

Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths... and walk therein."
(Jeremiah 6: 16)

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A Man That Is An Heretic

Charles A. Pledge

A heretic might roam the fellowship of the brotherhood and seldom be recognized. Thanks to the Catholic Church, a heretic came to be thought of as a false teacher. Specifically, in the Catholic Church as one who taught against the orthodox views, especially when the orthodox views prevailed.

Today, most brethren think that if a brother does not teach false doctrine, that brother is not a heretic. Such a view is false. A heretic may or may not teach false doctrine. A heretic may or may not agree with specific teachings of Scripture. A heretic might be the most vocal person around in speaking against liberalism or antiism. The heretic might, in fact, take a leading role against certain errors in order to gain a following.

All false teachers are dividers. Their false doctrine will divide. But their chief aim is not to divide, but to conquer; to devour the faithful with their doctrine (Rom. 16:17-18; Acts 20:29-30; Matt. 7:15-20). The heretic on the other hand has the main concern of gaining authority over a following with little concern for doctrine or anything else. The main tool of the false teacher is false doctrine. The main tool of the **Schismatic** is division. He may use an act, an innocent or unwise statement, or some unrelated fact to twist and pervert into an occasion for division. The heretic is adept at twisting and changing meanings of one thing into something else. Why? Because he is **subverted** (perverted).

A heretic is a sinner who falls into a special category. Because this sinner is not easily recognized by most

brethren, he is the most dangerous of all to the church. It is this sinner who occupies, as does the false teacher, a category of sin alone.

In the New Testament, five categories of sins are described which cover all the sins known. Every sin falls into one or the other category, and must be dealt with as that category of sin is dealt with by God in His word. These categories are: 1) The personal transgression (Matt. 18:15-18). 2) The False teacher (Rom. 16:17-18). 3) Moral sins (1 Cor. 5:1-13). 4) Unruly actions or disorderliness; general sins out of step with the Gospel (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). 5) The heretic (Titus 3:10-11).

It is to the heretic that we want to pay special attention to in this article from this point. It is the heretic that is a most dangerous person because he has escaped attention in most teaching done by brethren in this century.

Paul said to Titus in Titus 3:10-11: *"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."*

Paul was, in effect, commanding to reject a heretic after the first admonition, but not more than two admonitions. This is the force of the original language. Admonition here is from the Greek *nouthesia*, literally a putting in mind. It is sometimes used of training in word, and as such is found in Ephesians 6:4 where Paul said: *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* Here the word is used to indicate correction rather than training. Heresy is

such a sin that little is needed to identify it in the scriptural sense. Our modern task is cutting through all the misconception surrounding the sin.

Paul argues that the quick and decisive action regarding a heretic is necessary because of the obvious and dangerous nature of the sin and the subverted condition of the sinner. After all, a short putting in mind of the sin and the warning involved, then, after that and not more than one more quick admonition, the act of rejecting is to be done. Why? Who is this dangerous individual? What is his sin?

Who is the heretic? The heretic is a *hairetikos*. This word indicates in a primary sense capable of choosing. It indicates a causing of division by a party spirit. It is used in this passage to refer to a **factious schismatic**. It is a man guilty of **heresy**.

Heresy is from the Greek *haireisis* indicating choosing; making a choice, then that which is chosen and, hence, an opinion, especially, a self-willed opinion. This opinion is substituted for submission to truth and leads to formation of sects within the body of Christ. This is referred to in Galatians 5:20: *"Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies."* Heresies here is indicated in the margin of some Bibles as parties. "Sect" is a secondary meaning of the word due to the significance attached to it in the New Testament usage.

The heretic is essentially a divider of brethren for the purpose of

(Continued on page 4)

Heretic...

Guest Editorial

HEARTLAND '97

Bert F. Vick, Jr.

The prophet Ezekiel said, "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O Wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; thou hast delivered thy soul. Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live" (Ezekiel 33:1-10)?

Heartland '97, the main cooperative event of the liberal churches in central Indiana, is being announced. It is scheduled to take place July 9-12 here in Indianapolis. According to the announcement in "Direction" (March 11, 1997), the bulletin of the Southeastern Church of Christ in Indianapolis, some of the speakers will be Mike Armour, Jerry Jones, Don

McLaughlin, Prentice Meador, Harold Redd, Rubel Shelly, and Jeff Walling. None of these men nor the churches announcing this event are sound in the faith. They are not interested in giving a "thus saith the Lord" for all they do and teach (Col. 3:17). No longer can brethren plead ignorance to the false doctrines which permeate the church in many places.

