

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

Volume 28

Mammoth Spring, AR 72554

March, 1994

No. 3

More "A Few ^ Good Men"

by Ted J. Clarke

The U.S. Marines claim that they can fulfill their assigned tasks regarding our nation's defense with "a few good men." Perhaps this is the greatest need in the Lord's church today. This is not to say that we do not have some good men in the church, for we do. We could use a **few more** good men. We do not just need more men in our congregations, although increased numbers should be desired. We need **good** men. Possibly most of the serious problems facing the church in every generation could be solved, if we just had a **few more good men**. Maybe we would not even have to improve the ratio of men to women in the church, if we can motivate some of our **men** to become **good men**. We have a few. We need more!

Congregational Makeup

With few exceptions, congregations of the Lord's church today have more women in them than men. Two reasons may explain this. One, it seems that more women than men admit to having spiritual needs and they seek to meet and express those needs in the congregational community. There is implied in this a dependency upon God and fellow-believers. Our "macho" way of life in general western-world civilization tends to discourage men from showing dependency at all, especially in religion. Two, women live longer than men. Thus, population statistics alone would favor more women than men in the church.

I thank God for all of our **godly women in the church!** They accomplish a tremendous amount of the work done, they are generous contributors in their time, talents, and money, plus they work a great deal with the children who are the future of the church. Likely, we do not give our ladies anyways near the praise and credit they deserve. Yet, we need more good men to carry on much of the work that needs to be done. In some

congregations the number of men who will agree to serve in any way is so small that the same men are generally involved in anything that gets done. In some places that cannot be helped without converting more men, in others it could be helped, if some of the male members became **good men**.

What Makes A Man?

What follows is not intended to be insulting to those who may fit a certain profile. These things are written to get us to think God's way, not the way of the world. In different parts of the United States and for different types of social status there are different definitions as to what makes a "man". Also, what makes a man may differ between the sexes. Some may think a real man drives a pickup truck, while others view a real man in a sports car. Among the various things that traditionally define men are: dominating one's wife or girlfriend, drinking beer or scotch, being a sports fanatic, chewing or smoking tobacco, having charge of the TV remote control, hunting and fishing, not admitting being afraid of anything, swearing and using profanity, fighting, taking chances, not showing that he needs anyone, gambling, chasing other women, never shedding tears, subscribing to *Playboy*, not letting anyone get really close to you (seeing what you are really like inside), and perhaps you could add a few more.

Of course, many of those things do not describe men in the Lord's church and should never be characteristics of any Christian, for they are works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21). Some of the items do describe some of the men in the church, although they are things men need to surrender or improve. Quite a few men in the Lord's body need to change some of their present characteristics, so that they can become the

additional **good men** that we desperately need in the church.

What Makes A "Good" Man?

Since God is our Creator, he ought to know what kind of man is a "good" man, the kind we need more of in our churches (Genesis 1:27-28). **First**, God has placed man in the leadership role in our families, with the wife and children in submission (Genesis 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:3). However, "good" men will lead their homes as Christ does the church; not as a dictator, but with sacrificial love and the giving of oneself (Ephesians 5:22-25). That headship requires the man taking the lead in seeing that the wife and children receive proper spiritual training **primarily in the home** (Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:5-9; 6:1-9, 20; Psalm 44:1-3; Ephesians 6:4). We cannot have good men in the church unless we have good men in the home, men who are spiritual examples for their families. A lack of good men in the home is a major reason we are losing our children to the world and why there are so many divorces among church members. Of course, not all divorces are caused by men.

Second, a good man in the Lord's church is one who **grows in faith and service to God**. As new Christians we are to desire the milk of God's word so that we may grow (1 Peter 2:2). We are to develop from babes in Christ into mature men in the faith (2 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15-16). Good men should be able to look back over the years and see the progress they have made, noting what they are doing now compared to what they used to do. How would you estimate yourself? Are you a good man in the church, or just a man in the church? Are you doing more now than ever before? Good men in the church grow into being **teachers of others** (Hebrews 5:12-14), feeding on and teaching the meat of God's word, in place of constantly needing milk (Hebrews 6:1-9). Teaching in the home helps good men prepare to teach in the church. Serving at the Lord's Supper and leading a prayer are good beginnings, but we

(Continued on page 2)

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. 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 the financial status and expenses, that information will be furnished upon request. Mail all address corrections to:

FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS
P. O. Box 251
Mammoth Spring, AR 72554
Ted J. Clarke EDITOR
Publication No. 211780

(Continued from page 1)

must have some good men who will grow into other areas of further service. You say that you cannot do more? Maybe so, and if so, God accepts what you can do. But don't look for a way out of growing and don't sell yourself short on what you can learn to do. We have many in our congregations that can become good men beyond what they are now doing.

