

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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SUMMER IS HERE!

Roger D. Campbell

After the end of the great flood in the time of Noah, Jehovah declared, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22). God's promise is still being fulfilled in our day. The summer of 1999 is about upon us! Summer is a time when children and students are on vacation from classes. Many families have opportunity to go on vacation together in the summer while others spend much time working in their gardens or simply resting from their normal busy schedule. Summer is a time when many are involved in sports or other activities outside. Yes, summer is a special time that many people, including us, really enjoy. But, we must also plainly say that summer is a time when some affairs are out of place. We must understand that activities which are not pleasing to God any other time of the year do not automatically become acceptable in His sight just because it is summertime. Just what do we have in mind? Please read on.

Summer is not a time to forget about the Lord. Sometimes it seems Christians are so busy in the summer with their own affairs that they forget about the Lord and their responsibility to Him! Before the children of Israel entered the land of Canaan, Jehovah often warned them through Moses that when they would enter that land of promise and receive great blessings from His hand, they must not forget Him. One

such warning was, "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day" (Deut. 8:11). Sadly, many Israelites did not listen to Jehovah's warning and forgot Him. This summer, let us not forget to study the word of God! Wherever we may be, let us always make certain we have our Bibles with us and keep studying God's book each day, just like always. We need to imitate the Bereans of the first century, of whom it is written, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Besides studying God's word each day, we need to continue to pray to the Lord, just like always, as it is written, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). There should never be a time in our lives when we say to God, "I am sorry, but I am so busy that I just don't have time to study the Bible and speak to you in prayer." If a child of God is too busy to study and pray, then he is TOO busy!

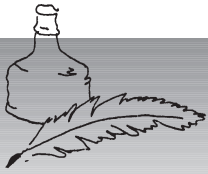
Concerning not forgetting the Lord, allow us to mention one other affair. If we are going to be gone this summer (or any other time) and will not be attending the services of our home congregation, then we must not forget our contribution to the Lord. Each Christian is to contribute on the first day of the week for the

work of the Lord, and that includes in the summer time also (1 Cor. 16:1,2). Surely none of us would want to say to God, "I am sorry, but I am taking a trip and for this trip I need the money that I usually contribute to you." In the summer, a congregation must continue preaching the gospel, helping its widows, and being involved in other aspects of the Lord's work that require funds. So, it is important that every member who is going to be out of town and not assembling with his own congregation on Sundays either give his contribution before he leaves, or else give the money to some other member and ask them to contribute his money while he is away. Let us not forget God!

Summer is not a time to stop preaching the Gospel. The Holy Spirit instructed Timothy, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). It is always a good time ("in season") to teach others the good news about salvation through Jesus Christ! The disciples of the first century taught the Gospel every day, and surely that must have included during the summer time (Acts 5:42; 17:17; 19:9). Souls that are lost need the gospel today, for "now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). Are we prepared to put a sign on the building where we assemble which says, "Because it is now summer and all of

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Summer Is Here!...



Editorial...

RATHER CRITICAL

Another student at **Lipscomb University** has written saying, "I was writing in concern to a news bulletin you published that was rather critical towards Lipscomb and Dr. Steve Flatt. I would like to know your thoughts on why you don't support a Christian college such as Lipscomb University. I would also like to know why you publish such degrading things about the topics mentioned above. I believe that a Church bulletin should write things such as Jesus would write.

ANSWER: Dear _____;

I appreciate you taking the time to write. I have nothing against "Christian colleges" and would defend their right to exist as a private enterprise, seeing they are a work of the home, not the church. However, we will not ignore error wherever it is found — even in schools and colleges, whether operated by some who are members of the church or not. We are concerned about following the Lord's directives in Jude 3, Romans 16:17, Ephesians 5:11 and 2 John 9-11. We believe in being "balanced" in our work for the Lord and will not be side-tracked by focusing only in one direction, namely evangelism, as many do. The congregation here is involved in many works including newspaper, radio, TV and many other avenues of evangelism. However, we could not be true to the Lord if we ignored the passages which speak of contending for the faith and edifying the saints. Therefore, we are interested in examining and refuting error wherever it may be found, whether in the local church, the community, the government, the schools, or wherever. I don't know how we can refuse to obey the commands of the Lord and be right in his sight. When we (Christians) oppose error in the church, that does not mean we don't support the church. We simply do not support the error found in it. When we oppose error in the schools,

it is not the school itself we oppose, but the error found therein. However, when a church or school becomes saturated with error and itself is the embodiment of and promoter of error, then we will oppose it as well.

