

Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID

Volume 11

Mammoth Spring, Arkansas 72554

March 1970

Number 8

Total Dedication

Too many religious people today have been converted to a number of dos and don'ts! There is far too little dedication to Christ. Total dedication! Many think that if they do not do certain things they will not wind up in hell, and if they do a few other things they will wind up in heaven, so through life they travel with a bag of dos and don'ts! But may I offer to you the Bible truth that Christianity is total dedication to Christ! Then of course we must do and not do certain things!

What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.", 1 Cor. 6:19-20. Here is total dedication as required by God! Body and Soul! God owns the Christian, body and soul! The Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of the Christian! He is not his own! His every thought, word and deed should be dedicated to God and all should be controlled by God's word! He is God's servant! Now, when the Christian accepts this and understands it, his dos and don'ts will be a part of his life! When it is time to worship God, the Christian will have no problem as to whether he should worship God or not, he will worship Him, he is God's! When it comes time to contribute, there is no problem with the totally dedicated Christian, all he has is God's and it is a pleasure to share with God the things that are His! When it comes to teaching the lost, the Christian has no problem; he is saved to save, he is God's! His time is God's! He is on earth at the pleasure of God! God may call him at any minute! Ready and willing is his motto!

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service", Romans 12:1. The Christians of Macedonia, "first gave their own selves to the Lord", 2 Cor. 8:5. This is still the answer today. Give self to God, soul and body! We then have the "spirit of Christ" (Rom. 8:9) and become truly his! Far too many Christians (?) today, withhold from God the very things that belong to God, their very soul and body! They cater to the body and lose the soul! Paul had to bring his body (which was God's) into

In Spite of the Devil and All Temptations, Is It Possible for a Christian to Remain Faithful to God and Be Saved?

Many Think Not

In talking to many people today, they think it impossible in this day and time, to be righteous! They believe that before sin became so attractive, gift wrapped by the devil, that it was by all means possible, but not now! Thousands of former members of the Lord's church have fallen by the way side because they lost hope, or thought the incentives unworthy of the labor and sacrifice! Looking for greater rewards, or less effort, or both! Of course if we could talk to these same people at the judgment, we would receive a different view! But what about you?

Whom Do You Believe?

Well of course if we believe the devil, there is no use in trying to live for God! He will discourage each one by causing him to believe that God's way is impossible. But let us hear and believe God! David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsake, now his seed begging bread", Psalms 37:25. He said righteous! Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things (food, raiment and shelter, GVP) shall be added unto you," Matthew 6:33. He said those who seek God's righteousness! Not everyone! Again, Jesus said, "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world", Matthew 28:20. Can we not believe Jesus? Should we not believe Him rather than the devil? Jesus died for you, what has the devil done for you? What ever it was, you would have been better if he had not done it!

Samuel said, "For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: Because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people", 1 Samuel 12:22. If God would not forsake his people under the law of Moses, you can be sure that he

bondage less he lose his own soul, 1 Cor. 9:27. All of those who spend eternity with God, must have this total dedication which means that one has the spirit of Christ and will act as Christ would act in any given condition. Are you totally dedicated?

will not forsake them under the law of Christ!

The Hebrew writer said, "so that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me", Hebrews 13:6.

Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me", Philippians 4:13. This, as well as Hebrews, is addressed to Christians.

Again Paul says, "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it", 1 Corinthians 10:13. To Christians also!

We see that God has provided a way to escape the temptation if we want to escape! Then why do so many fail to escape? "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death", James 1:13-15. There you have it! Man can continue to sin, or with God's help he can refrain from it? Which is you?

How To Escape The Devil

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you", James 4:7.

The Devil Is Very Dangerous

"Be sober, be vigilant: Because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world", 1 Peter 5:8-9.

The devil met his Waterloo when he tried to tempt Jesus in Matthew 4. When Jesus resisted him, the Devil fled from Jesus. The same is true with us!

Do You Really Want To Live A Righteous Life And Be Saved?

