

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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June, 1963

## Each Christian's Responsibility

There is no substitute for preaching the gospel. We can have all the training courses and develop all the schemes and plans in the world for bringing in the masses, and still not convert the world. We can organize and systematize, but these will not substitute in any way for preaching the gospel. The preaching of the gospel is the only thing on earth that can convert the world.

And we will never be able to hire some one to do our share of preaching. If you could hire some professional preacher to do your preaching for you, you could hire some one to go to worship for you. You could hire your way into heaven. The idea that you can put an extra dollar into the collection plate and hire some one to preach the gospel for you does not come from the Bible. Every child of God has the personal responsibility to preach the gospel to the extent of his own capacity and opportunity. That responsibility cannot be shifted to another.

It is certainly a misconception that the responsibility for preaching the gospel lies only upon the workers who are paid for it. There is not one among us upon whom the great commission lies with greater weight than upon you yourself.

The future—the real future—of the church rests with the average member of the church, and his willingness to do something personally to further the cause of Christ. Every Christian must be constantly thinking about what he can do to spread the borders of the kingdom.

—Selected by Reuel Lemmons

There was an all day service, with dinner on the ground, at Pilot the third Sunday in May. Brother Lyndal Anthony delivered the sermon.

## Gospel Meetings

JEFF, MO. 8 miles east of Thayer, Mo. July 18-28. Norman Starling, San Marcus, Tex., will be the speaker.

AGNOS, ARK. July 7-16. Wesley Hylton will be the speaker.

ELIZABETH, ARK. First two Sundays in June. Bro. R. L. Griffin, San Antonio, Texas the speaker.

CAMP, ARK. June 12-19. Bro. Harvey Elder will do the preaching.

STURKIE, ARK. June 24 - July 3. Brother Doyle Kinder doing the preaching.

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK. July 4-13. Brother L. F. Mills of Wichita, Kansas will do the preaching.

VIOLA, ARK. June 12-21. Burl Curtis of Greenville, S. C. the speaker

TWIN CREEKS, ARK. June 4-12. Orbie Robins doing the preaching. Twin Creeks is located on highway 9, ten miles south of Melbourne, Ark.

GAMALIEL, ARK. June 2-11. Doyle Kinder the speaker. Also Riley Henry will hold a tent meeting here beginning July 21-31.

SITKA, ARK. June 27 - July 3. Brother Clovis Ragsdale the speaker.

WHEELING, ARK. June 27 - July 6. Brother S. R. Tipton of Hope, Ark., will do the preaching.

## News Items

We received a letter from the brethren at Twin Creeks expressing their appreciation for every one who helped in financing the new building there. They state that services have been held in the building for several weeks and it is very nice. Twin Creeks is located nine miles south of Melbourne, Ark., on highway 9.

Brother Wesley Hylton preached the Baccalaureate sermon at Mammoth Mammoth Spring, Sunday, May 15.

## Contributions Acknowledged

Church of Christ, Salem .....	\$5.00
Church of Christ, Welcome Hill .....	5.00
Church of Christ, Morrilton .....	5.00
R. C. Blankenship, Melbourne .....	1.00
Boyce Gillihan, Melbourne .....	1.00
Mrs. G. W. Hendrix, Memphis .....	1.00
George Huett, jr. Elizabeth .....	1.00
A Friend of the paper .....	5.00
Wheeling Church of Christ .....	10.00
Mrs. F. N. Fletcher, Williford .....	5.00

## An Open Letter

Dear Readers,

It has been a pleasure to work on the paper. Your comments, from time to time, indicate that you have appreciated our efforts. For all the words of encouragement I am deeply grateful. I will miss being with the paper, and with you in that sense. May God richly bless each one of you.

The paper is a good work. Your encouragement and help will make it possible to continue this good work. Clovis will be handling things by himself, until Brother Morgan arrives in the Fall. He will do a good job. May I ask you to help him in every way possible? It has been good to work with Clovis, and I wish him the best of everything.

I am looking forward to my new work, but will not forget the many friends we have made through the paper, and in this area. If I can ever be of assistance to you in any way please feel free to call upon me.

Will look forward to seeing you at some future date. Until then, "Keep the Faith."

Yours In Christ,  
Wesley Hylton

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Editors—  
Clovis Ragsdale  
Wesley Hylton

## Editorial

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brother Wesley Hylton for his efforts in helping to edit the Fulton County Gospel News. It was at the suggestion of Bro. Hylton that publication was resumed in January of 1959. Since that time he has given unselfishly of time and effort to improve the paper.

