

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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SEEKING THE LOST

by Ron Gilbert

Jesus said "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15-16). Each generation of christians is faced with the challenge of evangelism. What shall we do about the billions of lost souls? God expects his children to be good stewards of their time, talents, money and all things (1 Corinthians 4:2). The purpose of this article is not to encourage people to stop doing good works in America but to encourage more evangelism outside the U.S.A. About 30 or 40 years ago in America a gospel meeting could be held for 2 weeks with great crowds each night. Some of the preachers then would preach for 2 or 3 hours each night. It was not uncommon for 50 or more people to be baptized into Christ during such meetings and 50 or more being restored. How long has it been since you heard of such a meeting? We should not stop having meetings just because we are not having large numbers of people responding to the Gospel.

However, just suppose that for some unknown reason people in the state of Florida were obeying the Gospel of Christ in great numbers. Suppose that several preachers went to different areas in Florida and preached the pure simple Gospel of Christ and hundreds obeyed the Gospel. Surely if such an interest existed we would send many preachers and teachers to Florida. We would want to start radio programs and put ads in the newspapers and give away many pieces of literature. Suppose after several months the interest grew even more and people by the thousands were being baptized into Christ and the people were begging for more preachers to be sent. What would we do if for some unknown reason that Florida had become the most fertile field in the world? I do not believe that we would stop preaching the Gospel in Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee and other places in America.

However, as good stewards we would want to go to Florida and preach and teach or we would send faithful men.

Notice I started this off by saying "just suppose." Some places in America are more receptive than others. However, at the present I do not know of a place in America where there is a mass hunger for the Gospel and thousands are being baptized into Christ. But there are places where this is the case; places where people will travel for days just to hear the Gospel preached; places where people will sit all day and eagerly study the Bible; many places in Africa, India, Russia and other countries where people will come by the thousands and stay for days hungry to hear the Truth.

This past July 26-August 17 a campaign was led in Africa by Rod Rutherford. This group of 6 men, Rod Rutherford, David Amos, Bruce Daughtery, Steve Fishel and Ron Gilbert, preached in Zambia and Botswana. We encountered people who traveled for days just to hear the Gospel preached. People would sit and eagerly listen to preaching all day long. Each day there would be long question and answer sessions. At one village over 800 people had come from many different places and camped out to hear the Gospel. They were starving for the Gospel. They would take each piece of literature given to them and read it and ask for more. We went to the water about 3 times each day to see people being baptized into Christ. In all there were 67 baptisms and 115 confessed sins.

We may see the time once again in America when we hold 2 week gospel meetings with overflow crowds each night and hundreds being baptized and restored. There may not be this kind of hunger for God's Word at present in America, but it exists in other places such as Africa, India, Russia and other parts of the world.

As stewards of God let us be concerned with those who are begging for

the Truth. Preachers need to go! Churches need to send! Souls are lost! We need to lift up our eyes and go where the fields are white unto harvest (John 4:35-38).

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[Editor's note: I believe that this article by brother Gilbert is timely and needed! God forbid that we ever neglect teaching the gospel to our own neighbors, but if they will not hear we must use our resources to attempt to reach those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Remember Paul's sermon in Antioch: "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you (the Jews): but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles' " (Acts 13:46). If our neighbors will not hear, let us turn our attention to the nations that will gladly receive the word of salvation in Christ. Some of the greatest resources we have in the Lord's church can be found in our small rural congregations. By itself such a congregation cannot do much for world evangelism, but by working together with other such churches in a cooperative spirit small contributions add up and enable effective work to be done.

Let me suggest to those congregations not presently helping in foreign mission work to consider sending a monthly contribution to the Knight Arnold Church of Christ, 4400 Knight Arnold Road, Memphis, TN 38118. The fine elders at this missionary-minded church are overseeing evangelistic efforts in Russia and working to establish a school of preaching there to train native preachers to evangelize their own country. Curtis Cates is the excellent director of the Memphis School of Preaching, which operates under the direction of the Knight Arnold elders, and he and many of the faculty of the school have been making frequent trips to Russia to evangelize and establish churches there, returning to follow up and strengthen the churches as was done in Acts 14:21-23. Many graduates of the school have also made missionary trips to reach the lost and soul-hungry masses in the former U.S.S.R.