If so, with God's help you can do so! "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble", James 4:6. You are

(Continued on Page 3)

A Review of the Restoration Movement

By Clovis Ragsdale

The Restoration movement began about one hundred and fifty years ago in the minds of several scholarly men who reasoned that if people would take the Bible as their only guide in faith and practice they could do away with secular differences and false doctrines. The Reformation, which had begun more than three hundred years before, had assisted many thousands in seeing the error of Catholicism. The idea of the Reformation was to correct or reform the Catholic church of its many false teachings and intense corruptness. But Catholicism did not want to be reformed. It forced large numbers to look elsewhere for church homes. This brought about the many different protestant churches.

Many of the false doctrines that were begun by the Catholic church were accepted by the protestant churches. Infant baptism, mechanical instruments of music in worship, man made creeds, and etc. were carried over into the protestant worship.

The Restoration began when several men, independent of one another, began to teach that if we took the Bible alone and were guided by the writings of the Apostles we could restore the church as it was in New Testament days. Those who advocated Restoration quickly got together and a great movement was born. They were bitterly opposed by the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist movements. Many public discussions were held. When New Testament truths are placed alongside error it will show up more in public discussions than most any other way. This was soon recognized by the denominations and they quit

CONTRIBUTIONS:

Delson Stephns	\$10.00
Dellhalf Church of Christ	5.00
Viola Church of Christ	5.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ	5.00
Ring Church of Christ	5.00
Agnos Church of Christ	5.00
R. E. Kissinger	2.00
Stika Church of Christ	5.00
Wheeling Church of Christ	5.00
Mrs. Herbert Rhoades	1.00

of the Roman Empire described in the first chapter of Romans. Read the first chapter of Romans, verses twenty-one through thirty-two, and compare the description of those people with the way people are becoming today and see if there is a similarity.

The congregations in this area who would like to have their meetings announced through this paper should immediately send us the time and speaker for their meetings coming up this summer.

debating. The Restoration has grown by leaps and bounds in the one hundred and fifty years since it began, and this despite a great cleavage that came about over the Missionary Society and the use of mechanical music in worship.

After the division in the ranks of the Restoration movement, the liberal group, which called themselves the Disciples of Christ, but were better known as the First Christian Church, grew more rapidly than their more conservative brethren known as the Church of Christ. The Christian Church was predominant in the Midwest and Eastern part of the nation, while the Church of Christ was stronger in the Southern states.

However, the Church of Christ began to grow very rapidly about the time of World War Two, and today numbers between two and three million members in the United States alone. It has gone into most of the other nations of the world by an expanding missionary effort working through independent congregations, often pooling their resources, but refraining from unscriptural arrangements to preach the gospel to all the world.

In the next issue we will discuss the Restoration movement in our present day and discuss some of its problems and aspirations.

We would like to point out the aim of the Restoration movement. Most people will agree that the Bible is God's inspired word. That it gives his plan for the salvation of man. That the New Testament is in force today. That he only gave one plan or blueprint for the church in which all men could worship therein, and all the saved were to be a united body working together to save the lost. The church in New Testament days met those conditions and is the example as God would have it. It is well known by Bible scholars, indeed by most who study the Bible carefully, that man departed from the plan and went into a state of apostasy. The Restoration simply is to restore the church to the plan found in the Bible, to speak where the Bible speaks, and to be silent where the Bible is silent. This will be the safe course, for many believe God will not be pleased with departures from his word as this is rebellion and he has always punished those who rebelled against his word in times of old. We believe that if we fail to worship and abide by this plan we will be lost. Did not our Saviour say in Matt. 7:21, "not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." This statement by Christ points out that we must do God's will or be lost. More about the Restoration in next issue.

The Fulton County Gospel News

... is a monthly publication distributed free of charge to any who care to receive it. We will be happy to add any names to the regular mailing list. If you send in a name, be SURE to include the Zip Code Number. It must be with each address according to the Postal regulations. This paper is supported by unsolicited contributions for which we are grateful. If you care to know of its financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request.

EDITORS: Clovis Ragsdale
and James E. Henley.