Mike Armour has taught that under God's grace an unscripturally married couple does not have to break up. According to Armour, forgiveness takes care of their adulterous state. This he taught at the Pepperdine lectures a few years ago ("Integrity," Vol. 26, No. 2, p.40). He also continues to appear on lecture-ships with false teachers as others mentioned above.

Jerry Jones was once Chairman of the Bible department at Harding University, but was fired. He "left town" on the Crossroads horse, but it seems the real reason he was fired was because he blew the whistle on "...the employment of student-athletes by 'the job'...." Harding's practice, according to the minutes of the AIC Executive Committee, September 30, 1983, was "not in keeping with the spirit of the regulations of the conference, or the interpretations thereof."

Having left Harding University, Jones became more deeply involved in the Crossroads/Boston Discipling Movement in Boston, Massachusetts. He became an elder in this apostate group. He was there two years. The other elders at that time (October, 1986), along with Kip McKean, "the Pope" of the Boston Discipling Movement, wholeheartedly commended Jerry as he made his move back to St. Louis. When Jerry got out of the Boston Discipling Movement, he wrote some booklets exposing them. Howard W. Norton, Chairman of OCC and Clifton Ganus, Jr., Chancellor of Harding University, wrote letters commending Jones since he left

the Crossroads movement. But I wrote Jones in 1988, acknowledging his disassociation with the divisive movement, and asked him if he had ever confessed his wrong. He did not answer. Later, I saw him at the Freed-Hardeman lectures where he was selling his wares. I asked him face to face if he thought he was wrong in getting involved with the Crossroads/Boston movement. He would not admit he had sinned.

As far as I know, Jones still holds to false doctrine on the marriage question. He regularly speaks at the Tulsa Workshop, which has been a spawning ground for liberalism since its inception.

Don McLaughlin preaches for the Lindberg Road Church of Christ in Anderson, Indiana. In 1995 he was the guest speaker at the 12th annual Greater St. Louis Youth Rally sponsored by Harding University and some of the St. Louis area churches of Christ. Jerome Williams, song leader from Tulsa, Oklahoma, led singing. The group Acappella sang. McLaughlin, with numerous other false teachers, is also a speaker at the 1997 Tulsa Workshop.

Prentice Meador has been a staff writer for "Image," a magazine with a liberal agenda. He appeared on the 1993 Jubilee along with Willard Tate, Ronnie Norman, Lagard Smith, Marlin Connelly, Carl Brecheen, Joe Beam, Buddy Bell, Paul Faulkner, and G. P. Holt.

I do not know Harold Redd, but any brother who runs with the false teachers is going to be marked with them. He was a keynote speaker at the Jubilee '96. Any faithful brother would expose the false teachers at such a function to the point that he would "satisfy them," i.e., he would not be invited for a return engagement. Some, because of their opposition to liberalism, would not get an initial invitation to speak at such a gathering. If one wants to talk about drawing the lines of fellowship, the liberals draw the line tighter than anyone, because they refuse to invite those who disagree with them to speak at their functions. Yet, they want others to think that they are loving and broadminded. They are narrow-minded liberals!

If Redd does not know that these brethren with whom he is appearing are false teachers, he ought to wake up and smell the coffee! The color of a brother's skin is no excuse for not

knowing what is going on in the brotherhood, nor does it immunize him from being exposed as a false teacher, the charge of racism to the contrary notwithstanding. There is no such thing as the red brotherhood, the yellow brotherhood, the black brotherhood, or the white brotherhood. Peter commanded us to “*Love the brotherhood*” (1 Peter 2:17).

Rubel Shelly and Jeff Walling are also scheduled to speak. These two brethren fellowship the Christian Church and other denominations. They are making it their aim to destroy the Lord’s church by turning it into nothing but a denomination.

We are informed in this same bulletin article on Heartland ’97 that “A new addition to this years [sic] program is the ‘Heartland Artist Series.’” [sic.] This will feature a well-

known talent in the world of literature or entertainment. This year’s featured speaker will be “**Michael Medved.**” Mr. Medved is a noted historian and film critic who has authored many books including *Hollywood vs. America*, a controversial and influential industry. [sic.] Mr. Medved will enlighten us on the battle for morality we face each day within our families and churches....”

Mr. Medved is not a member of the Lord’s church. He is a Jew. Though he is very intellectual and articulate, what, by God’s authority, gives these supposed churches of Christ the right to give this man a forum to address brethren? If his religion is Judaism, then he would deny Jesus is the Christ. John says, “*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that*

denieth the Father and the Son” (1 John 2:22). Thus, Medved is an antichrist.

