

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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July, 1959

Tie A Knot and Hang On!

Boyd E. Morgan

Kennett, Mo.

Trials and tribulations! Heartaches and Anguish! Woes and Despair! All my efforts are vain. What am I to do?

A congregation with corrupt doctrine. The leaders weep and pray and plead. A mother bewails her grown child's disobedience to God. A faithful wife mourns for the non-Christian husband. All seems in vain. A father holds his baby in his arms; he has been told that it cannot live. He sits with tight drawn lips and white face. A fatherless child cries for the deceased parent as a casket is slowly lowered into the ground. These things we witness and they all ask what can we do.

Someone said, "When you get to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on." This is good advice. Very good advice indeed. What men have expressed in this saying we read in other words from the Bible.

1. When the angel had John write to the church at Thyatira, there were some who had not corrupted themselves with the adultery of Jezebel. No encouragement was given to any of these to quit. The admonition was: "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But THAT WHICH YE HAVE ALREADY, HOLD FAST TILL I COME." Rev. 2:24.

It was tie a knot and hang on!

2. Peter realized the anguish of those whose loved ones would not obey the gospel. In specific consideration to the wives of non-christian husbands he wrote: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation with

fear." 1 Pet. 3:1. Here were some who would not be won merely by the preaching of the word but the life of the wife would win them to obey Christ. So, tie a knot and hang on!

3. When the child of David died he arose and ate. They inquired why he had fasted and wept before the child and then ate when it did die. His answer was simple, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back? I SHALL GO TO HIM, but he shall not return to me?" II Sam. 12. David was at the end of his rope but he had something to hold to. He tied a knot and held on.

4. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." I Thess. 5:21 "Buy the truth and sell it not." Prov. 23:23. In many ways our Bible teaches us to tie a knot and hang on! It is always hang on to that which is true and right and good.

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Without the help of those interested in bringing the gospel to the lost this work would not be possible. We appreciate them very much, and pray that God's richest blessings will rest upon them.

NEWS ITEMS

Meetings are in progress at Pilot, West Plains, and Thayer. They will have closed by the time you receive this issue. May God bless these efforts, and many souls be won to the Master.

Gospel Meetings

HATFIELD, MO. July 6 - 15 Wesley Hylton. Mammoth Spring, Ark. the speaker. The meeting will be under a tent, and will be held in Lanton, Mo.

O'KEAN, ARK. July 6 - 11 Don Smith the speaker.

HEART, ARK. July 13 - ?Charles Coil the speaker.

AGNOS, ARK. July 17 - 28 Vance Greenway, Paragould, Ark. the speaker.

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Mo. July 20 - 29 Clifford Stewart, Gainesville, Mo. the speaker.

ASH FLAT, ARK. Aug. 10 - 19 Ray Chester the speaker.

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK. Aug. 20 - 30 Riley Henry, West Plains, Mo. the speaker.

GATEWOOD, MO. Aug. 20 - 30 Wesley Hylton, Mammoth Spring, Ark. the speaker.

HARDY, ARK. July 23 - Aug. 2 Riley Henry. West Plains, Mo. the speaker.

CHURCH IN ASH FLAT GROWING

On Sunday May 24, 1959, Bro. Clovis Ragsdale baptized two into Christ at Ash Flat, Ark. Three weeks later, June 15, one more was baptized. We rejoice in the work of the brethren at Ash Flat, and wish them's God's blessings in their future efforts.

Bro. Riley Henry, West Plains, Mo., preached in Ash Flat the fifth Sunday.

The meeting at Welcome Hill closed with one addition. A young lady was baptized into Christ. Bro. John Simpson of Searcy, Ark. did the preaching.

Bro. Hylton preached for the churches in Agnos, Liberty, and Camp during the month. The church in Mammoth Spring continues to prosper. Class rooms were painted during the past month. Other improvements are planned. Pray for us in the work here.

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Editors—
Clovis Ragsdale
Wesley Hylton

Editorial

There is a great need in our section of the country for more reverence in the worship service. When we come together to Worship God, a certain degree of seriousness needs to be manifested on the part of every christian. I do not say that we have to have a long face and a holy-stone to every thing that we say, neither should we go to the other extreme of loud and unrestrained hilarity. Oftentimes a church building will sound more like a beehive than people come together to worship and commemorate the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross of calvary.