This and That ...

An item in the religious section of a well known daily newspaper states that an acute shortage of preachers has developed in all Christendom. Many pulpits are empty and fewer students are training for the ministry. The article cited the exacting demands made on preachers and low pay as the chief causes for the shortage. It mentioned that the pay scale for preachers made them grossly underpaid in comparison to other occupations. Because of these conditions most parents are not encouraging their sons to become preachers. We believe that a lack of love for the Lord is the main reason for this problem, both on the part of Christians who refuse to support preachers and the lack of a willingness to sacrifice on the part of those who are talented enough to become preachers.

Brother Clovis Ragsdale preached at Evening Shade the fourth Sunday in February trading pulpits with Brother Claude Hall, who preached at Mtn. Grove, Mo.

Good attendance and good singing was reported of the singing at Welcome Hill on the second Sunday in February. These brethren are willing to share their regular second Sunday singing with other congregations if desired.

Men in high position of our nation and society are asking the question, what has happened to our youth to make them so vicious and rebellious? Most of the answer can be found in the violence seen on TV, the indecency observed on TV and in printed matter, plus the neglect on the part of parents to give the necessary time and attention to molding the right kind of character in their children. This results in a boy or girl, who flouts the law of the land, of society, and the laws of God, developing into a faithless creature more like an animal than a human being. It happened in Sodom and Gomorrah, in the time before the flood, and in the time

What Bob Allen Doesn't Know...

By Frank J. Dunn

(NOTE: This is a true account of a South Texas family. To avoid embarrassment, the name is changed in this article.—FJD).

Bob Allen, his wife, and four teenage children were baptized into Christ about a year ago. He was a Congregationalist; she a Catholic.

The Bob Allen family runs a dairy farm, milking 60 cows every day. It is a family affair, with every member performing his assigned duty every day for a week, then rotating with the others. That means that father, mother, and each boy and girl take their turn at feeding, cleaning the milking machines, and scrubbing the concrete slab in the barn.

The change that Christ has made in their lives is a cause of amazement and inspiration to all their neighbors. Sunday is no longer just another work day. They are present whenever the church doors are open. Much of their "spare" time is spent in teaching others. Bob says, "I can't learn the Bible fast enough." They are continually seeking opportunities to "do good unto all men."

But there are some things that Bob Allen and his family have not learned.

(1) They do not know that hard work is out of date. They really believe that God expects everyone to "work with his hands" (Eph. 4:28).

(2) They do not know that Bible study is optional. They really believe that every Christian must study to show himself approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15).

(3) They do not know that attendance of all church services is unnecessary. They really believe that Christians should continue steadfastly in fellowship and spiritual growth (Acts 2:42; 2 Peter 3:18).

(4) They do not know that soul winning should be left to the "personal work committee." Bob uses a tape recorder to record and learn Bible lessons and sermons to teach his neighbors. He also learned to use filmstrips, charts, and his Bible. One neighbor whom he is teaching said, "Bob would make a good preacher."

(5) They do not know that parents should go into debt to give their children cars, color television, and other expensive trinkets. They really believe that Christians ought to seek first the kingdom of God and to give liberally as the Lord has prospered them (Matt. 6:33; 1 Cor. 16:2). Bob and his wife and the four teenagers share the cab of a pick-up truck, their only means of transportation, when they come to worship and wherever they go.

(6) They do not know that church members are supposed to be critical and

Church News

The Church of Christ at Viola Arkansas will have a gospel meeting April the 20th through the 26th. Brother Clifford Dixon will be the speaker.

Plans are now being made to have a teachers workshop in the early spring either at Mammoth Spring, Arkansas, or in West Plains, Missouri. Watch the next issue of the Fulton County Gospel News for the dates and place. We hope to have a complete list of instructors by then.

The Church of Christ in West Plains, Missouri, has appointed a committee of 13 members of the church there to complete the establishment of a Children's Home in West Plains. The home will be known as the Rolling Acres Church of Christ Children's Home.