Third, we need a few more good men as elders, deacons, and preachers in the Lord's church. Not everyone can serve in these areas, but we need good men who **are qualified** to accept these responsibilities (1 Timothy 3:1-16; Titus 1:5-11; 1 Peter 5:1-4). **There is a critical fallacy in the thinking of some regarding the eldership!** We have some well-qualified men who think that just because they do not desire the position of an elder, that they are thereby excused from any obligation to become one. Think again, brother! The concept of **opportunity plus ability equals responsibility** is well established in Hebrews 5:12-14, and logically extends to other areas of service such as elders and deacons. For example, a man might not desire to become a Christian, but he is not thereby excused for not doing so. He will be judged for his refusal to do God's will (Mark 16:16; Acts 17:30-31). Christ did not desire to go to the cross (Matthew 26:38-42), but He surrendered His will to God's and fulfilled the need that we all have for a Savior. A part of the personal cross that each qualified man should bear is serving as an elder or deacon in the Lord's church

(Matthew 16:24-26). **Good men prepare for and accept these charges to serve.** We are in a crisis over good men to lead and serve. We do not just need men in the church to serve, we need quite a few good men as defined by God.

Fourth, we need good men in the Lord's church who are willing to follow in the steps of Jesus regarding suffering (1 Peter 2:21). Christ was disliked, opposed, ridiculed, and persecuted because He took a stand for the truth of God's word against the will of other religious leaders and the popular opinions of the day (Matthew 19:23,26). We need good men as elders, deacons, preachers, and average christians who will stand up to false teachers and ungodly examples, stopping their mouths and exposing their sins (Titus 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). We need more **good men** who put service to God's truth above self, family and every other possible consideration (Luke 14:26-33; Galatians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:4). Good men will stand toe to toe with the devil like Christ did (Matthew 4:1-10). Good men will not compromise the truth just to be popular or to avoid hurting someone's feelings when that person needs to hear the truth! All kinds of false doctrines and immoralities are getting a toehold in the church because there are not enough good men to stand against them! **Good men fear God and love Him more than they fear and love other men** (Matthew 10:28; John 5:44; 12:42-43). Because of that, good men will not put their personal wills over God's nor bow to the pressures of friends and family (cf. Deuteronomy 13:6-8; 1 Kings 15:9-13).

Conclusion

Brethren, until we get more **good men** in the church we won't stop losing our children or prevent many divorces; we won't develop the strong type of teaching program we need; we won't solve the leadership crisis which the church currently suffers; and we will not stop the flow of congregations into the torrents of current digression — **until we get a few more good men in the Lord's church!**

Men of the Lord's church, it is time for all of us to take seriously the charge of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:13 — *"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, act like men, be strong."*

Elders, take charge and insist that your preacher preaches on these matters, then back them when they do.

Organize classes and training programs to help yourselves and to prepare others to become good elders. **Deacons, grow in service** and work toward leadership that pleases God. **Preachers, do not be afraid to preach the truth in any of these areas. You must do so!** "Reprove, rebuke, and exhort" your men to become **good men** - as good as each one can be. **Members, stir up your elders, deacons, and preacher** to be good men in accepting their responsibilities in these areas. If they refuse, work to create good men who will **"act like men"** as God has commanded.

We can be thankful for all of our godly ladies and good men in the Lord's church, but the greatest need in the Lord's church right now is for **a few more good men!**

THE HANDS OF GOD

by Allen Webster

God is a Spirit and spirits have not flesh and blood bodies (Jn. 4:24; Lk. 24:39), but, to aid our understanding, sometimes the Bible Speaks of God anthropomorphically (ascribing to Him human traits).

He is said to have feet (Ex. 24:10), arms (Ex. 6:6), a mouth (Num. 12:8), eyes (Hab. 1:13), ears (1 Pet. 3:12), a face (Gen. 32:30), a back (Num. 12:6-8), and hands. Let's examine the hands of God.

THE HANDS OF GOD ARE POWERFUL (Ex. 3:20). With His hands God framed worlds (Heb. 11:3), sustains universes (Heb. 1:3), and restrains the furies of hell (Rev. 20:1,2). He brought down man's greatest schemes (Gen. 11:1-9) and brought forth a baby from a virgin (Mt. 1:18-25).

God's hands are mighty to save (Isa. 63:1). No power can tear the faithful believer from His hand (Jn. 10:29).

THE HANDS OF GOD ARE PROVISIONAL. "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Psa. 145:16). He provides for all our needs, both physical (Mt. 5:45) and spiritual (Eph. 1:3). His providence attends to our every concern (Psa. 31:15). He takes a special interest in the poor, the fatherless and the widows (Psa. 10:14; 68:5; Ex. 22:23; Deut. 10:18; Isa. 10:1-3).