Faithful brethren will have nothing to do with Heartland ’97. Paul wrote, “*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*” (Eph. 5:11).

So, once again, we sound the trumpet of warning loud and long!

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*Place the scripture
which authorizes women
interpreters here.
Waiting...
?*

A BROTHERHOOD ALERT FOR THOSE SUPPORTING MISSION WORK IN PAKISTAN

Churches of Christ across the U.S. and particularly those in the northern part of Alabama and the surrounding area who are sending funds for mission work to Pakistan should be very quick to ascertain to whom those funds are being forwarded. This is because B. M. Sabir of Sahiwal of that country has set himself up as “**Head of the Church of Christ**” and is supervising some eighty preachers for the church. Excerpts from an article shown below is from a denominational magazine called *Khurooj*. It is published in Bahar colony, Kot Lakhpat, Lahore 54770 Pakistan.

Even though the article (Vol. I, No. 4, October 1996) gives a rather thorough outline of Sabir’s membership and work in the U.P. (United Presbyterian) and the A.R.P. (American Reformed Presbyterian), not one word is said about him being immersed in 1990 by one of our brethren.

In the event someone may suggest that the information in this article is just incorrect editing by the denominational editor, let them consider that over a six month period this man was proclaimed to the denominational world as the “**Head of the Church of Christ.**” Also, a number of his advertisements, articles and greetings to the “**Christian community**” was carried in these issues.

Due to the great amount of money this man is receiving from stateside churches, he has gotten control of many preachers and has undermined the work of the faithful brethren in Pakistan.

For further information, contact: **Asghar Ali**, 59 ABU Baker Block, Lahore, 54600, Pakistan or **Jim Waldron**, P.O. Box 123, Dunlap, TN 37327.

Found below are excerpts from the denominational magazine called *Khurooj*.

**RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL SERVICES
HEAD OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN PAKISTAN
EVANGELIST PROFESSOR B. M. SABIR
CHURCH OF CHRIST IN PAKISTAN**

“Head of the Church of Christ and Evangelist of the Holy Bible;

professor B. M. Sabir is a prominent Christian scholar and the senior teacher of theology. Professor B. M. Sabir is a prestigious personality. He communicates difficult points of the Holy Scripture to his audience or listeners so easily. This is the reason that people are found so anxious to listen to his impressive message of the salvation of our Lord Jesus through him in order to have fulfillment of their thirst. He had an authority and talent to focus all the secret points and views of the Holy Bible through our enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, there are so many servants of God who are used to come to him for the Bible Study and several pupils of Prof. B. M. Sabir are well known servants at present in our country. ...

“Prof. B. M. Sabir was born in January, 1936 in Sahiwal. ... In 1962, he completed Religious Education from the Theology Seminary at Gujranwala and from 1961 till April, 1964, he rendered remarkable services in U.P. Church Faisalabad. (Former Lyallpur) ... Since 1964, he rendered Church services in A.R.P. Church of Pakistan in Sahiwal and since 1966 till 1969 he remained Moderator of the presbytery in A.R.P. Church Sahiwal. ...

“He held an office as General Superintendent in A.R.P. Church of Pakistan affiliated with ICC since May 1969 till April, 1973. ... From 1981 to 1986, he served in A.R.P. Church as an independent Moderator. In July, 1986, he left for Amsterdam a city of Netherlands in order to participate in the world conference of the world renowned Evangelist of the Holy Bible; Mr. Billy Graham. ... Since 1986 by now, Prof. B. M. Sabir is supervising more than 80 priests and also providing them spiritual aid for the further promotion in Evangelism. ...

“In 1967 due to his utmost endeavours the Christian Welfare Society (Regd) came into being at Chichawatni, for which, Prof. B. M. Sabir was elected as president. ... Keeping in view the remarkable services of Prof. B. M. Sabir, he has been nominated life president of the Christian Welfare Society.” ...

Khurooj (Vol. I, No. 4, October, 1996)

In the November, 1996, *Khurooj*, B. M. Sabir is pictured with **Jim Collin**, “a distinguished guest and Missionary from Church of Christ, America.” B. M. Sabir is listed three times as: “Professor B. M. Sabir, Head of the Church of Christ in Pakistan.”

In the February, 1997, *Khurooj*, we read: “Professor B. M. Sabir, Head of the Church of Christ in Pakistan.”

Heretic...

(Continued from page 1)

attaining power or leadership. Division is his specialty and most brethren, not recognizing the nature of his character, are easily taken into his fold before they know anything is wrong.

