

# Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body." – Ephesians 5:23

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## If You Hate The Church, You Hate Jesus

### Part One

by Ted J. Clarke

#### Introduction

The Scriptures liken Christ and His church to the head and the body. Ephesians 1:22-23 says, "And He [God] put all things under His [Christ's] feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (NKJV). We cannot separate Christ (the head) from the body (the church). Acts 20:28 and Ephesians 5:25 tell us that Christ "purchased [the church] with His own blood" and "gave Himself for it" on the cross. In spite of what most denominations teach about membership in the church being non-essential, becoming part of the Lord's church is equal to receiving salvation. The same process by which one becomes a Christian (Acts 2:36-38) causes the Lord to add one to His body, the church (Acts 2:47).

Saul of Tarsus "made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison" (Acts 8:3). When the Lord appeared to Saul on the Damascus road, He asked, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4). Saul was persecuting the Lord when he persecuted the church, and it is equally true today that if one hates the Christ's church, that person, in effect, hates Jesus. One can protest that this is not so, but such protests have a hollow ring in view of the teaching of the Scriptures just cited.

There are people who hate the church of Christ for various reasons, but they, like Saul, are actually opposing Christ, since His body is the church. The fact is, that if the church of the Lord is saying and doing what He commands, then to hate the church is to hate Christ! Surely you do not want to be found hating the Lord who died that you might be saved! Neither should you face Him in judgment having hated His church, for to be saved in Christ is to be in His church

(Acts 2:38, 47; Ephesians 1:7; 5:23).

#### Why Some Hate the Church

Some hate the church of Christ because it teaches that not all religious people will be saved. But if you hate the church because it teaches such a doctrine, you will have to hate the Lord for the same reason. The church of Christ teaches this because Jesus Christ taught it! Jesus said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). In verses 22-23 Christ pointed out that "many" religious people, who claim to do good works in His name, will not be accepted by Him! What determines who will or will not be saved from religious folks? Jesus said, "he who does the will of My Father in heaven" — this is what makes the difference. Do you hate Christ because He said that? If not, why hate Christ's church when it teaches the same thing? Do you think you can be saved if you ignore what Christ said, or that you can tell others that they do not have to obey God's will in order to go to heaven? Please do not hate the Lord's church because it teaches that it does make a difference what you believe and practice in religion. It is merely saying what Christ said!

Still others hate the church because of its emphasis on being baptized in order to be saved. This can become an emotional issue because most of us, whether members of Christ's church or not, have had loved ones die who were not immersed in Christ's name to have their sins washed away. Some become hurt or angry and say, "Do you mean that you think that my mother (or wife, husband, father, brother, sister, etc.) was not saved because she (or he) was never baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of sins?" Of course, no one can say on his/her own authority that someone is saved or lost. It does not

matter what you or I say or think. The matter of who is saved or lost depends on what the Savior, Jesus Christ, says in His word.

Christ says that we are saved by faith (John 3:16), but He never says that we are saved by faith alone, like so many denominations claim. The Lord includes repentance and confession of our faith as essential to salvation (Luke 13:3,5; Matthew 10:32). Jesus also stated, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). Do you hate Christ because He joined baptism to faith and placed both of them **before** salvation? Do you despise the Lord because He inspired the apostle Peter by the Holy Spirit to say that repentance and baptism in Christ's name are "for the remission of sins," meaning in order to obtain salvation (Acts 2:38), or because the same Lord and Spirit inspired Peter to write that "baptism doth also now save us" (1 Peter 3:21). Since Christ placed baptism before salvation, as a necessary part of God's plan of redemption, what right does the Lord's church (or you) have to say that anyone can be saved without obeying that command? If you want to hate the church of Christ for teaching that baptism is necessary for salvation, you will have to hate the Lord for the same reason.