THE HANDS OF GOD ARE PROTECTIVE (Psa. 139:10). Perhaps as a child you experienced fear and placed

your small hand into your father's. You felt secure knowing that someone was there to keep you from harm. So it is with God. His hands offer continuous protection (Jos. 1:5; Psa. 121:3-8). As a fire, He camps around Israel (Zec. 2:5).

THE HANDS OF GOD PLEAD WITH SINNERS. "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (Rm. 10:21). "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people..." (Isa. 65:2; Prov. 1:24; Lk. 13:34; 19:41,42). God's hands are stretched and waving to men to come to Him (Mt. 11:28-30; Lk. 15:20). He desires that all men be saved (1 Tim. 2:4).

THE HANDS OF GOD ARE PUNISHING (Psa. 75:8). A day will come when His pleading will cease and all men will be forced to drink from the wine bottle of His wrath. Just as a father begs a child not to commit an offense, only to see the child transgress anyway, God's pleading can turn to punishment. One day, too late, men will realize that the hands which have so blessed them in this life will afflict them in the next (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

Remember the child's lyric, God holds the whole world in His hand!

80 Road, No. 321
Tiplersville, MS 38674

A twinge of conscience is a glimpse of God.

CONTRIBUTIONS

CHURCHES

Dellhalf Church of Christ, Myrtle, Mo.	\$25.00
Pilot Church of Christ	40.00
Mammoth Spring, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Clarkridge, Ar.	50.00
Church of Christ, Moody, Mo.	25.00
Welcome Hill Church of Christ	10.00
Mammoth Spring, Ar.	
Church of Christ, Agnos, Ar.	40.00
Viola Church of Christ, Viola, Ar.	15.00
Moko Church of Christ, Salem, Ar.	25.00
Church of Christ, Elizabeth, Ar.	15.00
Wheeling Church of Christ, Salem, Ar. ...	25.00
Church of Christ, Garfield, Ar.	35.00

INDIVIDUALS

Victoria Stark, Mammoth Spring, Ar.	5.00
Jeff Montgomery, Wiseman, Ar.	10.00
Rick Barnhardt, Star City, Ar.	20.00
Robert Qualls, Lake City, Ar.	5.00
Judy Burlingame, Independence, Mo.	5.00
Audine Rowlett, Independence, Mo.	10.00
Joyce Cooper, Pocahtontas, Ar.	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Lewis, Peculiar, Mo.	5.00
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Erwin,	15.00
Weatherford, Tx.	

THE FINAL GRADE

by Garry Stanton

Fear comes to most students when it is time to take final tests. While some may not fear the test, they certainly are apprehensive about it because of the unknown. In man's relationship with God there is a final test which is many times more important than any we take in school. This important test is the life we lead in the flesh, it is a test of sorts. Each individual's "test" will be graded on the day of judgment and the "final grade" will be given. Passing or failing this test will be all important for eternity's sake. Let us look at what the Bible says about this great day.

THE APPOINTMENT. The day of judgment is an appointment that no one will miss! "It is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). The only thing that lies between death and the judgment is the wait for that appointed day to come. Jesus said all who have ever lived will be there to be judged, "For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good... and they that have done evil" (John 5:28-29).

THE AUTHORITY. The standard of authority for judging right or wrong on that day will not be feelings, opinions, nor the teachings of men. The one and only authority is Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18), he will be the judge (John 5:22). The plumb line for judgment will be his words, Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). His word, the standard in judgment, is from the Father which sent Jesus to earth (John 12:49-50; Heb. 1:1-2). Right and wrong, good and bad, will be determined by what is found in the gospel of Christ.

THE ASSESSMENT. The divine standard will be compared to each individual's life and, based upon that comparison, an eternal assessment will be made by Jesus for that individual. There are only two possibilities: "everlasting punishment" and "life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). The eternal punishment will be in "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). The eternal reward will be in the city of gold where the tree of life is found (Rev. 21:18; 22:2).

2707 Mt. Holly Rd.
Camden, Ar. 71701

THE 18% JESUS

by Ted J. Clarke

We must busy ourselves preaching and teaching about the trend in much of religion to do away with a considerable portion of the words and deeds of our Lord Jesus Christ. In case you think I may be exaggerating my concern, look at the Jan. 10th issue of *Time* magazine. The article "Jesus Christ, Plain and Simple" sets forth just some of the disturbing conclusions of a group of so-called scholars regarding what are and what are not the words of Jesus. What these men plan to do, "plain and simple" (to use their language), is to destroy faith in the Scriptures as the word of God. This has been tried before in a number of ways, but the scholars are really determined this time to influence the common man, as well as universities and seminaries.