The heretic, coming upon a peaceful and tranquil scene in the church may not surface with his actions until he has a majority following him. This is one reason a heretic is often thought of as a false teacher; their methods of operation are so identical in most instances.

A congregation might enjoy peace and unity for years until suddenly the heretic, after coming on the scene without notice, has gained a strong following and then he turns on one or more of those who have been responsible for the peace and unity. For whatever the occasion of attack, whether of a personal nature, or some manufactured reason, sudden division occurs. The peaceful brother may leave to avoid further problems and the rest might think the problem has gone away. There might not be any more such problems for some time. But the heretic is in control, whether directly, or by manipulating one who has strong leadership over the others.

One thing about a heretic: he does not care who appears to lead so long as he has his way in his vested interests. But if his interests are threatened, he is very quick to attack the one, or ones, he thinks responsible for the threat, whether real or imagined. The heretic will never leave unless he is **rejected; asked out, or requested to leave.** So long as he has any control over any members, he has his disciples and will remain entrenched with a view of gaining more.

A heretic might be a member who does not serve in any particular way, or an elder, a deacon, preacher, Bible class teacher, or other who has some leading part in the work. A heretic is an expert in at least one thing: **dividing brethren** to gain control.

My personal experience with heretics is limited. I have known at least eight heretics in my lifetime; men I am convinced beyond doubt as being heretics. I might have known more who were borderline without the courage to be full blown heretics. I have been under attack by at least half of those. The attacks were vicious, two of them short, the others sus-

tained. Two of the attacks were surprise attacks taking some time to sort out and get the motives identified. The other attacks were anticipated by others than me with motives obvious before they began gnashing with their teeth. In each instance, observers could more easily identify the nature of the heretic and the motives involved than those who were close to the situation. Why?

Because of the divisive nature of the situation, those close to it who were sincere searched their own hearts and lives first to see if they were guilty of anything. Second, the sincere ones were willing at first to give any benefit of doubt to the heretic. The seasoned heretic (one who has been through his routine once or twice) knows this already and always capitalizes upon it. He is quick to spread his poison about all who are of the opposite position. It may be by innuendo or it might be outright lies. After all, in this troubled period it is his word against the other. If some question most of his lies, there is a reasonable doubt about some of the others. If just a little truth is told by him, then his lying about the rest is acceptable to many. He gains new disciples every day he is tolerated. By the time facts and allegations are sorted out, the heretic has a sizeable amount of support for his position. Any discipline will be painful. Any delay means he gains more disciples. More lies are told. More reputations are tarnished. More truth is obscured. More souls are lost.

The **Schismatic, the divider of brethren**, may be allowed to leave quietly to go elsewhere to vend his services. The same thing will occur elsewhere; and again; and again, until the rejection takes place and public marking of the sinner happens.

Paul tells us the **Schismatic** is to be rejected. "Reject" is from the Greek *paraitomai* meaning to ask off, to reject. This rejection is to take place after one, but not more than two admonitions. Why? Because the very presence of the **schismatic** is dangerous to the safety of the unity of faithful brethren. Unity between friends and brethren is to be treasured and every threat to genuine unity to be dissolved as quickly as possible.

Why is the presence of a **schismatic or divider** so dangerous, even if that one seems to have no opportunity to spread his venom among brethren? Very obvious! Paul said that such is subverted. The word used in

the KJV as subverted is truly perverted. It is from *ekstrepho* literally meaning to turn inside out; to make into the opposite character. It is used in Titus metaphorically to indicate how opposite in character to truth the **schismatic** is.

The **divider** will intentionally take a statement or fact, or act, and verbally make it of the opposite character and use it to divide. In this sense, a **schismatic** cannot be trusted with even the least opportunity to work his poison. His very presence will damage unity. With just a casual word the **schismatic** can skillfully work his evil. Remember, he has experience and he has the devious character to use his experience to the fullest. It is for this reason he must be rejected very quickly without giving him more opportunity to divide. His nature of character is divisive. If he does not say a thing after being exposed, some poor soul is likely to feel constrained to give him the benefit of the doubt and attach himself emotionally to the **schismatic**.

Paul says his sin is a condemnation of him. That is, the very nature of his character. **Schismatic** is of the opposite character of Christ. Christ prayed in John 17:20-23: "*Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*" The oneness of unity characterized by love, peace, and joy is to characterize the church Jesus died for.