The Church of Christ in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas, plans to have a gospel meeting April the 16th through the 22nd. Brother Bill Richardson of Mountain Home, Arkansas, will be the speaker.

In Spite of the Devil (Continued)

one of these! Which one, will depend on how God deals with you!

Jesus Is Able To Save You

"Wherefore he (Christ) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them", Hebrews 7:25.

Jesus Is Willing To Save

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance", 2 Peter 3:9. With God On Our Side, We Cannot Fail

Paul said, "If God be for us, who can be against us", Romans 8:31. The answer of course is, that with God on our side, we can resist the devil at all times and in all things!

But we must obey God (Matt. 7:21): We must obey Christ (Hebrews 5:8-9). If you obey God, the devil cannot keep you out of heaven, but, if you do not obey God, even he will not keep you from hell! It is up to you!

complaining. They really believe that Christians must "rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4). The children recently volunteered their meager savings to help a poor family. They are the happiest people in the community.

Don't you feel sorry for the Bob Allen family? Isn't it too bad that they are making such sacrifices for the Lord when so many members have learned that you can get to heaven without making them?

I pray that none of my brethren who "know better" will ever teach the Bob Allen family. May God forbid that those who take Christ and His church for granted will ever cause them to lose their zeal for God.

The True Meaning of Church Membership

By Carl Spain, Professor of Bible
Abilene Christian College

The ideal description and true purpose of membership in the Church of the New Testament is found in Paul's words, "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" (Romans 12:5).

Ideally, the body of Christ has but one heart and one soul (Acts 4:32) and one mind (2 Cor. 13:11). The phrase "one another" is a divine key to the meaning of membership in the Church for which Jesus gave, and continues to give, Himself.

Read closely as He speaks to us about our involvement with each other in the evangelistic, edifying and encouraging fellowship called the Church of Christ:

"Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another . . . even as Christ forgave you" (Col. 3:13); "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2); "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (Jas. 5:16); "speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5:19); "be subject one to another, and gird yourselves with humility to serve one another" (1 Pet. 5:5); "and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together . . . but exhorting one another" (Heb. 10:24-25); "Greet one another with an holy kiss" (2 Cor. 13:12); "Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pet. 1:22); "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

In the light of the above, listen further: "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light" (1 John 2:10); "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

Finally, brethren, "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27). This is the meaning of fellowship in Christ, "from whom the whole body fitly framed and knit together by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love," and "in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 4:16 and 2:21-22).

The Lord's Supper

By James D. Jarrett
West Plains, Missouri

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ on the night of the betrayal. The giving of the Lord's Supper in carefully explained in the gospel accounts and also by the apostle Paul. Christ first took the bread and blessed it. This bread was unleavened bread for it was forbidden for Jews to have leavened bread in the house at this time, Deut. 16:4. Unleavened bread is bread which has not risen and is a wonderful representation of the unrisen body of Jesus Christ.

Next, Christ took the cup and blessed it. The cup is grape juice, or fruit of the vine. We know that it does not have to be wine because the scripture never uses any of the words for wine in the original language but always uses the expression, "fruit of the vine". The cup represents to the recipient, the shed blood of our Saviour.

The Lord's Supper is a communion service in which we spiritually commune with Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:16. It is a memorial service, Luke 22:19. It proclaims the Lord's death, and reminds us of the new covenant which was prophesied in Jeremiah 31, which in fulfillment was sealed by the shedding of Christ's blood, Luke 22:20. "This cup is the new testament of my blood which is shed for you." The Lord's Supper is an institution of self-examination. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28)

Today, we find the Lord's Supper observed at many different times. Some partake of it yearly, others semi-annually, some monthly, and still others partake of it weekly. Most partake on the first day of the week, while others partake of it on Thursday before Easter. Which is correct? Acts 20:7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." The first day of the week was the day of worship for the early day Christians, perhaps the day spoken of in Psalms 118:24. It was the day the Lord's Supper was partaken by early Christians. On every first day of the week, consecrated Christians should meet, contribute, and commune with the Lord. There is no honor greater, no privilege more noble than to meet together, "to proclaim the Lord's death till he comes".