It is not the church's place to judge whether or not specific people who have died are lost. Jesus said that the Father had given that judgment unto Him (John 5:22-23). However, the church is the "pillar and ground of the truth" of God's word (1 Timothy 3:15), and must teach to the living what one must do to be saved. None of your loved ones who have gone beyond this life can save you, but it is possible that by following them instead of Jesus you could be lost (Luke 14:26). Since Jesus set forth immersion in His name as essential to forgiveness of sins, how can anyone claiming to follow Him do otherwise? Would you tell a Jew, a Muslim, or a Hindu that he/she could be saved without believing in Christ? Of course not, and you should not. Why? Because Jesus plainly said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No

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one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). He just as plainly stated one must believe **and be baptized** in order to be saved (Mark 16:16). There is no reason to be ashamed of these words of the Lord (Mark 8:38). Are you personally condemning or judging people to hell when you simply tell them what the Scriptures say? Christ's word is the judge (John 12:48-50). Jesus saves those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). Those who do not submit will be condemned by the same word which saves others who obey (Revelation 20:12).

There are yet others who hate the church Christ established because it insists in setting forth book, chapter, and verse from the Scriptures for what it teaches and practices. Churches of Christ try to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where it is silent. Our desire is to call Bible things by Bible names and to do Bible things in Bible ways; having a "thus saith the Lord" for what we say and do. The authority principle of Colossians 3:17 is vital. "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." Jesus appealed to the Scriptures over and over to teach truth, correct religious error, and to call people to repentance and change of life (Matthew 4:1-10; chapters 5-7; 22:37-40). When Satan misquoted Scripture, as men often do too, Jesus corrected him with more Scripture, put in its proper context. Christ expects men to study the

Bible diligently and to reason correctly upon God's word (Matthew 22:29-33; 2 Timothy 2:15). The nature of the word of God is such that "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35), meaning that it cannot lose its power by someone proving it to be false, for it is nothing but truth (John 17:17; 8:31-32). On the other hand, false doctrines come from outside of the Bible or from only considering a part of what God's word says on a subject. When these false teachings are subjected to the light of God's complete word, they will not hold up (John 3:19-21). It is this conviction in the power of God's word which leads the church of Christ to be willing to subject its teaching to the test of public discussion as an honest search for truth (Acts 17:11).

Some especially hate the church because it seeks to expose false doctrine and those who teach it. Jesus warned of false teachers (Matthew 7:15); He corrected religious error (Matthew 5-7); and He was almost in constant controversy with the religious groups of His day over their erroneous teaching and practice (Matthew 21:12-23;39). Do you hate the church of Christ for following the example and teaching of the Lord? The early church was hated because it challenged the religious error of unbelieving Jews and pagans. The apostles and early church were persecuted, not because they taught a neutral doctrine that offended no one, but because they taught that it made a difference what people believed and practiced religiously (Acts 4:5-31; 5:17-42; 14:1-20). They stirred such opposition and hatred that the early church was "spoken against everywhere" (Acts 28:22). Those who hated the church hated Jesus.

The church of the Lord will "prove all things, (and) hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). It will "test the spirits, whether they are of God," for there are many false teachers in the world of religion (1 John 4:1,6). In doing this, the Lord's church must always be "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15), and "always be ready to give a defense (answer) to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15). To hate the church of Christ for following the teaching of the Lord is to hate Christ Himself. [To be continued]

*Friendship is a cozy shelter from life's rainy days.*

**WHY JUST EVOLUTION AND NOT BIBLICAL CREATION?**

By Dr. Russell C. Artist  
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It is no secret today that the presently accepted view of the world's origin and of the living things upon it, including man, is that of the concept of evolution. In the name of modern science and all that it entails, as well as insistence upon the separation of church and state, the Bible and theistic creation have been banned from the curriculum of our schools and universities. Instead, a non-theistic religion of secular evolutionary humanism has become the official and acceptable world view which is taught. That this same evolution, the amoeba to man variety, has been enthroned as the only acceptable explanation for the origin of the world and man has been voiced by a number of distinguished British proponents of evolution.

One classic claim made over 65 years ago is still voiced as current opinion today by some intellectuals favoring evolution. Professor D. M. S. Watson, in *Nature*, Vol. 123, page 233 stated:

[Evolution is] a theory universally accepted not because it can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible.

In so many words, this professor of biology dispensed with any vestige of a Creator-God, for such a Being bringing about a special creation would be "clearly incredible!" However, there are a good many top-notch scientists of all kinds in almost every country of the world, including Great Britain, who find it more logical to believe in the biblical Genesis account of origins than in the evolution to which Dr. Watson subscribed.