The **schismatic** is by character and disposition the opposite character. That is why the **schismatic** is condemned of himself. The very thing he pretends to want, unity, is disrupted by his character enacted in practice. He condemns himself because his motive is to gain disciples. His very character is devoted to that end. This is why his presence alone will disrupt and divide. He knows no other way. He can think in no other terms than advantage for self. He hesitates not a moment in dividing friends and brethren.

The **heretic** is by nature a factious man. He will try to avoid this

appearance. He will usually disavow at the outset any desire to be contentious. But he can't walk away from a matter. He must justify himself once he enters the fray. Rarely, if ever, will you hear the **schismatic** confess to sinning. He may apologize, but never admit he has sinned, or even that he was wrong in a matter. He might be misunderstood, but not wrong.

The **schismatic** will take an innocent statement from its context, place an evil connotation to the statement, then weave all sorts of stories around that connotation. The heretic usually has a vivid imagination; even a feverish childish imagination. This is coupled with his corrupt character and what he tells others may seem very real, but it is a figment of his evil imagination.

The **schismatic** looks for every opportunity to work his evil. Can you imagine the pain experienced by those to whom the **schismatic** lies in his effort to divide brethren and/or friends to gain his end? It hurts to be lied about, but for those lies to be applied to brethren and friends to destroy friendship and unity hurts even more deeply. When those who have worked together in the kingdom for years suddenly find themselves separated by a **schismatic**, there is bewilderment and pain, the like of which has seldom ever been experienced. What if you heard from your best friend, **through the mouth of the schismatic of course**, that you were a low down, good for nothing, reprobate fit only for hell? How deep is the stroke of pain felt? Even, if later, it is discovered that the report delivered was only a lie, does not every wound leave a scar? A doubt is planted which in most instances will never be fully removed.

Why give a **schismatic** a moment to do his iniquity? Why offer him a platform on which to be heard? Why extend to him any opportunity to be heard with credibility by anyone? This, my friends, is why God commands that a **schismatic** be dealt with speedily and decisively. Do it at once, and do it decisively enough that honest people can never again believe the **schismatic**. Do it with fervor and conviction. But, above all, do it!

Reject the **schismatic**. Ask him out! Put away from you that evil one. Every second you delay he will use as opportunity to serve his cause. More division will result. Souls will be lost. Those who knew but failed to act will become responsible for the harm done. Judgment day is certain and it will

then be too late to make amends.

Two very sinful characteristics are attached by Scripture to both the false teacher and the heretic. (1) Both are dividers, each using different tools with which to divide. (2) Both have the characteristics which the scriptures teach belong only to a hypocrite. Both will deliberately lie to accomplish their end. I have never met an honest false teacher (the terms are contradictory —

honest and false). Neither have I ever met an honest heretic. Subverted is the opposite of honest.

"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Titus 3:10-11).

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Singing, Humming And Unscriptural Songs

Ronald Gilbert

Our worship to God is a serious matter. What we do in worship is not determined by our personal likes and dislikes. What we do in worship to God is determined by God's Word (John 4:24; Col. 3:17). For our worship to be acceptable to God we must worship in the proper way with the proper motive (John 4:24). The Bible speaks of ignorant worship (Acts 17:23), vain worship (Mark 7:7), creature worship (Rom. 1:25) and other types of false worship.

Among those things authorized in our worship to God is singing. In Colossians 3:16 and Ephesians 5:19 we are told to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord. Everyone is to sing, not just a group of people, but all are to sing. If we are to follow the Bible we will sing only, not sing and play, or sing and clap hands. These things add to what God has commanded and are therefore sinful. Notice also that just singing anything is not good enough but we are to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Not all songs are appropriate for worship to God. Wildwood Flower, Tennessee Waltz and other such songs may bring us pleasure to hear but they are not appropriate as songs of worship and praise to God. Most songs that are in our song books were written by men and women who are members of denominationalism. Those in religious error have many false ideas and misunderstandings of the scriptures. If you will listen closely, members of denominations will teach error in their preaching, in their prayers and in their songs. It is a serious matter to teach error whether in a sermon, prayer or a song.

In many of our song books there is a song titled "His Grace Reaches Me." The writer of this song tells all the men to hum through the first part until they get to the chorus, then to sing. Brethren, humming is no more scriptural than playing a piano. Suppose one song writer said, "everyone clap their hands as they sing," would this be acceptable to God? No it would not! Even though a song writer may say everyone hum or clap your hands as you sing, as Christians we must follow the Bible, not someone who wrote a song.

