

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

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MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

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The Eldership No. 6

We continue our study of the eldership as revealed in the Bible. There is no more important subject than this as it relates to the organization of the church. As goes the elders so goes the church normally. The elders must set the right kind of example before the flock.

In I Timothy 3:2 we have listed along with others, these qualifications which an elder is to possess. Paul says, An elder must be of good behaviour. Just what does the inspired writer mean by this? He means that an elder must lead a well disciplined life, this means an orderly life. His outward bearing must in all respects correspond to his inner life. He must be the master of his life.

Also, in this verse Paul says, That an elder must be given to hospitality. Of all people in the church, the elders should be the first to manifest a hospitable attitude and spirit. To be hospitable means to receive and entertain guests generously and kindly. It also means to be liberally receptive. An elder can come to know the flock better by visiting with them in their homes, and most of all by having them visit in his home.

Another qualification listed by Paul is, Apt to teach. An elder of the church must be qualified to teach. Since elders are charged with leading the flock in the right way, it necessarily follows that he must know that way himself. There is some question as to how capable an elder must be in teaching. In Titus 1:9 Paul is very plain when he says, "Holding fast the faithful words as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. In oth-

er word, he must be able to defend the truth against false doctrine both from within and without. One great problem which we face today is, elders not being able to defend the truth as they should. Preachers and others begin to teach false doctrines and before the elders detect it the church has been rent asunder. The only way an elder can acquire this qualification is through study of the Word of God. He ought to study daily, and prayerfully.

And elder must not be a drinker. This is certainly not in keeping with being the right kind of an example to the flock. If anyone should refrain from drinking strong drink, it is an elder of the Lord's church. An elder must not be a striker. This means that an elder must be able to control his temper. He must not be quarrelsome or ready to fight. It is sad when elders cannot control themselves. When they cannot stand criticism, or when they resent everything that is said to or about them. Elders must be big men in this respect.

Elders must not be lovers of money. Covetousness is strongly condemned in God's word. Elders should be the last people to bow to this temptation. Money blinds many to the truth of God, and their duty to God and man.

We pray that you will study these items further in the privacy of your home, that you might learn more of God's will concern-

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February Issue - -

As you receive this issue of the Fulton County Gospel News, the next issue is already in the hands of the printer. We are in hopes that the next one will come to you in just a few days. Your continued interest in this publication is appreciated. If you have any subject that you wish to receive attention in our writing, we would be happy to hear from you. Either Brother Ragsdale or I (Richard England) would be glad to prepare an article on any Bible subject. There are times when it is difficult to determine what is the best type of material to use. If you ever have any suggestion, please let us know.

ing elders. James Knight
Pineville, La. 71360

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID
MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK.

Rosa Ragsdale
Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

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EDITORS:
CLOVIS RAGSDALE
RICHARD ENGLAND

"A Partnership with Christ"

In 1 Cor. 1:9, Paul wrote, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord". In I John 1:3, John wrote, "—that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." The word "fellowship" is derived from a Greek word, from which the words — communion, partakers, and partners, are also derived. Each of these words have the meaning of, Taking part together, sharing, and having the same mind and interests.

If we were going to enter a business relationship with another person as partners, we would want a person who was willing to take his part in the work of the business, who was willing to share in all concerns of the business, and who had a concern for the success of the business. We would not want

a partner unless he was willing to take part, share, and have a concern in the business. In view of this, when we became a Christian we entered into a partner relationship with Christ in the greatest business on the earth. As such, we should concern ourselves to know everything possible about

this business that we might have a part in making it a success.

The business of Christ is that of reconciling lost humanity to God. In this business, Jesus did everything that we could not do. He provided the way to make this work possible. He offered his life as a sacrifice to pay the price of our redemption, he provided his blood to constantly cleanse man from sin, he provided the gospel to guide man to salvation and service, and he provided for man to have a part in bringing the lost into this way.

The scriptures make it clear that the gospel is the medium through which man can be reconciled to God. Man cannot be saved apart from the teaching of the gospel. It is in this way that we work together with Christ in seeking to save that which is lost. We are to "Preach the gospel to every creature". Our responsibility in preaching the gospel involves us in two ways, first we must personally tell others about Christ, and second we must support others who are willing to go where we cannot. Can we honestly believe that we can have fellowship with Christ, and refuse to take our part in this?

Christ was willing to share so much with us. He is willing to share his life and inheritance. In John 14:19 Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall also live." Has he no right to ask us to share this life with others? "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." In John 6:44, 45 Jesus made it clear that no man could come to him apart from being taught the gospel. Thus through our teaching the gospel to others, we are sharing with them life, life that is in God's Son. Christ gave his life that we might live, are we willing to be partners with him in life? How much of our life are we willing to share with Christ in an effort to reach lost souls? In view of the soul winning programs of the church, have you ever excused yourself with, "I don't have time?"