Here is only a sample of their latest attempt. First, these theologians say Jesus "probably never delivered the Sermon on the Mount." If He did, not much in our Bible's account of it was actually spoken by Jesus. "Precisely 82% of Jesus' words are judged inauthentic," meaning that they were not really spoken by Him. Consider Matthew 6:9-13 in the scholars' translation.

OUR FATHER in the heavens,
your name be revered. Impose
your Imperial rule, enact you will
on earth as you have in heaven.
Provide us with the bread we
need for the day. Forgive our
debts to the extent that we have
forgiven those in debt to us.
AND PLEASE DON'T SUBJECT
US TO TEST AFTER TEST, but
rescue us from the evil one.

The key to understanding these verses is as follows: only what is typed in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** above are the true words of Jesus. The **lower case bold letters** are "probably" something like what Jesus said. The **UPPER CASE UNDERLINED LETTERS** represent words that it is "doubtful" that Jesus ever said. The **lower case underlined letters** represent words that Jesus "never said." If 82% of the words which the Bible attributes to Jesus were never really spoken by Him, we end up with an 18% Jesus. The mindset of the world is such that it will grasp at anything that destroys the genuineness and authority of

(Continued from page 3)

the Bible. Many believe that if they could free themselves from the worry that God makes demands on us in the Scriptures, that they would be free indeed. True freedom comes by abiding in the words of Christ, not by trying to get rid of them (John 8:31-32). The methods of these so-called scholars are neither scientific nor are they proof of anything, except their bias against God's word.

We must be training and supporting men who can meet and expose the methods and reasonings of these so-called scholars. Otherwise, our society and those to come will swallow and promote such blasphemy. Any time we reject the words of Jesus we diminish His person (John 12:48-50); Mark 8:38). We should desire the Jesus of Scripture 100%!

LIFE COSTS

A certain Christian lady once said to a friend, "The church costs too much. They are always asking for money."

Some time ago a little boy was born into our home," replied her friend. "He cost me a lot of money from the beginning: he had a big appetite, he needed clothes, medicine, toys and even a puppy. Then he went to school, and that cost a lot more, later went to college; then he began dating, and that cost a small fortune! But in his senior year at college he died and since the funeral he has not cost me a penny. Now which situation do you think I would rather have?"

After a significant pause she continued, "As long as this congregation lives it will cost. When it dies for want of support, it will not cost us anything. A living church has the most vital message for all the world today, therefore I am going to give and pray with everything I have to keep the church alive."

[Copied]

If you want to know how popular the church is, come Sunday morning.

If you want to know how popular the gospel is, come Sunday night.

If you want to know how popular the Lord is, come Wednesday night.

The man with the pet sin is like the little boy with the dirty neck - neither wants to have anything done about it.

SUCH CONFINEMENT

by Danny Cline

"They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity" (II Peter 2:19).

It doesn't take long to see through Satan's favorite enticement to sin. Righteousness is so restricting, so limiting. Break out, turn loose, be free, declare your independence.

So we try his wares, and what happens? We've never experienced such confinement, such fatigue, such hurt.

Eve breaks away as Satan leads, and her role as mother of all living is immediately inflicted with pain in childbearing. Adam succumbs and sees his freedom curtailed - weeds grow, sweat flows, death limits his earth-life.

Sin is a fraud. It promises liberty while hiding its true nature - imprisonment.

Commit adultery. Loosen up. Have some "fun". And it never satisfies. I can't give or receive fully in that illicit relationship. Only bodies merge. The love that accompanies a godly union is missing. And I'm cheated. Frustrated. Cheapened.

Loosen up. Drink up. Shoot up. Smoke up. Don't let God's narrowness keep you from your due. Be free. Almost immediately I'm hooked. The alcohol, the narcotic, the nicotine takes charge. I'm bound.

Contentment is but a false impression. Shake away. Covet more. Set your mind on things of this earth. Then peace flees. I'm victimized by my own greed. I can't enjoy what I already have for wanting more.

Set your own schedule of activity. Don't let spiritual endeavor steal your time and interest. Don't be the slave of your soul's demands. The carnal man assumes ascendancy in artificial detachment from God's government. I hurt; I'm empty; I die.

"When he (Satan) lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44b).

"... the truth will set you free."

P.O. Box 126
Blue Ridge, Ga. 30513

Strong heads are not head-strong.

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).

"YOU CAN HELP WITH POSTAGE"
MOVING?
Be sure to send us
your change of address



POSTMASTER
Mail all address changes to:
CHURCH OF CHRIST
P.O. BOX 251
MAMMOTH SPRING, AR, 72554

Second Class Postage
Paid At
Mammoth Spring, AR
72554
Publication # 211780