After the worship service has started, some parents turn their children loose to roam at will over the building and to visit as they please. This will distract peoples attention, especially people of advanced age. Also, the children fail to develop the proper respect for a worship service. The parent fails in that they do not heed Pauls admonition to fathers to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In some small country congregations this problem has become of major concern. If you are the parents of small children, try to correct this situation for the sake of the children as well as the others who desire to worship the Lord.

Bro. Clovis Ragsdale preached at Burks Chapel on the fifth Sunday . . . Clovis has entered Harding College for the summer semester. At last account he was a very busy fellow.

MAILING ADDRESS

Send all correspondence to Wesley Hylton, P. O. Box 237, Mammoth Spring, Ark. Questions and comments are invited.

The Paper Gets Around

When a publication such as this paper is printed and mailed out, there is no way of knowing who and how many will read the paper, or where the paper might travel to. Brother Ralph Shrable of the Crossroads congregation recently told of sending the Fulton County Gospel News to his daughter who was living at the time, in southern France, where her husband was stationed with the Armed Forces of our country. They, and two or three other families, met for worship each Lords day in private homes. The paper was passed among them and was the only religious paper received by any of the group.

Events like this bring to mind the statement made by Isaiah and recorded in chapter 55, verse 11, when he stated that if Gods word is sent forth it would not return unto him void. Oftentimes when a meeting is held and there are no responses, we become discouraged. What we do not realize is that in someones heart the seed may have been planted that might not be in evidence for some time to come. The lesson that we should get from this is that we should ever be making known the Gospel Story in every way possible and to realize that the power in that word will be doing good in ways that we may never know about.

First Things First

FIRST READ I KINGS 17:8-16

The widow of Zarephath was in dire need. When Elijah asked for a morsel of bread the widow replied, "As the Lord liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal and a little oil in a cruse: behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die." Elijah said unto her, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make ME thereof a little cake FIRST, and bring it to me and after make for thee and thy son. For thus sayeth the Lord God of Israel, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." (According to James 5:17 it rained not for three and one-half years). Was this

an unrighteous and selfish act for Elijah to ask that she make him a little cake FIRST when she had only enough oil and meal for a cake for herself and for her son, with no hope of having any more? The widow's faith was put to the test. There was a blessing connected to the request. Elijah promised that the meal and oil would not fail until God sent rain. Before she could receive the blessing it was necessary that she put first things first.

This is the kind of faith needed today in the work of Christ. This faith needs to be exercised today by brethren who are not afraid to "see first the Kingdom of God", trusting God to add to us the necessities of life. Mt. 6:33.

There are many blessings man seeks. These spiritual blessings are conditional. If we put first things first we will obey the commands FIRST, then expect the blessings to follow. Men put first things LAST when they say they are being baptized because their sins are already forgiven. (Acts 2:38). Many of us who are children of God put first things last in seeking our own fortune first.

Cliff Stewart, Gainesville, Mo.

One Thing Lacking

Lavern Stewart

West Plains, Mo.

If you were asked to name ONE thing most needful, among God's children, what would you name? I would name ZEAL. It was a lack of zeal that was the undoing of the brethren of Laodicea, Rev. 3:14-22. Because these brethren were lukewarm, or had no zeal, they could not realize they were lost. This needful virtue (zeal) means, "eager interest and enthusiasm", "ardent endeavor or devotion." Webster further says it means "fervor." Concerning fervor, Romans 12:11, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." We are told in Titus 2:14, that one purpose of Christ's death was to purify unto Himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS of goodworks. Zeal will cause a man to go far in propagating a cause he believes to be right. It is so forceful in stimulating one to action that it often causes its possessor to go far in the wrong direction. Zeal is dangerous if it is not tempered by knowledge. Israel had much fervor; yet no knowledge of Christ and His Gospel. Their mis-guided zeal caused them to

reject Christ, set up a system of their own and also to persecute Christians. The apostle Paul was formerly one such. Please read Romans 10:1-3, and Phil. 3:6. Since zeal means "eager interest" the man who has it will stay so busy doing the work of the Lord that he will have no time to partake of the world or to stir up trouble among brethren. Paul said (II Cor. 9:2) zeal would provoke others to good works. There must be real and lasting enthusiasm, if one is going to succeed, in any profession—our religion must be a profession and not a mere sideline. Some church members start off like the rabbit, but their zeal soon burns out. We better start like the turtle and keep that pace as to start fast and quit. Remember it is how the horse finishes and not how he starts that determines the race. No doubt, both "fervor" and "steadfastness" are enjoined upon us in I Cor. 15:58, "BE ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord . . ."

