one acted contrary to his conscience he would be doing what he felt to be wrong.

Continued

# Contributions

FOR JUNE:

Agnos Church of Christ	\$5.00
Viola Church of Christ	5.00
Ring Church of Christ	5.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	5.00
Jocie Sparks	2.00

---

## News

Mammoth Spring Church of Christ enjoyed the largest V.B.S. in its history May 26th through the 30th.

Mammoth Spring Church of Christ continues to grow, with an average attendance of 250 per Sunday for the first 5 months of 1969.

There will be a Gospel meeting at the Mammoth Spring Church of Christ July the 20th through the 27th. Brother Harlan Hurd of Bono will be the speaker. Brother Hurd is well known throughout this area for his ability to preach the Gospel of Christ, in its purity and simplicity.

---

### CONCERNING PASTORS AND PREACHERS —No. 2

by Dean Fugett

Before I write the rest of this article, I feel I had better inform the readers that I am not "down" on the Eldership — Far from it. I am convinced there are many good qualified, functioning elderships. This is not going to be another article telling you that Elders are to oversee, feed, etc. as the duties of the eldership. A storehouse of very good material is available on these subjects. (I suggest that the Eldership that is truly interested in doing its best for the flock of God purchase several of these books and pass them around.) I hope that this article will be food for some thought.

1. In Luke 15:4-7 Christ makes use of a parable with which we are all familiar. But may it be possible that our elderships are overlooking the application of this truth to their work? The good Shepherd leaves the ninety and nine to find the one. We are losing members one-by-one in just about every congregation. Is it possible that the elders are so busy providing conveniences for the ninety and nine that we are losing the flock one-by-one? Most of the time, the responsibility for keeping up with the straying sheep falls on the preachers, but it is the duty or responsibility of the shepherds. "Shepherds, where are your sheep at feeding time?" There

are wolves and lions devouring them. Do your duty. Honestly, brethren, if I were looking for some one to shepherd a flock of sheep belonging to me, I would look long and hard before I would hire some who are supposed to be shepherds.

2. The elders should be better acquainted with their flock than anyone else. (Contrary to popular opinion, even more familiar with them than the preacher is.) It should be to the Bishops they would go with their problems. Preachers who would do their duty faithfully would send the sheep to their pastors.

Who should be more aware of the loss from the fold of one of the sheep, and who should feel it more than the elders? Who should be better informed of the needs of a bereaved family than the bishops of their lives? But, how long has it been since you have seen an elder presiding at the funeral of one of his flock? Usually it is a preacher, who many times, could in such circumstances be lawfully referred to as a hireling instead of the shepherd. Why not call on the elders who can know and share the grief with the family? Immediately upon the death of a loved one, why call for the preacher? Why not call for the bishops of the flock?

Really, calling for the preacher upon sickness or death is a carry-over from Catholicism and the feeling that the priest had some special power that could reach even beyond death. The denominationalists failed to break cleanly with this mystical concept during the reformation, and apparently we have failed to break this tradition in our efforts to restore.

3. I would like very much to see some vision and wisdom displayed by some congregations in the area in putting some of our elders under the full support of the church. When the time comes that we begin to think in terms of an educational director, or personal-work director, why don't we just place one of those who are really to be qualified to carry on such a work and whose duty it really is. Why not put in a "full-time" elder. I can think of many merits to such a program. If you will stop to think and investigate, many of the more successful, growing congregations have full-time elders, or at least one.

This could provide a qualified person to make hospital calls, call on delinquent members, plan teaching programs, and many other works that usually fall to the preacher and rob him of valuable time needed for study.

There would be no consideration of tenure because he would be a permanent piece of the program. The time might come when all elders of the congregation

could be full-time. The possibilities of such a congregation would be limitless.

Of course, all these suggestions are only opinions of mine but I ask you to consider them in the light of their merits, and so respond as conscience and common sense dictates.

---

## So He Paid The Fare Thereof

(Jonah 1:3)

One day the word of the Lord came to Jonah commanding him to go into the wicked city of Ninevah, crying out against its' wicked inhabitants. Preaching a doomsday message of "repent or perish" had no great appeal for Jonah, however, hence, he went down to the sea-coast town of Joppa and began to look for a ship which would take him as far away from his disagreeable duty as possible. In this, he was not disappointed. A ship was sailing for the far-distant port of Tarshish "so he paid the fare thereof."

"So he paid the fare thereof." This seemingly insignificant scrap of information tells us a great deal about the character of Jonah. It tells us that Jonah was no more faithful in the small issues of life than he was in the big issues of life. Let me explain. That Jonah sinned when he deliberately fled from his God-given duty is clear to all. What is not clear to all, is that Jonah used money borrowed from the Giver of every good and perfect gift to finance his trip. If using the Lord's money to finance one's flight from duty is not a clear abuse of the principal of stewardship, there can be no abuse of that principal. Yet, when we think of Jonah, that isn't the principal we think of first, is it?

Why do you suppose that is the case? Could it be that Jonah's abuse of stewardship seems almost insignificant to us in comparison with his flight from duty? If so, we would do well to consider this teaching of our Lord again and again. "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much."