Jesus confronted error many times, while at the same time being compassionate toward the suffering. The two are not incompatible. The two show balance in obeying God. Matthew 23 is filled with some very harsh and strong language used by the Lord. He said things that offended people. Notice these words: "*hypocrites*" (v.13,14,15,23,25,27,29) "*blind guides*" (v.16,24), "*fools and blind*" (v.17,19), "*blind*" (v.26), "*whitened sepulchres*" (v.27), "*full of hypocrisy and iniquity*" (v.28), "*Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell*" (v.33). Didn't he know people were turned off by his harsh words? Didn't he realize they may never come back to hear the truth again? He certainly knew these things but would not change the truth in order to pacify their hurt feelings (Matt. 15:12-14). He didn't try to make things difficult for them. He didn't set out to offend. That was not his purpose. Neither is it ours. But, no matter how we speak the truth, it is a fact of life that some will be offended and turn their ears away from the truth. This was made clear by the apostle Paul. "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*" (2 Tim. 4:2-4). I personally don't like the end result of people being offended, but at the same time, I will not and can not change the truth of God into a lie in order to accommodate those who are offended by the purity of the

Gospel (see Rom. 1:25). The Lord wouldn't do it, neither should we.

One of the main reasons Jesus was rejected and nailed to a cross was because he condemned sin and error. Had he taught "smooth things" as the people of Isaiah's day had ask him to do (Isa. 30:10), he would have gotten along fine with people. To those truly seeking the Truth, the Lord had words of compassion and exhortation (Matt. 11:28-30; John 6:35-37). To those who were hateful and did not love the Truth, the Lord had more uncharitable and merciless words (cf. Luke 9:41; 11:29; John 8:44). This enraged many people and they sought to put him to death because of it (Matt. 26:59).

The Lord's words concerning those who truly "love" him show that they will "obey" him. For one to not obey the Lord shows that he does not love the Lord. Jesus said, "*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*" "*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*" "*He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me....*" "*Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.*" "*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*" (John 13:17; 14:15,21,23,24; 15:14).

Paul speaks of faithful brethren's approach to false brethren in Galatians 2:4-5, "*And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*" I do not know the motive of these false brethren to whom Paul referred. Perhaps it was noble. I would like to think they genuinely desired to bring all disciples into compliance with God. However, their teaching was not right. Paul said it would bring its followers into bondage and take them away from the liberty they had found in Christ. The apostle's approach to this false

doctrine was that faithful brethren did not allow it to stand, not even for an hour. They did not tolerate it. It had to be confronted and refuted. If they had not done so, the truth of the Gospel would not have continued with the disciples. He even confronted the apostle Peter because he was to be blamed (Gal. 2:11). When we face false teaching today, should we not treat it and deal with it as this divinely inspired example shows?

I do not question the sincerity or motive of any at Lipscomb or any other place. What is in question is their error, false teaching. When such error and false teaching is followed, it will cause one to lose their soul.

With kindest regards,
Garland M. Robinson

Brethren everywhere need to be aware of those who have departed from The Faith and have gone out from us. The apostle John makes this clear in the following verses: *“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us”* (1 John 2:17-19).

John said that those who **doeth the will of God abideth for ever**. Those who do not abide in the Will of God, the Truth, are **antichrists**. There were many of them in the first century and their tribe are numerous today. Though they were once “of us,” i.e., of our number and faithful to the Truth, that is not the case any longer. They have departed from us “in spirit” — “in faithfulness” to the Lord. However, they linger on with us in “name” only. They are as a leech, clinging, hanging on for a free ride, seeking advantage and gain. We would be far better if they departed from us completely, severing all ties and resemblance. They pose great threats and are a menace to evangelism. It is increasingly difficult to teach lost

souls the saving Gospel when they ask “what about the church of Christ over there...?” When they learn of such division and strife they are often repulsed and lose interest. Oh,

hasten the day when the antichrists among us will go on their way, change their name and leave us completely — they already have left the Lord. It’s time they left us also.

NEWS BRIEF...

“BIRDS OF A FEATHER...”

The “Mountain-top experience” went off as planned at **David Lipscomb University** during the Singarama Summit, March 5 & 6. Billed as a “mini-version of **Winterfest** and **Impact**,” by Steve Davidson, director of special activities at Lipscomb. “This is an event that should appeal to both prospective students and church youth groups,” he continued. **Jeff Walling** of Providence Road church of Christ in Charlotte, North Carolina, was the featured speaker with **Matt Elliot** of the Campus church of Christ in Atlanta the worship leader. Encounter classes were scheduled to be taught by **Lance Bennett** (East Brainerd, Chattanooga, TN); **Jim Hinkle** (Madison, Madison, TN); **Todd Loyd** (Crittendon Drive, Russellville, KY); **Johnny Markham** (College Street, Lebanon, TN); **Rich Reaves** (Lau-rel, Knoxville, TN); **Craig Shelton** (Centerville, TN); **Mike Shepherd** (Darby Drive, Florence, AL); **Jon Shoulders** (Old Hickory, TN); **Rob Touchstone** (Mayfair, Huntsville, AL); and **David Skidmore** (West End, Knoxville, TN). **The Lipscomb News**, March 22-24, featured a Spring Revival at Lipscomb’s Collins Auditorium featuring **Buddy Bell** as speaker and **Keith Lancaster** as worship leader.

The **Woodmont Hills Church** (Rubel Shelly’s Church) weekly newsletter of March 24, 1999 reads: Invite Your Friends To Worship With Us: It will be a week you won’t want to miss. Wednesday Night Family Dinner sponsored by the Youth and Family Ministry, March 31, 1999 at 5:30 p.m. in the Lobby. \$5.00 adults / \$3.00 children. Proceeds will benefit the 1999 Summer **STRETCH** Trips. Mark your registration cards this Sunday with a “D” and the number in your family attending. Following dinner, a time

of praise and worship (6:30 p.m.) including a special program by the **David Lipscomb Middle School chorus** directed by our own Suzanne Craig.