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

May I plead with the leaders of our small rural congregations to make a decision to assist in this great work while there is still time and opportunity to do so! Whatever amount you can send to any foreign mission work, please do so. I can recommend the work being done through the Knight Arnold church without reservation. Write to the elders there, to brother Curtis Cates, or to Billy Bland, who is coordinating this Russian work. They will see that you receive whatever information you desire. Please pray about this and take action as soon as you are convinced it is God's will.]

DID DAVID SMITH HELP KILL HIS CHILDREN?

by Ted J. Clarke

This question is not asked in an attempt to sensationalize the tragic events surrounding the deaths of Michael and Alex Smith by the hand of their own mother, Susan, in Union, South Carolina. Susan has admitted her guilt and stated that she acted alone. No criminal charges have been filed against David Smith in this November tragedy, but was he in any way responsible?

Television news stories stated that David and Susan Smith were divorcing because of his adultery. If this is the case, I suggest that David Smith contributed to the death of his children. While adultery may no longer be against man's law as it was once, it is a violation of God's law and those who do not

receive forgiveness through Christ will be barred from God's heavenly kingdom (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Actions have consequences and David Smith's alleged adultery struck at the very root of his marriage, violating the vows of faithfulness he made. If Susan was faithful in her marriage vows, she had a scriptural right to divorce David and marry another (Matthew 19:9). But the tragic fracture of that family resulted in even more tragic events.

With no husband, Susan was saddled with the responsibility of basically raising her two children alone. Visitations on weekends by divorced spouses do not make up for the parent being absent the rest of the time. Additionally, Susan's financial condition was poor, having more going out than was coming in. David Smith's \$115 a week in child support doesn't make up for all of his income which was available to the family when they were a unit. Susan Smith was a young mother without the emotional and financial support of a husband who had pledged to love, honor, and care for her until death parted them. If he violated those vows as was reported, he contributed to the events which led to the deaths of his own children. None of this excuses Susan Smith's actions and her failure to show motherly love for her children in spite of her difficulties, but it does make David Smith an accessory to what happened. He cannot escape the consequences of his own actions any more than Susan can escape hers.

It is heart-breaking to think of all the consequences of divorce in our society. A few years ago brother V.E. Howard wrote a book entitled, **Broken Homes and Handicapped Children**, in which he documented that so often a broken home leads to serious problems for the children of that home, as well as for the parents. In such homes it is often the case that the children are led into juvenile delinquency, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual immorality, general rebellion against authority, and troubled marriages ending in divorce for the children of broken homes. The very problems of ungodliness and crime in our nation can be traced to a breakdown in the home in teaching Biblical values and the breaking up of the homes into which children were born. In too many cases there is **no male role model** for little boys growing up to look at and see how they are supposed to develop as men of God. There are no male role models for little girls to

look at and say, "That's the kind of godly man I want to marry, a man like my daddy." Without proper guidance, these unfortunate children make the same mistakes of their parents, sometimes leading to more tragic results.

God will judge Susan and David Smith for the crimes and sins against their children, just like he will judge others who violate their responsibilities as husbands, wives and parents. **We must not give up the fight against divorce and child neglect**, even though we are losing the battle on many fronts! The home must return to being the major arena of teaching our children through example and instruction the Way of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:5-9; Ephesians 5:22 - 6:3).

The Wise Man notes the destructive nature of adultery in Proverbs 5:1-23. He warns against the seductive wiles of a loose woman, saying, "For the lips of an immoral woman drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell" (verses 3-5, NKJV). He encourages men to "rejoice with the wife of your youth" and to "always be enraptured with her love" (verses 18-19). If David Smith had done this, his children might still be alive.

OUR PLEA

- No book but the Bible.
- No creed but Christ
- No name but the divine.
- No plea but the gospel.
- No aim but to save.
- In Christ — Unity.
- In opinion — Liberty.
- In all things — Charity.