—Harry Gipson—

---

### OF SIRENS AND OPPORTUNITIES

By: Robert K. Oliver

The sirens Monday morning were different from those usually passing our house: they stopped next door. A police cruiser, a rescue squad and ambulance

arrived almost together. I thought it is good to live in a place where such facilities are so readily available. I remembered wondering what had happened. The people next door are about 70. Both seem in good health. Who needed the rescue squad and ambulance?

We have been good "neighbors". We have lived side-by-side for over three years. We have had no quarrels. We have friendly visits when we happen to be in the yard at the same time; Bonnie has shared the fruits of her busy oven with them. I had leaned about his occupation, his family, his politics. They know I am a preacher and where I preach. We exchanged small favors and small talk; but we share nothing of any consequence.

I sat in the house waiting and wondering about the dimensions of the emergency next door. My conscience smote me. Three and a half years I had known this family, a length of time equal to the whole earthly ministry of Christ. I had made no serious effort to win them for Him. I had made a point of telling him how I got rid of the aphids on my roses; of offering to help him re-set his mail box post; why had I not made a point of sharing Jesus Christ? I was all sick inside at the realization of what I had failed to do. Even as I asked God's forgiveness, I promised this emergency would be used as an opening. I would talk to them about salvation. But the time I saw it was the man who was carried to the ambulance my good intentions were already having their effect. I was felling better. As soon as this emergency quieted, I would begin:

I was not to have this opportunity. My good intentions have become a nagging memory. My neighbor was not sick. He was dead. A heart attack had killed him almost instantly. My first words to them about salvation were his funeral which I conducted Thursday. Three and a half years of neglected opportunities make a very heavy burden. How we need the grace of God!

I suspect I am typical of YOU in this respect. This is one of our real problems. We are not sharing Jesus Christ with the people of our town. We will send money to Japan, Africa or Brazil (which is good) ...but we will not take ourselves next door. This is bad. I hope it is Christ I face in judgment...He might understand. I know my neighbor would not. I still have a neighbor on the other side. How about you???? (Adapted from THE SWEET - WATER CHRISTIAN)

he is saved? Can he be lost? Answer to both questions—YES!

**Rom. 8:16-17**—"The spirit itself bear-eth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; IF so be that we suffer with Him, that we be also glorified together."

The WORD assures that we are children of God. A child of God is a **saved** person: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.." (Mk. 16:16) "**IF** we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (I Jno. 1:7)

One who has all past sins forgiven is a saved person. The blood of Christ **continues** to cleanse our sins. The one who **walks** in the light as "he is in the light" is kept in a saved relationship with God. God does not impute sin.

**II Pet. 1:8-10**—"If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Reread verses 5-7 to know what "these things" are.)

The one who 'abounds' in the Christian graces is effective, fruitful and 'walking' in the light. He knows more than **FACTS ABOUT** Jesus. He **understands those facts** and translates them into life!

**Vs. 9-10** "But, he that lacketh these things is **blind** and cannot see afar off, and **hath forgotten** that he was **purged** from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren **GIVE DILIGENCE** to make your calling and election sure: for **IF ye do these things YE SHALL NEVER FALL.**

The one who has not added the Christian graces has 'forgotten' he was cleansed. He is ineffective. He is unfruitful. He is an **UNFAITHFUL CHRISTIAN**, He has tragically forgotten:

1. The great love of Christ (Jn. 3:16)
2. The **PRICE** He paid (I Cor. 6:20)
3. He **BELONGS** to God (I Cor. 3:16)
4. That to bear fruit as He did, we **follow** Him. We too pay a price. We are crucified with Him. We **walk** in the light. we **LIVE** to God.
5. That to have spiritual **POWER**, we must be "**plugged in**" to the source.

Regardless of the **POWER** in the electric plant, **our house** benefits only when it is **wired** for electricity and is **plugged in** to the source.

"**If ye do** these things, **YOU SHALL NEVER FALL.**"

"If a man loves me, He **will KEEP MY**

**WORDS...**He who does not love me, does not keep my word...The word you hear is not mine, but the Father's that sent me." So says our Lord (Jno. 14:)

**Rev. 3:19-20** - "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Be zealous therefore and **REPENT**. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if **any** man hear my voice, and open the door, I **will** come in to him, and will sup with him and he with me."

Our Lord does not force His way in. "I" must open the door. He wants to come in, He stands pleading. He is not willing that any should perish. He brings a blessing—the greatest. He wants to give it, but He will not break in. He loves enough to leave us our privacy, If we choose misery instead of His peace, it is **OUR** choice.

**II Pet. 2:20-22** - "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, **the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.** For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the Holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

It is possible for one to stop walking in the light and return to sin. It happens "One may so sin as to sever his relationship with God. He forfeits his right to participate in the stream of eternal life. We must not confuse this with the assurance of being saved." (Last quote from **Tupelo, Miss. bulletin** in answer to a similar question. If you have other Bible questions, please send them in. Your response will effect this as a weekly feature.)