Another area is that of unscriptural songs such as "Jesus Is Coming Soon." This song was written by a man who believed in the false doctrine of premillennialism. Not only did he believe this false doctrine but he taught it in this song. The title of this song itself states something that the Bible says no man knows (Matt. 24:36). Concerning when Jesus will descend in the clouds, the Bible says, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." In Matthew 24, Jesus was asked questions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the signs leading up to its destruction and when the end of the world would come. Jesus answered those questions in the order in which they were asked. In Matthew 24:4-34 Jesus deals with the destruction of Jerusalem and the signs that would be given leading up to its destruction. Those who believe in premillennialism take these verses out of context and apply them to "signs of today" in an effort to show that the end of the world is near. In Matthew 24:34 Jesus said "this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." These verses clearly have refer-

ence to the destruction of Jerusalem. In Matthew 24:36 Jesus turned to answer their question concerning the end of the world and said of "that day and hour knoweth no man." He stated that no signs would be given in regard to the end of the world.

The second stanza of "Jesus Is Coming Soon" says, "Love of so many cold, losing their home of gold, this in God's word is told, evils abound...." This is a quote from Matthew 24:12, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." In the context of Matthew 24 this has no reference to the end of the world but the destruction of Jerusalem and the signs which would lead up to that event. This song clearly teaches false doctrine when it takes these passages out of context and says we can read signs today and know that "Jesus is coming soon."

It is a serious thing to teach false doctrine. When we sing the words of this song we also teach false doctrine. Perhaps it is time to consider closely our singing. Even though some songs may encourage us to hum while others sing we cannot do so and please God. We cannot teach premillennialism in our songs and stand guiltless before God. Worship is a serious matter. It is time for elders and preachers and all members to get serious and follow God's Word. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

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Mark And Avoid

Jimmy B. Hill

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

It has been said that the idea of "branding" a brother (or a group of brethren) is not in the word translated "mark" in this verse. However, the word demands the act of taking note of a person. It means to regard, consider, take heed, look at, observe, contemplate. False teachers certainly fall into this category so that we might be able to avoid them and warn others of them. And, does this not demand that they be branded, exposed, revealed, for what they are? Still, some may say, "well, that is unkind, unloving, and un-Christ-like." But, is it? Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6). He also said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). Did Jesus not love them? Was Christ unkind? No, not at all. Yet, He did expose the Pharisees and the Sadducees and warn others of them.

Brethren, false doctrines do not flourish without false teachers. Therefore, those who propagate and promote divisive doctrines must be dealt with and Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said we are to "mark" and "avoid them." There must be a constant vigilance in everyone who follows Christ for observing the false teacher (Jude 3). But instead, there are those who claim loyalty and allegiance to Christ, all the while sympathizing with false teachers and/or those who promote them. This verse demands we practice discrimination in preachers and preaching and teachers and teaching.

Is it the mark of spiritual maturity and superiority not to observe the things which are taught by the brethren? If the false teacher is

ignored, will he just go away? Will the problems he causes cease to exist? Dub McClish stated it this way: "Like the fool who

places his hand over the gas gauge in his car thinking the gas will last indefinitely if he doesn't see it register "empty", so is the brother who prides himself in not knowing or taking note of who is teaching or practicing this or that, thinking it will go away if it is ignored. A generation of ignoring instead of taking note has shown the predictable evil fruits of disobeying divine instruction." Patience? Yes! Tolerance? For a time. But just how long do we sit idly by and allow false teachers and their promoters to bring dishonor to our God and His precious, soul-saving word?

To "mark" simply means to observe very carefully and point out false teachers to others that they may not be beguiled. One who causes division is one who disrupts the unity of the body of Christ. One who causes offenses is one who causes an occasion of stumbling to one along the spiritual pathway of life. Both are wrong and "contrary to the doctrine which you have learned."

To "avoid" means to "keep no company with." Thayer defines it as to "keep aloof from one's society; to shun one." Christians should keep no company with false teachers but should shun them as they would the devil.

Brethren, if we truly love the Lord Jesus Christ, we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3) but are life everlasting (John 12:50). If we truly love Him, we will obey His command to "mark" and "avoid them."

Brethren, let us all pray for resolve, repentance and a revival of spirit. May God's will be done in all things!