In his two years at Mammoth Spring, he was also instrumental in starting the daily radio program and in several mission efforts, especially at Winnona, Mo. He preached every month at Liberty, Agnos, Camp, and several times at Union Hill. We wish him well in his future work in the Master's vineyard. We hope that he can send us articles from time to time for future issues of the paper.

Meanwhile, we hope to carry on the good works that he helped so much to start. The paper has enjoyed the faithful support of the brethren during the past year. We hope to keep the publication going as long as brethren think it is needed and will support the cost of printing and mailing. We would like for more to send us articles and news. The task of editing and mailing is considerable.

Our thanks to the Stovall Publishing Company of Imboden, Arkansas for the good job of printing they have been doing for the paper. At present we are mailing almost 1600 copies each month. In the future all correspondence should be addressed to Clovis Ragsdale, Mammoth Spring, Arkansas.

## "One Pearl of Great Price"

Wesley Hylton

Matt. 13:45, 46, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

This brief parable illustrates the precious value of the church. In value it is unsurpassed. Nothing can compare with it. To have it is worth all else.

In olden times pearls were highly prized, and extremely valuable. They were a mark of wealth. In the parable, the merchant is seeking "goodly pearls." He finds one of great value. It is so valuable that he doesn't have the means to purchase it. However, his desire for it is so keen that he is willing to sell "all that he had" to buy it. The kingdom, or church, is worth all that we have to give, or give up, in order to be a part of it.

Notice, the man was looking for pearls. He was looking for something better than what he had. Many today are not satisfied with their religion. They can see the many differences between what they read in their Bible and what they see practiced in their religious organization. Some are earnestly and sincerely seeking the truth. When they find it, they will be willing to forsake all else for it. The Lord said, "Ye shall find me, after that ye have sought for me with all your heart."

Some learn the truth without difficulty. Their parents or friends may be instrumental in helping them to find the right way. Others must seek through a maze of error, creeds, man made traditions, and false systems. There is a great contrast between the man who seeks the truth, and the one who accidentally comes upon it. Regardless of whether we seek it, or find it accidentally, the important thing is to take advantage of the opportunity offered.

Sometimes it takes a great deal of soul-searching for a person to recognize the true church. It involves giving up a lot. Loved ones may object violently.

Former friends may frown. Business associates may look elsewhere. The seeker must face these important questions: Is it worth it? Is the price too high? Will I get more out of this new way of life than the old? The answer is yes! The church is worth all else! It cost God His Son! It cost Christ His life!

The man was seeking goodly pearls. He knew what he was looking for. He was not satisfied to sit back with something inferior. He realized there were better pearls than the one he possessed. The vast majority doesn't know what it is seeking. They are content with half a loaf. To them, imperfect pearls will do. In many instances they have been deceived. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12. It isn't safe to follow a course just because it seems right. We must be sure! To be sure involves knowledge can only come from God's word. It is tragic that many begin their search too late. Death catches them before they find the truth. Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have everlasting life; but they are they which testify of me, and ye will not come unto me, that ye may have life." Jn. 5:39, 40.

The merchant sold "all that he had." This indicates his willingness to give up everything for that which he prized most. He offered proof that meant business. Very few are willing to follow the same course. They want the blessings and rewards of Christianity, but they aren't willing to pay the price. They aren't sincere. They offer a mere pittance for the most precious and costly thing on earth.

Human misery is everywhere. It affects all. It makes us long for a better land. We can only obtain that better reward by selling all, that we may have the one thing that is worthwhile.

## Busy Here and There

Clovis Ragsdale

In the twentieth chapter of I Kings we are told of a parable taught by a prophet of God to Ahab, king of Israel. He had displeased God by not destroying old King Benhadad of Syria, in that he had allowed him to live after having

defeated him in battle in which the Lord had aided Israel. In substance the parable is of a battle being fought in which a man was given charge over a prisoner. He was duly informed that if the prisoner escaped then his life would be forfeited. In the course of the day while the man was busy here and there the prisoner escaped.

The application today could be that everyone is given one soul to keep or to save. Many get busy with the affairs of this life and fail to "lay up treasures in heaven" and lose their souls in eternity. We need to realize that God has made possible, that any one who wishes to reach heaven, can do so.