All gospel preachers have heard this excuse many times by those who live for self, and are not willing to be partners with Christ in life.

To be partners with Christ, we must also have the same mind and interests. In Phil. 2:5, Paul wrote, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus". Christ's mind was to do the will of his Father, John 4:34. He had a mind for the unity of all believers, John 17:21. He had a mind to help the needy, Luke 10:30 37. He had a mind to save the lost, Luke 19:10. What are our interests in the Lord's business? Do we have a deep passion for lost souls, for the needy, for unity, for doing the will of God? How could we claim partnership with Christ if we do not have his passion?

A partnership with Christ does not depend upon how much wealth we have, nor upon a high degree of education, but upon a willingness to take a part in his work, to share with him in this work, and to have a deep concern for the success of this business. The Lord seeks workers, not loafers, with whom to share the profits of his business. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

No greater blessing could be bestowed upon us, than to join hands with God in a partnership of saving lost souls from eternal condemnation.

Harold Turner

The church is the only thing that will be saved in eternity.

"When a man sings his own praise he invariably gets the tune too high."

THE PARADOX OF CHRIST

He who is the Bread of Life began His ministry hungering. He who is the Water of Life ended His ministry thirsting. He was weary, and yet our rest. He paid tribute, yet He is King of Kings. He wept, and yet dried our tears. He was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and yet redeems the world. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and yet is the Shepherd of the sheep. He died, and yet by dying destroyed him who had the power of death.

There's Danger in this New Doctrine

By: Boyd E. Morgan

The new doctrine being advocated by some of my brethren today is most distressing. It's danger lies in the fact that it is a departure, Jer. 6:16. Like the other, not now "current issue," it advocates the same old idea that what we have always taught and practiced is not necessarily true simply because we have always taught and practiced it. So they proceed to give us something new and at the same time it endeavors to find among gospel preachers of the past some quotation that it can fasten upon to prove that it is not new. That is a trap many of us have learned to avoid.

To teach a special leading separate and apart from the word of God is a new doctrine to gospel preachers. Long ago Bro. C. L. Embrey, 1005 Dudley Ave., Texarkana, Arkansas, wrote a book entitled, "My Experiences in the Baptist Church and Twelve Short Sermons." On page 26 of that book he tells how he as a Baptist preacher attended what he then believed to be a Campbellite meeting and heard a sermon on Feelings. Let me quote him from that page: "Let me say here that before coming to the preaching that night, I had been reading J. Frank Norris' paper (Baptist editor BEM) and I had read about a Baptist church advertising for a preacher through the paper. In about ten days the clerk of said church received 28 letters from 28 Baptist preachers and 21 of the letters read about alike. The letters stated that they had prayed over the matter and the Spirit had prompted them to come and pastor the church. Now anyone could see that the Spirit of God did not send twenty-one Baptist preachers to one church to preach. I knew in a moment that God had nothing to do with this, but that these men were looking for a job. So when the preacher began to explain just what the denomination believed about the Spirit, I

began to learn some things I had never thought about."

I wonder what he would have learned from some of my brethren today. The most common illustration I hear from my brethren in testimony of the Spirit's leading the child of God in our day is in the place of work or type of work they choose to work in. If it so leads them what will happen when two or three or even more are led by the same Spirit to the same one job today with each claiming to be led by the Spirit?

Brethren, it's later than you think. The gates are open for more departures.

Can a Multitude Be Wrong -

Cliff Stewart
Mt. Carmel, Ill.

Many people are impressed with large numbers. Advertisers tell us that "more people use brand X than any other." Others say, "160,000,000 can't be wrong." Religious issues are decided according to how many have accepted a certain view. Some insist that "our church must be right because we have so many members."

Counting noses can hardly be used as an unerring method of determining right and wrong. According to the American People's Encyclopedia there are at least 4,000,000 alcoholics in the United States. The World Almanac, (1961 ed.), lists only about eight denominations in the United States with a membership larger than this. Shall we therefore conclude that it would be better to be an alcoholic? The World Almanac also lists the religious population of the world at 2,793,052,000. Of this number only 869,923,820 is listed as "Christian." All who have read their New Testament with any profit realize that only a very small percent of these could scripturally be called Christians.