3987 Vandever Road
Crossville, TN 38555

Elders
COLUMN

1 2 T H A N N U A L

SEEK THE OLD PATHS

LECTURESHIP

July 27-31, 1997

Always the 4th Sunday in July

THEME: THE CHURCH AT COLOSSE

SUNDAY, JULY 27

- 9:45 The History of the city of Colosse along with the occasion and setting of the church, 1:1-2..... *Windell Fikes*
- 10:35 Conversion in Colossians *Nat Evans*
- 7:00 Exposition of 1:3-8 *Charles Blair*
- 8:00 A faithful minister, 1:7; 4:7 *Garland Robinson*

MONDAY, JULY 28

- 9:00 Exposition of 1:9-20..... *Wayne Cox*
- 10:00 Let no man deceive you, 1:23; 2:4,8,16,18,20-23... *Brian Hodge*
- 11:00 Being fruitful in every good work, 1:10..... *Ted Horn*
- 1:30 Exposition of 1:21-2:3..... *Dean Fugett*
- 2:30 Redeeming the time, 4:5..... *John Grubb*
- 7:00 Dead in sins, 2:13..... *Charles Leonard*
- 8:00 Alive in Christ, 2:13 *Melvin Sapp*

TUESDAY, JULY 29

- 9:00 Exposition of 2:4-12..... *Ben Vick*
- 10:00 The nature & preeminence of Christ, 1:15-19 *Robin Haley*
- 11:00 The kingdom of God's dear Son, 1:13 *Chuck Northrop*
- 1:30 Exposition of 3:16 *Charles Pledge*
- 2:30 Exposition of 3:17 *Ken Burtleson*

- 7:00 Punishment of the wicked, 3:25..... *Ron Cosby*
- 8:00 Redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, 1:14 *Gilbert Gough*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30

- 9:00 Exposition of 2:13-23 *Wayne Coats*
- 10:00 The mystery of the Gospel, 1:26-27; 2:2; 4:3 *Melvin Elliott*
- 11:00 Worshipping of angels, 2:18..... *Walter Pigg*
- 1:30 Exposition of 3:1-15..... *Alan Adams*
- 2:30 Give thanks to God - Gratitude, 1:3,12; 2:7; 3:15,17; 4:2 *H. D. Simmons*
- 7:00 Grounded and settled, 1:23 *Virgil Hale*
- 8:00 The wrath of God, 3:6 *Terry Joe Kee*

THURSDAY, JULY 31

- 9:00 Exposition of 3:18-4:1 *Bill Crossno*
- 10:00 Love to all the saints, 1:4 *Don Tate*
- 11:00 Let your speech be seasoned with salt, 4:6 *O. B. Porterfield*
- 1:30 Exposition of 4:2-18 *Jimmy Bales*
- 2:30 Laboring fervently - zeal, 4:12 *Jimmy Young*
- 7:00 The priorities of life, 3:1-2 *Ed Casteel*
- 8:00 The hope which is laid up for you in heaven, 1:5 *Ronnie Whittemore*

East Corinth Church of Christ

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*Limited housing is available in member's homes. Contact the church office for reservations.
Water and electrical hook-ups (no sewer) are available for RVs.
We would like to know in advance of your arrival to reserve you a space.*

BOOK, VIDEO & AUDIO TAPES ARE AVAILABLE

A book of the lessons will be available but the cost has not yet been determined. Cassette audio tapes are \$20 for the complete set (add \$2 for postage). Make checks (for books and cassette tapes) payable to Old Paths Publishing, 304 Ripley St., Corinth, MS 38834. The set of video tapes is \$50. Order from: Jim Green, 2711 Spring Meade Blvd, Columbia, TN 38401. The church is not involved in the sale of any of these materials.

MAIL BAG



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

Do you know what Jesus said when he was told to keep his trouble to himself? *"But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in"* (Matt. 23:13). It amazes me at how little some people know of the scriptures. God told those of Hosea's day, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children"* (Hosea 4:6). Our desire and prayer to God for spiritual Israel (the church) is that they might come to a knowledge of the truth, obey it, and be saved. Paul said of such people, *"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge"* (Rom. 10:2). To faithfully serve God, one must have both zeal and knowledge. One without the other is useless and vain.]