The society in which the people of our nation live today is, perhaps, the most dangerous of any in history in regards to time. Our every minute is taken up. To meet the demands of the necessities of life require so much of our time. Recreational facilities are in abundance, claiming even more of our precious time. The human body demands a certain amount of time for rest and to rebuild. Where does this leave the Lord? In the lives of far too many Christians it leaves practically no time at all for worship service, Bible study, visiting the sick, meditation, and for personal contacts. If we do not keep our minds on spiritual matters part of the time our faith will waste away and we will become spiritual weakened. What can be done about this problem? We can set aside some time for the Lord and consider it the most important of our life. Then we will see that it is given the time it should have. Christ said in the sermon on the mount; Matt. 6:33, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We should take the Savior at his word.

Many people plan to become Christians sometime in the future, but like Felix of old, they never find the "convenient season". While they are busy here and there with the affairs of life, the years slip away and life upon the earth comes to an end. If only people would take time out from the rush of everyday life to take stock of their soul's condition. Realizing their shortcomings while there is still time to do something about it, then many might come to Christ before it is too late. In the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, Christ

asked a question that everyone needs to spend considerable time thinking about. The twenty-sixth verse reads "For what shall it profiteth a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

To you who are Christians, why not resolve to give the Lord more of your time. It will help you to grow and to become stronger in his service. To you who are not Christians why not decide that now is the time for you. Stop putting off what you know that you should do. There are many gospel meetings in progress during this time of the year. There is probably one in progress close to where you live at this very time. If not now, certainly before long. If this is not possible then make your desires known to some member of the church and he will make arrangements for some one to assist you in the things which the Bible commands you to do in order to become a child of God.

## He Proved His Point

A denominational preacher once preached a very forceful sermon "proving" that one doesn't need to be a member of any church to be saved. At the close of the sermon he "opened the doors of the church". A man arose and started to leave.

When asked where he was going, he stated, "That preacher did such a good job of showing that I don't have to be a member of any church to be saved, I thought while he had the doors to this church open I'd get out."

One doesn't have to be a member of a y denomination to be saved. The church Jesus built is not a denomination. The ones who are saved are added to it. (Acts 2:42) In Acts 2:36-41, we read what they did to be added.

—Selected

## Presumptuous Sins

Guy H. Couch, Monett, Mo.

David prayed; "Keep thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then I shall be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."

PRESUME: to suppose something to

be true. To venture without permission. To act in a forward and arrogant manner. For an excellent example of this type sin, read Deut. 1: God had told Israel to take the land of Canaan; They said; "Let's send men over and see if we can." They went and on return decided by "majority vote" that they could NOT do what God had told them to do. Then, God changed His mind and said: "Ye shall NOT go up to possess the land, seeing ye rebel, but ye shall DIE in the desert." Then they decided to go. God said: "Don't go, I will not fight your battles, but they "went up **presumptuously**; they thought surely, God will fight for us. They went up, but were chased and destroyed in Mt. Seir (V. 44).

Why did David call this a "great transgression?" 600,000 rebellious men left in the wilderness to roam for 40 long years until they all died. This is just one example of "PRESUMPTUOUS SINS."

Because God at one time permitted or commanded a thing, does not give us permission to do the same things today. God told Israel to "GO UP AND TAKE THE LAND." They rebelled. God changed his mind and gave another law or commandment. Which is now binding, the first or last command?

Men PRESUME that many ought to please the Lord in the worship of the church today simply because at one time God permitted or commanded that thing. Therefore, Instrumental music, earthly priests, burning incense; sprinkling water, infant membership in churches, etc., are all PRESUMPTUOUS. Why? Simply because God's "last Will and Testament," the "perfect law of liberty" does not bind, command nor give permission for the doing of such plus many others that are practiced PRESUMPTUOUSLY.

Think of the time and money that is being spent digging up the relics of the past that were to die with the law of works, PRESUMING that God will be pleased, to have them put back in HIS house?

If only folk could be taught to see the Beauty; the simplicity; the Freedom and Liberties to be enjoyed in simple Christianity, the New Testament

# Baptized Without Delay

Delton Haun, Wichita, Kansas

It is strange that men can think lightly of water baptism today. It is strange that any sincere person can delay being baptized in view of the practice in Bible times following the day of Pentecost. Then, those who learned the truth and received it were baptized without delay.