It is perhaps not so well known that there are certain very respectable evolutionists who have raised serious doubts about the validity of evolutionary doctrine as true science! One, Dr. L. Harrison Matthews, a British biologist of some note, had this word of caution to his colleagues:

The fact of evolution is the backbone of biology, and biology is thus in the peculiar position of being a science founded on an un-

proved theory — is it then a science or a faith? Belief in the theory of evolution is thus exactly parallel to belief in special creation — both are concepts which believers [in each] know to be true, but neither, up to the present time, is capable of proof. (**Origin of Species**, London: J. M. Dent Co. Ltd., 1971. Foreword, p. xii)

A second quote is from the renowned Thomas H. Huxley, probably more responsible than any other man for the acceptance of Darwinian evolutionary philosophy. He wrote:

Creation, in the ordinary sense of the word, is perfectly conceivable. I find no difficulty in conceiving that, at some former period, this universe was not in existence; and that it made its appearance in six days ... in consequence of the volition of some pre-existing Being. (In Leonard Huxley, **Life and Letters of T. H. Huxley**, London: MacMillan, 1903. vol. 2, p. 249)

These last two confessions must make it clear, even to the casual reader, that not all scientists who are (were) evolutionists have/had the same mindset of the aforementioned Dr. Watson, to discount the possibility of creation as "clearly incredible."

A final quote comes from another somewhat distant but well-known authority in science, the celebrated Sir Cecil Wakely. His scholastic achievements are revealed by the numerous degrees and titles which follow his name: B.T.; K.B.E.; LL.D.; D. Sc.; F.R.C.S.; and a Past President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England. In spite of his much learning, he is not an evolutionist, as one may glean from his statement below.

The time has come for all thoughtful people to make up their minds about the creation of the world. Scripture is quite definite that God created the world and I for one believe that to be a fact, not fiction! There is no evidence, scientific or otherwise, to support the theory of evolution. Yet the scientific world and our Universities and Schools still teach evolution. I sincerely trust that this book will play its part, all over the world, in exposing the unproved theory of evolution and establishing the

proved Biblical fact of the creation of mankind. Evolution is a man-made theory. Creation came by the almighty hand of God! (Foreword to **Evolution or Creation**, by H. Enoch, London: Billing & Sons, Ltd., 1967).

The author urges those who claim to be intellectual to do some more research into these weighty matters before making the oft-repeated claim that evolution is a proven principle of science!

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[Editor's Note: The purpose of this article is not to count scientific noses nor to weigh academic degrees in order to prove the truth or falsity of creation or evolution. In spite of the fact of abundant proofs for the existence of God (Romans 1:18-21; Psalms 19:1-6), there will always be greater numbers who will follow the ways of worldly thinking and disregard such evidences (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). Our brother shows that some of the best minds who favor evolution admit that it cannot be proved and would not exclude the possibility of creation. Do not let yourselves nor your children be bullied into accepting the erroneous statement that evolution is a proven scientific fact. If your school system in any way tries to intimidate your children into believing evolution, write to us and we will provide you with the resources you need to take a stand for the special creation view of the origin of the universe and man. You can receive a free catalog on evidences for creation and Christianity by requesting it from: Apologetics Press, Inc., 230 Landmark Drive, Montgomery, AL 36117-2752.]

### WHO IS THE TROUBLE-MAKER?

by Owen D. Olbricht

Paul wrote to the Galatian brethren, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:6, 7). Who was causing trouble, those who are holding to the truth or those who were perverting the truth? The answer seems quite obvious from this verse. The ones who were causing trouble were those who were perverting the gospel.

**Teachers can cause trouble by teaching truth but not practicing**

**the truth they teach.** Jesus admitted that the scribes and Pharisees were teaching truth (Matt. 23:3). They were making proselytes but in so doing they were not improving their condition before God. Because of these teachers God was being blasphemed among the Gentiles (Rom. 2:24).

**Teachers can cause trouble by teaching human traditions instead of God's word.** Human traditions differ from the tradition of God (Matt. 15:2-9; 2 Thess. 2:15). Christians are not to follow tradition that are not according to the truth (Tit. 1:14).