"May the unsurpassing peace of God continue to be with us. I sincerely wish to express my gratitude to you for putting my name on your mailing list throughout last year. I hope you will continue to maintain my name on your list. I have found the magazine to be very educative and spiritually edifying. May God bless you in your efforts. Thank you" ...*Ken Dadzie, Ghana, West Africa*. "Enclosed is a check to help on cost of paper which I currently receive. We like the paper very much and want to continue receiving it. We also want to encourage you to keep up the good work" ...*Bill Brockway, Lucedale, MS*. "Please put me on your mailing list for the monthly publication *Seek The Old Paths*. This paper has such interesting articles and is very informative about things going on in some churches today. It helps us be more aware of the fact that we do need to study God's word diligently and never let anything be added or taken away from our worship" ...*Jerry Pierce, Smithville, MS*. "Thank you for your stand against false teachers as well as many other things that are being taught in many congregations today. We are sending a check to help on postal expenses. We are a small congregation, financially unable to do much on our own and see your publication as an excellent way to help teach against these things. Thank you" ...*James Dewrell, Gridertown Church of Christ, Opp, AL*. "Please take off you mailing list" ...*Ralph Forshee, Elk City, OK*. "I am the gospel preacher for the church of Christ which meets at Talihina, Oklahoma. I am told by sound gospel preachers that your paper teaches the Lord's truth and is beneficial to the cause of Christ. I would greatly appreciate it if you would send your paper to my P.O. Box. I am always looking for good men who are not afraid to teach what is true and right. Thank you very much and may the Lord help you in all that you do to uphold Christian doctrine and pull down the strongholds of Satan. May the Lord bless you and keep you" ...*Chad Seaton, Talihina, OK*. "I am a student at the Memphis School of Preaching. Thank you and keep up the good work" ...*Randy Dodson, McDonough, GA*. "I preach in western Oklahoma where liberalism is spreading like terminal cancer. Your paper is greatly appreciated" ...*Earl Reed, Sayre, OK*. "God bless you and keep up the good work" ...*Gerry McAlister, Aberdeen, MS*. "Thanks for your effort and thanks for the publications. Continue to fight the good fight of faith" ...*William McCormick*. "Please start sending me the paper. I enjoy reading it very much and keeping up with what is going on in the brotherhood" ...*Melvin Carlock, Nesbit, MS*. "I appreciate getting your paper. Keep up the good work" ...*Jerry Reynolds, McMinnville, TN*. "As a matter of practice, I try to surround myself with as much Biblically sound reading material as possible. For that reason, I am always looking for publications which may aid the spiritual growth of my family and me. Your periodical, *Seek The Old Paths*, came very highly recommended to me by a respected friend. I look forward to enjoying and learning from your publication" ...*Brandon Rader, Lexington, KY*. "We enjoy *Seek The Old Paths*. It contains some timely, heart-searching, Bible-centered, John the baptizer's preaching/teaching, Christ on the mount preach-

"Please keep all your trouble there. I do not need it" ...*Bennie Barnard, Elk City, OK*.

[EDITOR'S NOTE:

We do not have any trouble with liberalism and digression in the congregation here and *Seek The Old Paths* serves a great purpose in keeping it that way.

ing and Paul's style sermons. Keep on keeping on. We can say a loud amen to all that we have seen and read so far. We are enclosing a check to show our love, respect, interest and helpfulness in your labors in Christ. We both are confined to wheel chairs and walkers. After more than 80 years of teaching and preaching in some of the states west of here in Oklahoma, some north of here, some south and some east of here, I can not go that far and wide now. I use a high stool and portable pulpit stand for my teaching and preaching. Thankful for what I can do under the present conditions. Your paper has the "old paths" sound and we commend you and your fellow helpers. Keep on keeping on sounding the old gospel trumpet, in season, out of season — "preach it when they likes it and preach it when they don't likes it." God bless" ...*Ector Watson, Cleveland, OK*. "Enclosed is a check for postage for mailing your gospel journal to the church here. We appreciate it very much" ...*Fred Bogle, South Orlando Church of Christ, Orlando, FL*. "Just wanted to let you know I enjoy your paper very much and am sending you a little money to help with it" ...*Marguerite Johnson, Coldwater, MS*. *Seek The Old Paths* continues to look great! I certainly enjoy receiving it, and I benefit greatly from its pages" ...*John M. Brown, Flatwoods, KY*. "I appreciate *Seek The Old Paths*. Every time I see a "Please remove us from your mailing list," makes me wonder where they stand (if they stand for anything). Well, it really doesn't make me wonder. If they do not desire to receive sound, Biblical teaching, that has a lot to say about the person. Anyway, keep up the good work" ...*David McElwain, Godfrey, IL*. "May God bless the continued success of this publication" ...*Kevin Kimbrough, Jackson, TN*. "Please find enclosed check to cover the cost of postage for *Seek The Old Paths*. We commend the brethren for the loving way in which error is exposed in your publication and we appreciate the good work you do. May God bless you as you continue to defend the truth" ...*Jim & Barbara Backhouse, Bellerive, Tasmania, Australia*.

Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the East Corinth Church of Christ and is under the oversight of its elders. It is mailed FREE upon request. Its primary purpose and goal in publication can be found in Jude 3; II Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

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