Happy New Year

- H**ear God's Word Romans 10:17
- A**nswer God's Call Matthew 11:28
- P**ardon Receive Acts 2:38
- P**ease Possess Romans 15:33
- Y**ield to God Romans 6:13

- N**o Condemnation Romans 8:1
- E**ternal Life Is a Gift Romans 6:23
- W**alk Uprightly Ephesians 5:2

- Y**outh Is the Time for Service ... Eccl. 12:1
- E**arly Seek God Psalm 63:1
- A**tend to God's Word Psalm 1:2
- R**ejoice in the Lord Philippians 4:4

AMERICA IS UPSET WITH SUSAN SMITH

by Wesley Simons

Susan Smith declared that a black man had hi-jacked her car and in the process taken her children. The law enforcement agencies swung into action. They and all America looked in vain for the car and the hi-jacker. The police followed every lead to a dead end.

Susan appeared on television begging the kidnapper to return her children. America wept. Video tape was shown of Susan playing with her children. How could anyone take these precious children from such a loving and caring mother?

When no car or hi-jacker was found, the police started to suspect the Smith family. They found a note from Susan's boyfriend which stated in essence, "I want you, but not the children." Therefore, Susan had to get rid of the children. The children were unwanted - in the way. She then did that which upset all America. According to her own testimony, she killed her two little boys.

With what should Susan be charged - murder, or bad timing? The children were not wanted. If she would have decided during her pregnancies that she did not want the children, then America would have helped her kill those precious little children by paying for the abortions. However, she waited too long, allowing the children to be born.

She said that she strapped them in the car and drove it into the lake. What is the difference between killing two children in a car and killing two children in the womb? If one kills two children in a car, it is wrong. And, if one kills two children in the womb it is also murder.

She said, that she watched her oldest son struggling to loosen his seat belt before the car flipped and disappeared into the water. We are also told that the little babies in the womb put up a struggle trying to get away from the instruments of abortion. However, they lose. There was no one there to save those dear little boys in the car - so they died. We must be the voice and life-line to save the babies in the womb.

America needs to wake up and realize that she is involved in murder. America is aborting children at the rate of 1.5 million per year. Susan Smith hasn't done any where near that much damage. A precious little life is aborted every 20 seconds. Planned parenthood has a slogan

"Every Child A Wanted Child." That is all that Susan was trying to practice. God's attitude is: Every Child A Loved Child. It is sinful to kill a child at any stage of life, even if one does not want it!

The Bible teaches that killing is wrong (Gen. 9:6). That which is contained in the womb is a little child, a human being (Lk. 1:41,44; 2:5). We are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psa. 139:13-16).

Susan Smith did wrong, but so has America. May God help us to stop the killing of little babies which are made in His image!!

Rt. 5, Box 2487

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A Willing Woman

Oh, dear Father,
may I be,
a willing woman,
just for Thee!

Ready to serve,
ready to do:
all that would make me,
pure and true.

Never Lord,
should I teach,
but Christ to others
as I meet.

By example,
may you see;
A WILLING WOMAN:
found in me

by Martha D. Manley
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IS IT A SIN TO DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?

by Marvin Rickett

We know that the Bible says drunkenness is a sin. Drunkenness is a work of the flesh and will keep one out of the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21). Drunkards are unrighteous people and they are classified with fornicators and idolaters (I Corinthians 6:9, 10). The church is under orders not to have fellowship with drunkards (I Corinthians 5:11). Drunkenness is a work of darkness and God's people are admonished not to walk in drunkenness (Romans 13:12, 13). The question is not whether drunkenness is a sin, it is; but whether drinking alcoholic beverages at all is a sin.

Drinking alcoholic beverages is what makes one drunken! Drunkenness is a matter of degree, beginning with the

first drink. If seven drinks makes one dead-drunk, then one drink makes him one-drunk-drunk. If heavy drinking makes one heavily drunk, then light drinking will make him lightly drunk and moderate drinking will make him moderately drunk. Even the laws do not agree as to how much alcohol in the blood makes one drunk (ranging from .08 to .15 percent). No faithful Christian would feel safe with any amount of drinking. We do not know when God considers one drunken. One thing we do know, if one does not take even one drink of alcoholic beverages, he will not be drunken.

Alcohol is a poison. This poison is what apparently caused the recent death of an Arkansas student at the University of Pittsburg. He died after consuming several shots of whiskey at a fraternity celebration of his 21st birthday. His death is being "investigated." The very word "intoxication" used in place of drunkenness comes from "toxin" which means poison. A poison doesn't have to kill instantly to be poison. Folks ingest this poison a little at a time under the name of "social drinking." Can you feature anyone deliberately ingesting small portions of rat poison at a time under the excuse of "social eating?"