The alien sinners on Pentecost were baptized on the same day they heard the truth preached (Acts 2:38, 41). The Ethiopian eunuch stopped his chariot and was baptized immediately after he heard about Jesus (Acts 8:37, 38), and the Philippian jailer was baptized the same hour of the night which he learned the truth (Acts 16:33).

We should ask the question, Why were these people baptized without delay? They were baptized without delay because baptism was necessary to their becoming children of God. It was a vital part of primary obedience. Those on Pentecost were baptized in order to have the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism put men "into" Christ (Gal. 3:27). It was necessary to be in Christ to be new creatures (2 Cor. 5:17).

The Bible nowhere teaches that baptism without hearing and believing will do anything for anybody. But it does teach that when alien sinners (those not children of God) learn the truth, believe it, repent of their sins and confess their faith that they are ready to be baptized. Short of being baptized they have no remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Scriptural baptism puts them into Christ. Scriptural baptism washes away sins (Acts 22:16).

The real reason why some alien sinners are not baptized "the same hour of the night" in our time is due to the fact that those who teach them do not believe that baptism is essential to salvation. Thus in the human reasoning it can be delayed. There is therefore a marked difference between Bible teaching and present day practice. Practice will change only when men come to recognize the truth on this subject.

## HOW THE ADS SHOULD READ

If the places that sell WHISKEY and beer would tell the truth in their advertising, the ads would read something like this:

"WANTED—One hundred new customers, as the most of our old ones have dropped out. Ten committed suicide; twenty are in jail; and fifteen are in the poor house; one was electrocuted for murder; three are in the mental hospital; and the rest are broke.

"We must have new customers—young, fresh and strong, for they will not live to stay with us long. Come to see us. We have brands that will cause you to disgrace your family, paralyze your mind, warp your body, and lose your friends, along with your soul."

NOTE: The pitiable part today is the fact that some church members are taking part in "social drinking". Not only so, but if opportunity presents itself they vote in favor of legalizing the debauchery of selling liquors to an indiscriminate public. They argue for such the same as the hoodlums now in the liquor business, namely that they are getting rid of the boot-leggers and giving the revenue to the government where it rightly belongs. Blood money does not rightly belong anywhere! Too, two wrongs never made a thing right. We haven't rid ourselves of the boot-legger; and those who have changed have simply obtained a license to sell the damnable stuff legally! So, we still have the boot-legger, legal or illegal. In either way we still have the same undesirable salesman in the same abominable business.

There was nothing wrong with the law of prohibition. Its failure was in the execution of its dictate. Corruption in the officers responsible for its execution is the place of fault. Lay the blame where it belongs. Even with this weakness, prohibition was better than the wide open affair we have today. Alcoholism has soared to frightening heights and is still on the increase. Yes, population has soared also but we are speaking percentage wise. The same can be said of crime in its many forms. And these things, gentle friends, have made their momentous climbs since repeal!

One says, "We are going to have drinking anyhow!" Yes and murder and theft.

we might add. Shall we legalize these and collect revenue? We have legalized adultery in our divorce courts. Does that make it right? THINK!!!

## IS THERE A REAL HEAVEN TO BE GAINED?

To serious readers of the Bible, the conclusion that "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4:9) is inevitable. Unless God wants men to reach this conclusion, He has given them the wrong Book!

If there is no real heaven, could Christ have said to His disciples just before His death: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go to prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3)? Or could Paul have told his experience of being "Caught up even to the third heaven . . . into paradise" (2 Cor. 12:2-4)?

Christ teaches in His history of the rich man and Lazarus the uninterrupted continuity of life through death, and the survival of natural affections, memory, and reason after death (Luke 16:19-31). The life of men after death, so far as the Bible pictures it, is painted in similar colors taken from earthly life. The life a Christian lives on earth and his subsequent life in heaven are but TWO PARTS OF ONE LIFE—the hereafter is the after here. Is not the fact that Paul did not know whether his body went to heaven with him or not, interesting and instructive?

—R. C. Bell, Abilene, Tex.

Brother Clovis Ragsdale is working with the church at Mammoth Spring during the summer months. Brother Boyd Morgan of Kennett, Mo., will move to Mammoth and resume work with the congregation on or about Sept. 1.

Brother Clifton Ganus of Harding College delivered the Baccalaureate sermon at Williford, Ark., Sunday, May 8.