God is not as easily impressed with numbers as men are. To the

Israelites Moses said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you nor chose you, because you were more in number than any people; for you were the fewest of all people." (Deut. 7:7) Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, "There is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." (I Sam. 14:6) Jesus said, "Many are called but few are chosen." (Mt. 20:16) Also, he said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in there at: because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Mt. 7:13-14) Remember Ex. 23:2, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment."

TEACHER'S PRAYER FOR 1967

Oh, Lord, as I start this year,
Help me to make Thy word so
yearn

That every precious heart will
yearn

More and more of Thee to learn.

May every soul within my care
Of thy great love be made aware;
And thus before this year shall end
They'll know Him You as their
dearest friend;

The One who gave His life that
they
Might with Him in glory dwell
some day.

So strengthen me where I am weak
Give we the words that I should
speak
That I through Thee might reach
each one
So that none are lost, but all are
won.

A THOUGHT . . .

"The average man's idea of a good sermon is one that goes over his head, - and hits a neighbor."

I would rather fail in a good cause
than succeed in a cause that
will ultimately succeed will
ultimately fail. - Woodrow Wilson.

What Must I Do to Become a Christian?

HEAR— “If any man have an ear, let him hear.” Rev. 13:9 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Rom 10:17

BELIEVE — Except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.” John 8:24 “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Heb. 11:6

REPENT — “I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Lk. 13:3 “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Acts 17:30

CONFESS — “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven.” Matt. 10:32 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Rom. 10:9

BE BAPTIZED — “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Mk. 16:16 “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38

“THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: AND THE SAME DAY THERE WERE ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS.” Acts 2:41

To get the true measure of a man's capacity, note how much more he does than is required of him.

To take the wind out of an angry man's sails, stay calm.

Worrying about someone else's welfare sure beats fusing about your own.

Prayer and Providence

Richard England
Mammoth Spring, Arkansas

God designed and set in order the natural laws which are the orderly and very dependable processes of physical things. (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1ff) When God speaks the word, and His trump shall sound, these things shall cease and desist. (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 2 Peter 3:10, 11) But until that last great day, the time of which no man knows, God sustains or continues these processes by His magnificent power. (Colossians 1:16, 17; Hebrews 1:3) In that God created and upholds the natural processes, it can be said that the sun never rises and the rain never falls except by the power of God. (Matthew 5:45) These natural laws being set in order, have continued to this day. When God revealed His will to man on various occasions, He gave proof that such was from Him by superseding these laws and working what is called miracles. These miraculous feats were not performed to simply accomplish the thing done, but rather to demonstrate the power of the one doing them so that it might be known from whence the law of His will had come. (Hebrews 1:1; 2:1ff) All of God's will for man having been revealed, written down, and confirmed, the miracles have ceased. (1 Corinthians 13:9, 10) But, God still functions in the material realm by means of the natural laws which He upholds, controls, and operates.

Through the means of this established law GOD PROVIDES FOR US ALL. This providence does not supplant responsibilities given to man as a free-moral agent. That is, God does not do for man what He expects man to do for himself and for which man must give an account in the last day. Man, in exercising his power and God given responsibilities

of choice, must decide his own course of action in this life. Appeals to influence man in making his choice are lodged by both God and Satan. God exerts no moral influence upon man except through the word as revealed by the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, God continues to sustain and operate the natural laws, the outcome of which benefits man on many occasions. Such blessings are shed on both the just and the unjust. (Matthew 5:45) But, notice this: 1. There is special promise of provision made to the followers of Christ. (Matthew 6:33; 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 12) 2. THE FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN MAY INFLUENCE GOD TO EXERCISE HIS POWER IN THE OPERATION OF THE NATURAL LAWS IN SUCH A FASHION SO AS TO BRING ABOUT A PARTICULAR DESIRED EFFECT OR BLESSING. Such an influence upon God is brought about by prayer. This prayer, as is stated, must be that of a Christian, and must be in accordance with God's will. (Philippians 4:6; 1 John 5:14, 15) Obviously, God's answering prayers and providing for man is not dependent upon a personal, literal, actual dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the body of man. Neither is such provision and blessings an “Influence” exerted upon man by the Holy Spirit in addition to the Word, but the power of God exercised in the world through natural laws for the benefit of man. Man may pray for rain and God may make it rain, but not without a cloud. Man may pray for the sick and God may heal the sick through natural means, but not if we should get their medicine mixed up and unknowingly give them a big dose of strychnine, they will die, God has promised to provide the physical needs of His people. He has further told them to pray for such daily needs. (This is in Matthew 6:33 and 6:11) But this, too, is done only through natural means.

The bone of contention is usually just above the neck.

“Everybody is doing it,” is the national anthem of hell.”