Alcohol is a drug. It is as surely a drug as marijuana, cocaine and heroin. In fact, it is the king of drugs because people consume more of it and have been consuming it longer. How inconsistent it is for folks to condemn drug-abusers who use marijuana, cocaine or heroin; while they themselves freely consume alcoholic beverages. Drinking alcohol in any amount is drug abuse.

Alcohol is an addictive drug. Studies have suggested that some folks are more easily addicted to it than others. They are said to have "a genetic disposition toward chemical dependency." This may be the case, but if those predisposed to dependency (addiction) never took the first drink, they would never know it. They are responsible for the decision to take the first drink, and subsequently, they are responsible for breaking the habit when they get it. The Lord warns against becoming slaves to anyone (or any thing). "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men" (I Corinthians 7:23). We are to be servants of God. To become slaves to anything else, which comes between one and God, is a form of idolatry. Those who become addicted to

(Continued on page 4)

alcohol are slaves of corruption, "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage" (II Peter 2:19). A person thus enslaved must break the bondage of sin and become a servant of righteousness (Romans 6:16-18).

Alcoholic beverage can be known by its fruits: drunk drivers and the innocents that they slay, family abuse, crime, time lost from work and the resulting decline in production, deception (It promises popularity, happiness and good feelings; but brings shame, disease and foolishness). The Wise Man said, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverb 10:1).

Someone has said that alcohol has some good uses: "It removes grass stains from clothing." That's not all it removes. It removes inhibitions, leaving one open to fornication and shame, and emboldening the weak-willed person to go ahead and commit the crime. It removes summer clothing leaving one dressed immodestly. It removes clothes from the backs of wives and children. It removes furniture from the house, food from the table, smiles from innocent faces, and happiness from the home.

The only right response is to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages. We know that this is right.

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COMPASSION AND DISCIPLINE

by Ted J. Clarke

Jesus was (and is) a compassionate Savior, but He is not soft on sin. After all, it was sin, mine and yours, which caused Him to have to die on the cross. Christ's love for us led Him to die the painful death He suffered, but He demands repentance from us before He will forgive. Acts 2:38; 17:30 and a number of other passages illustrate that truth.

In spite of the things which He suffered because of our sins, Jesus has said that He stands ready to forgive us as freely as we repent. Not only that, Christ also says that we must be as ready to forgive others who sin against us as He is ready to forgive us when we sin against Him. In regards to the model prayer Jesus gave in Matthew 6:9-13, He says, "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (verse 14) In the next verse Jesus says, if we don't forgive others

He won't forgive us! Think about that! To be unforgiving is to be unforgiven! We cannot refuse to forgive. Even those who hurt us deeply must be forgiven.

There is, however, another matter involved. Christ will not forgive us **unless we repent!** In Luke 13:3, 5, Jesus twice pointed to our need to "repent (or) ye will all likewise perish." Repentance is brought on by godly sorrow for our sins, whether against God or others (2 Corinthians 7:10). If we are not truly sorry for our offenses against God or our fellow man, we will see no reason to repent. Regarding our relationships with one another, Christ taught, "Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him." (Luke 17:3-4, NKJV)

Just as Jesus will not forgive us of our sins unless we are truly sorry and repent of them, we cannot forgive a brother or sister who does not repent of sins against us. We must have compassion to forgive, but the sinner must have the discipline to repent!

Notice also in the verses above, that as often as a brother or sister repents, we are obligated to forgive them. That might seem to be a wearisome matter and one almost impossible to do, until we realize that we must often ask God to forgive us many times each day! To forgive and be forgiven, we need compassion and discipline for others as well as for ourselves.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CHURCHES

Jeff Church of Christ, Thayer, Mo.	25.00
Pilot Church of Christ Mammoth Spring, Ar.	80.00
Dellhalf Church of Christ, Myrtle, Mo.	20.00
Moody Church of Christ, Moody, Mo.	25.00
Church of Christ, Elizabeth, Ar.	15.00
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Welcome Hill Church of Christ Mammoth Spring, Ar.	10.00
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M/M Walter Johnson, Harrison, Ar.	25.00
Lucille Malone, Mtn. View, Mo.	20.00
Chuck & Joyce Broyles, Orlando, Fl.	25.00

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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