Organization of The Church

Wesley Hylton

"To arrange or constitute in interdependent parts each having a special function or relation with respect to the whole." The preceding is Webster's number two definition of the term organize. Organization is defined: "1. Act or process of organizing. 2. State or manner of being organized. 3. Any vitally or systematically organized whole."

The average person doesn't have any difficulty understanding the necessity of organization in any endeavor if it is to be successful. This can easily be seen in everyday life. Without organization our cities, counties, and states could not perform their proper function.

The same is true of the Lord's church. It must be properly organized if it is to function as the Lord intended it should. In fact, the Lord by divine instruction has informed us to the organization of the church. It is a divine arrangement, and is not subject to change by man. To change the scriptural order of church organization is a sin, and will bring condemnation to those who tamper with God's laws.

Christ is the head of His church. Eph. 1:22,23. Col. 1:18. No human being can

hold this office. The apostles acting by inspiration, instructed that elders were to be ordained in every congregation. The elder has the responsibility of leading, feeding, and caring for the flock.

The elder is also called a bishop, presbyter, pastor (the preacher is not a pastor, unless he is qualified for the office, and is so appointed), and shepherd. Each one of the named help indicate the scope of an elder's job. For a church to be scripturally organized a plurality of elders must serve.

The deacons also have a responsibility in the proper function of the church. The deacons serve under the elders. They are to carry the duties appointed them by the elders. The deacons obligation lies primarily in seeing after the physical needs of the members. They are to see that the destitute are clothed, fed, etc.

Evangelists and teachers also have their place in the work of the church. They are to work under the supervision of the elders. As the names suggest, their work is primarily in the teaching field.

Every Christian is a priest, a precious stone, a peculiar person, and is to let his light so shine that lost souls may be led to the saviour. Everyone has a certain amount of talent that is to be used, and developed.

As it takes every member of the human body functioning properly for the body to do its task properly, just so, every member of the body of Christ must work together to the glory of God, and the advancement of the cause. We must pull together as a team. A team on which there are no individual stars that rank higher than the team as a whole.

NEWS ITEMS

The young people met at Williford last month. Many young men took part in the services. Everyone enjoyed the entertainment and refreshments that came later. The meeting in June will be at Alton, Mo.

The meeting at Winona, Mo. (a mission effort, a few members were there but were not meeting regularly) closed with four baptisms. Bro. Don Smith and Bro. Wesley Hylton did the preaching. The church in Mtn. View, Mo. helped very much with their presence. Visitors from other congregations around the area

also. The churches in Mammoth Spring, Thayer, and Jeff helped with expenses. Arrangements were made for services to be held on Sunday afternoon each week. Bro. Henry Casey, from Mtn. View will be with them two Sundays a month. Bro. Smith and Bro. Hylton will help one Sunday each a month. There are great possibilities for the Lord's cause in Winona. Visit with them when you can, and remember them in your prayers.

In the last issue we reported the meeting in Pocahontas, Ark., in which Bro. Jim Allen did the preaching. 120 responded to the invitation, 67 for baptism. Bro. Allen recently closed a meeting in Newport. 36 responded to the invitation. 22 were baptized. He goes to Paragould the 28th.

IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD

How often is this statement heard by members of the church in regard to some phase of the church work? It is a favorite alibi for evasion of duty. Well, it is true and if you lay down the yardstick and demand to see immediate and overwhelming results from every effort, you will be disappointed. No phase of the work is revolutionary, isolated from the overall picture. (1) Pulpit preaching often seems to bear little fruit, regardless of the effort made. (2) the church bulletin often may not even be read by some indifferent members. (3) Visitation may show small returns. (4) The Bible study program does not return the dividends it should. But this does not justify letting up or eliminating any of these efforts. When given time and added together, the sum total is rewarding and gratifying. It is better to act in faith and to be "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." We are responsible for effort, not results. "I have planted, Apollos watered but God gave the increase."