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father in Heaven" — Matt. 7:21.

GRUDGITIS... Killer Disease

"Fret not thyself because of evildoers . . . fret not thyself in any wise to do evil . . . Wait on the Lord, and keep his way . . ." (Psalm 37:1, 8, 34).

A grizzly bear lumbered into a clearing where garbage had been dumped. Watching tourists noticed that there was only one animal the grizzly would permit to eat with him . . . a skunk! Doubtless he resented the skunk's brazen impudence. He could have easily won a fight with the two-tone intruder. But he didn't. Why? Because he knew the high cost of getting even!

Smart grizzly! Must smarter than the thousands of humans who spend weary days and sleepless nights brooding over resentments and inventing ways to "get even." Men never seem to learn the high cost of revenge!

Dr. S.I. McMillen insists that a disordered emotional life is a frequent cause of ulcerative colitis, toxic goiters, high blood pressure and scores of other diseases. If the truth were revealed thousands of death certificates would record that the victims died of "grudgitis." We've heard people say, through clenched teeth, "I'll get even with that bum if it's the last thing I ever do!" Often it is!

For centuries scoffers have ridiculed the advice of Jesus, "Love your enemies." Impractical! Idealistic! Absurd! Now psychiatrists are recommending it as a panacea for many of man's ills. When Jesus, the Great Physician, said, "Forgive seventy times seven," He prescribed good medication not only for our souls, but for our bodies too.

Booker T. Washington, who became famous in spite of prejudice against his color, was insulted times without number. But, he had the sense to say, "I will not let any man reduce my soul to the level of hatred."

The moment I start hating a man I become his slave, for he controls my thoughts. I can't escape his tyrannical grasp on my mind. He hounds me wherever I go. He may be many miles away, but he whips my thoughts into such frantical frustration that my innerspring mattress becomes a torture rack. Every moment is filled with thoughts that fume like nitric acid and corrode as deeply. The Good Book advises:

" . . . off with anger, rage, malice, slander . . . be clothed with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and good temper—forbear and forgive each other . . . as Christ forgave you, so must you forgive. And above all you must be loving, for love is the link of the perfect life" (Colossians 3:8, 12, 13, 14—Moffatt).

—Joe R. Barnett

Disappointed in Jesus?

Am I? Not on your life. Never for one moment have I been disappointed in Him or held a single doubt. On the other hand, from much of the preaching we get today for not feeding all the hungry and building better houses for the poor, and so on, it makes you feel that Jesus may have failed the people.

Of course we know that everything our Lord did while on earth is not recorded in Scripture, but from what is written we can draw some pretty convincing conclusions.

Jesus must have seen lots of people suffer and die before He started his ministry — He was the Son of God from birth, and with only one or two exceptions all those who died after He started they stayed dead. He did feed a few people — most of them on one occasion, and I just feel sure there were many lepers in Palestine other than those mentioned. We do find that compassion filled His heart wherever He saw the sick, blind, crippled but only lost souls filled His eyes with tears. Were we to measure His power with human reasoning we could but conclude that He was extremely selfish even in his compassion since there is no record of his having done any of these mighty works outside of his own community. I maintain that as important as all of this is, the mission of Jesus Christ into the world was for something much bigger, and bless your heart, so is ours — preaching the gospel to the lost, keeping saved the saved.

No, I'm not disappointed in Christ because He limited his feeding and healing powers but I sure believe that I would have been in his apostles and disciples to whom He commanded to preach the gospel to every creature had they not done it. Thank God they did and when we start believing this same command is for us we will do so too. With 98 percent of our evangelists preaching mostly to those already in the church and 95 cents out of every dollar given by the church for this purpose and the place where they hear it, something is out of balance. It is no wonder that the social gospel comes in to fill an empty gap, but believe me, this is not as Jesus planned it or wants it. One soul to Him is worth more than a whole world. Oh the blessings of a Redeemer.

Fulton County, Arkansas 72531