**Teachers can cause trouble by failing to give all the counsel of God.** Paul did not fall into that category. He had taught the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). This was in keeping with the instruction of Jesus that His followers were to teach people to observe all that He had commanded (Matt. 28:20). If a person is teaching more than the instruction of Jesus, he is teaching too much. If he is teaching less than what Jesus taught, he is teaching too little. If he is perverting what Jesus taught, he is teaching falsely. Those who so teach are trouble-makers.

**Teachers who do not teach a balanced message can cause trouble.** Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees was not that they required people to tithe the smallest of their herbs. He said they were right in requiring this. They were wrong in that they were emphasizing this more than the weightier matters of the law. (Matt. 23:23). We can major in minors and minor in majors. Some have tried to justify no need for careful adherence to the teaching of Jesus from the above passage. Jesus taught that we are to be concerned with the smaller things of God's will.

Today we have among us those who run over brethren who are trying to be careful to follow God, even in what may seem to be the smallest matters. It is to be admitted that one can be overly scrupulous and picky; however, being concerned to do God's business in God's way is to be commended not condemned. It is to be admitted that one can spend so much time on the small things that he does not become involved in the greater things of Christ. But it is just as wrong to overlook the need to be careful in all aspects of Jesus' teaching as it is to fail to follow the weightier

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matters of His teaching.

Those who belittle brethren who are seeking to practice justice, mercy, and faith plus the smaller matters of Christ are trouble-makers. "He that if faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). Jesus gave no comfort to those who would set aside the least of God's requirements (Matt. 5:19).

In an effort to follow Jesus we must be sure that we do not get so involved in one aspect of Jesus' teaching we overlook the rest of His will for our lives. Wrong emphasis can be as bad as outright false teaching.

Those who are trouble-makers are those who do not remain with Jesus in the full counsel of His will. Love should compel us to help each other to become mature Christians, complete imitators of Jesus.

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**APOSTASY ALWAYS  
ONE GENERATION AWAY**

by Max Patterson

The book of Judges gets its name from rulers God raised up to rule over Israel from after the death of Joshua to the time of Samuel. Approximately 400 years were involved in the life and times of 15 of the Judges mentioned in the book of Judges. The Israelites were to possess the land of Canaan, and drive the enemy out. Instead, in time, they became friendly with the Canaanites, etc., and made alliances with them, adopted their gods, and their immoral ways. Because the people did that which was right in their own eyes, the Lord allowed the enemies to oppress the the people of God. Whenever the people had a moral renewal, the Lord would raise up a Judge to deliver them. There is a circle that is followed many times in the book of Judges. I am listing here five of the events that happened in this constant cycle in the book of Judges:

1. There is a period of obedience and blessing.
2. Then, there is a period of sin, disobedience and apostasy.
3. Punishment, oppression and bondage always follows.
4. After a period of this, the people experience moral renewal, repent and call for God's help.
5. God delivers his people by raising up a Judge to carry on a campaign of war against the oppressors.

Just as there was a degeneracy after

the days of Joshua, so this apostasy kept occurring during the period of the judges. One statement that strikes at the very heart of the situation is found in Judges 2:10. "And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord ..."

From this point, the progression of Israel away from God and the punishment is inevitable. A summary of what happened over and over is found in Judges 2:10-15.

1. Spiritual illiteracy - they knew not God. vs. 10
2. They forsook God. vs. 12
3. They served false gods. vs. 12
4. God punished them. vss. 14, 15

Is this much different from our day or any other day in history? Compare what happened to the Gentiles in Rom. 1:21, 28-32. We have always been warned about the danger of forgetting God. Hos. 4:6, Gal. 1: 7-9. Therefore, great emphasis is placed on teaching in the Bible. Deut. 6:6,7; II Tim. 2:15; II Pet. 1:5-12.

Every generation must continue to teach its children. One generation not taught brings forth a generation who does not know God. This, in itself, is reason enough for Bible study. Each generation must produce its own great leaders. There came a time in Israel's history that Joshua died. There was not a great leader to take his place. Trouble was the result.

Let us make sure of our own faith, and teach that faith to others so that the church might survive and this and future generations might have the privilege of knowing the benefits and blessings that come to those in Christ Jesus. Eph. 1:3.

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**GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION**

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

**THE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2,3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

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