---

## The Lord's Way No.1

Man has many ways for doing many things. Usually these ways sum up to two—the wrong way and my way. There are certain areas in the Lord's work where he has left man free to use his ingenuity to devise the ways most expedient to the task and time. There are other areas where the Lord has not allowed us this freedom. It is

Continued

---

THE QUESTION IS ??????

Can a child of God know for sure that

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 : Clovis Ragsdale and James E. Henley

THE LORD'S WAY NO. 1

Continued

in these areas that we must know and do the Lord's way.

**The Lord's Way in Salvation:** While Christ lived on the earth he had power to forgive sins. In fact, from time to time, he performed miracles to show his enemies that he did indeed have the power to forgive sins. But he was even at that time preparing the apostles for the day when he would no longer be with them. When the time came for his leaving, he gave these prepared men their commission by his authority. By reading each account, we get a full picture of all parts of that commission. Matt. 28:18-20; Mk, 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49, The sum is Teaching, Faith, Repentance, and Baptism. (Confession is inferred, Matt. 10:32-33). In each case of conversion in Acts after the Church was established, the Lord's way was followed and it was effective for the desired end of salvation from sins.

If we today want freedom from sin and its consequence we must follow the Lord's plan.

Faith — Mk. 16:16, Jno. 8:24; Heb. 11:6

Repentance — Acts 2:38, 17:30, 2 Cor. 7:10.

Confession of Christ — Acts 8:36, Mt. 10:32, Rom. 10:10.

Baptism — Rom. 6:3-4, Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27.

by Dean Fugett

Continued from Page 1

Even so the notion that conscience is itself a guide is erroneous. We could not do right without conscience but conscience upholds or condemns according to whether our acts are in harmony with a guide already established—that which we have believed to be right based on what we have been taught. If we have been taught that a thing is right our conscience will approve when we do that

thing. On the other hand if we have been taught that a thing is wrong our conscience will condemn us when we go contrary to what we have been taught.

A good example of what we are trying to say is set forth by Paul. He stood on trial before the Jewish council. In defending himself he said, "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience up to this day." What is so remarkable in this is that once Paul did some things the very opposite to what he was now doing and his conscience approved in both instances. For example, at the time he made this statement he was doing all he could to convert the world to Christ and he preached to everyone who would listen including this very council. Some years before he had done everything in his power to destroy all who accepted the faith he now sought to establish. In both instances he did what he thought was right and his conscience approved.

At one time Paul had been taught, and sincerely believed, that to oppose the teachings of Jesus was what he ought to do and he says he thought he ought to do many things contrary to the Way. While he believed this his conscience was good when he acted accordingly. Later he was converted to Christ and from then on he did the exact opposite from what he had done before and his conscience was still good.

We see then that what Paul had been taught was his guide and his conscience approved or condemned as he followed that guide. Conscience is what prompts us to follow a guide and is not a guide itself Paul never went contrary to the dictates of his conscience but when he learned that he was in error his conscience was changed because it had a new standard of right and wrong.

Violating one's conscience can be very dangerous to his spiritual welfare. Our conscience is by nature very tender and will keep warning us when we are tempted to turn aside, but if it is violated repeatedly it begins to lose some of its sensitivity. Paul said regarding some that would depart from the faith, "Having their conscience seared as with a hot iron." In this case the conscience had been scarred until no feeling was left.

This is why we constantly warn that people be faithful in all that God requires of them for once they begin to backslide they are more difficult to reach and many finally apostatize.

We will be safe in following our conscience if we diligently study the word so that our conscience will guide us according to an infallible standard.

STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS

Harvey Porter

Three times Paul called on the Lord to remove his "thorn in the flesh" (I Cor. 12). And the Lord replied, "My grace is suf-

ficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

We know not what this "thorn" was though some have tried to guess. At any rate, we know that it was ever present and gave discomfort to Paul and he wanted it removed. God's answer might at first seem strange but the key is in these words, "for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Consider those words and know that God can take frail humans and make noble beings out of them when they give themselves to him. Moses made excuses that he was too weak to lead the people out of Egypt, but through him God's great strength was shown.

Paul was at one time the bitterest enemy of the church but he changed and became the greatest of its supporters. While he was in weak and sinful flesh, he persecuted the Way; but when he was "transformed by the renewing" of his mind, he became a living example of God's strength working through weak flesh.

Often we excuse ourselves from service to God by thinking we are not capable of doing the job. Certainly we can do nothing alone, but we need to realize that God does not ask us to do anything alone. Though we may be weak, if we can say, "Here am I, Lord, send me," he does not ask for more. The Lord's strength plus a willing spirit, though it be clothed in weak flesh, will result in a perfect job.

Can you think of Paul saying, "Lord, I have asked you three times to remove this infirmity and you have not; so, now I cannot go on"? No, that attitude does not fit Paul and it should not fit us either. God took him in his weakness to show his great strength; divine power in an earthen vessel. And God will do the same with us no matter how weak we may be, if we will but come to him with a willingness to submit to his will and do our best.

—In Reminder

Mammoth Spring  
Arkansas 72554

Second Class  
Postage Paid

MAILED 2002  
FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS  
Route 3  
CLOVIS RAGSDALE