"Every man will surely have his hour."

Nature seldom makes a fool—she simply furnishes the raw materials and lets the fellow finish the job to suit himself.

It is easy to lose interest in the church if you have never made an investment.

Present Day Religious Teachings Versus The Bible

PART I

There are many religious organizations in the world today, teaching many and varied doctrines. Can there be "many" doctrines and all be pleasing in the sight of God? Let us look to the word of God, the Bible, for our answer for therein is his divine plan revealed unto man. God's plan of salvation for man cost the sinless Son of God his very life's blood. Can we then follow after teaching of men? God forbid! Just before his death on the cross Christ prayed that his apostles would all be one even as God and Christ are one. John chap. 17: In the same chapter verses 20-21 we find: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe thou hast sent me" Notice, he prays that we all be one in order that the world will believe. We have only to look around us to see honest people who are confused because of the religious chaos in the world today. Thus we can see the religious world as a whole is not helping to answer Christ's prayer. When division arose in the church at Corinth, Paul wrote exhorting them to unity. I Cor. 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" The same writer exhorts the brethren at Ephesus to keep the unity of the Spirit. Eph. 4: He says there is but one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all. (verses 3-6.) He pictures each Christian as a member of the body of Christ, and all fitted together they become a perfect man, with Christ as the head. Verses 14-15 exhorts. "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head

even Christ."

Some will teach falsehood for gain. Paul says in Titus 1:10, 11 that there are deceivers teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. Matt. 24:24 says, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets and shall shew great signs and wonders; in as much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." We must be alert and watching then, lest we be deceived by these men, false teachers, who will be using every crafty means possible. In Matt. 15:7-9 Christ says "Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Thus we can see that those who place their hope and faith in man's creeds and commandments are not only hypocrites but their religion is vain. Paul warns in 1 Tim. 4:3,4 "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears and they shall turn their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables". Again in Titus 1:14 he warns that fables and commandments of men turn from the truth. 2 Jno. verses 9-11 reads thus: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ he hath both the Father and the son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Not only then is it wrong to teach and follow after the commandments of men, but we must not assist those who do, for in so doing we will be a partaker of his evil deeds. Paul tells the Galatian brethren "There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:7,8. The inspired writers wrote the Holy Scriptures as it was revealed unto them by the Holy Spirit. As Paul says of himself (Gal. 1: 11, 12) "But I certify you, brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Now let

us make a summary of what we have studied. Christ wants us all to be one in him. The Apostles taught we should be one, speak the same thing, and there should be no division. Christ and the Apostles warn there will arise "many" false teachers. There is only one doctrine or Gospel of Christ and that one is revealed in the Holy Scripture. All over and above one doctrine or Gospel, then, is too many. Dear Reader, let us not seek a plan of salvation through the doctrines and commandments of men, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ as recorded in the pages of God's Holy Word.

The Bible Is Right

Delton Haun

Does the baseball rulebook become wrong if a hundred men strike out? No, "three strikes is out" if one or a hundred strike out. This is the rule.

Is the Bible wrong in condemning profanity if a thousand use profanity? No, profanity? No, profanity is sinful whether one or a thousand use God's name in vain.

Wrongs do not become right because many are made sinners. When God speaks, what He says is right regardless of how many disobey.

We all see the mistake of the polygamist who reasons, "I can't accept the Bible if it condemns polygamy. Since my friends are polygamists this would mean they are wrong and I can't believe that." Yet, how many are ready to reject God's word on other subjects affecting them and theirs?

The Bible forever settles religious matters and the number wrong or right has nothing to do with it. The only question we need ever ask in learning the truth is: "What does God's word say?"

TAKE MY NICKEL

A little boy sat in the church worship by a well-dressed lady. He had a nickel which he was anxious to give. As the plate came near he noticed that the lady was making no effort to give anything. So he said: "Lady, you take my nickel and put it in; I'll crawl under the seat."