Good Friday Service
Friday, April 2
7:00 p.m. — Great Hall

A quiet and intimate reflection on the crucifixion of Jesus. The story of the Savior’s road to the cross told through scripture, narrative, and song. Easter Sunday, Sunday, April 4. In both of our morning services we will celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. The chorus will lead a dynamic hour of praise and worship, **John York** (Lipscomb faculty member) will lead our thought and the morning will culminate in the drama “I Saw Him” as preparation for communion. An Elders/Preachers Workshop is planned at Lipscomb for June 12 with **Paul Brown, David Wray, Charles Hodge, Walt Leaver, Randy Harris, and John Harris** as speakers.

A Counseling Seminar is also planned for June 17 with Lipscomb representatives **Carl McKelvey, Randy Harris, and Paul Cates** joining **Jerry Barber, Randy Becton, Jim Anderson, Gene Arnold, and Terry Smith** of Woodmont Hills.

Do birds of a feather really flock together?

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EDITOR’S NOTE: The events mentioned above are certainly not given as an announcement nor endorsement of these activities. On the contrary, they are mentioned simply to confirm and document the constant departure of many from the Faith. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

HOW TO DODGE QUESTIONS ABOUT APOSTATE BRETHREN IN NASHVILLE

The elders at West End in Livingston, Tennessee, sent a letter to **Steve Flatt, President of David Lipscomb University**, asking the following:

1. Do you encourage or discourage students to attend the Nashville Jubilee?
2. Would you discourage students from attending the Woodmont Hills church of Christ where Rubel Shelly preaches?

He responded,

“First, we neither encourage nor discourage our students to attend Jubilee. Frankly, it is a moot point since it occurs during the middle of the summer when only a small number of students are on campus. Jubilee is not a part of any campus announcements. Second, we make no public endorsement or criticism about individual congregations. We do encourage students to find a church home and that it be a congregation faithful to Christ and His Word. Personally, when asked I encourage individual students to worship at churches of Christ that are faithful to the Bible, filled with a spirit of joy, provide active opportunities for them to serve, and that enjoy a close fellowship with the majority of other churches of Christ in the area.”

Here is the real politician at work. He knows how to answer questions without really answering them. He knows that what is going on at the Jubilee and at Woodmont Hills is not right. But he also knows that it will cost him in more ways than one if he speaks against these things. And, he knows that he and some of the faculty at Lipscomb have spoken at Jubilee. He furthermore knows that numerous members of

the faculty and student body attends Woodmont Hills. So, he straddles the fence.

Perhaps the most revealing statement in his response is in the last line, where he encourages attending churches that “enjoy a close fellowship with the majority of other churches of Christ in the area.” There we have it in his own words. If the majority of churches in a given area are faithful, then fellowship with them is good. But even then, the reason for fellowshiping them should not be because they are in the majority, but because they are faithful! And what if the majority of these churches are not faithful? Flatt’s advice would have you in close fellowship with them. Had he lived in Asia when Revelation 2-3 were penned, his advice would have put him in fellowship with wayward churches. In other words, he would have been in the same situation he is in at Nashville, Tennessee.

*Kerry Duke
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In Addition.....

One wonders what Steve Flatt would have done in the 60s and 70s as **Don Finto** of the Belmont Church of Christ led a whole congregation into Pentecostalism. The Belmont Church is what remains. Finto was a Lipscomb professor in the 60s and they were forced to sever ties with him. He later claimed to have been made an apostle by God and still makes that claim today, miraculous abilities, etc. Back in November, “apostle” Don was at Woodmont Hills speaking on a unity forum they were hosting along with L. H. Hardwick Jr. of Christ’s Church Pentecostal down the road from the Woodmont Hill’s complex, plus “a Roman Catholic historian...that will help us see ourselves as others see us.” (Woodmont Hills Love Lines, Volume 24 Number 43). Who would dis-

courage entanglement and fellowship with such? The answer is obvious: faithful brethren.

Steve Flatt reminds me of Billy Graham who tells those who have “accepted Christ” through inviting Jesus into their hearts to “find a good Bible believing church to worship and grow with.” It seems to never have registered with Mr. Graham that those who believe the Bible do not accept “accepting Jesus” per his denominational error nor will they find themselves denominationalists. Those who believe the Bible don’t believe Billy Graham. You have to believe something else other than the Bible to be a sectarian. Likewise, Steve Flatt seems to be oblivious to the fact that congregations “faithful to Christ and His Word” have marked and avoid the very false teachers and apostate congregations Flatt remains in fellowship with. What a mess! It could be cleaned up immediately with a return to the Bible.

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Judy Roberts, in memory of Lola Richards ..	\$15
M/M John H. Brown.....	\$25
Ector and Cordia Watson	\$100
Hornbeak Church of Christ, Hornbeak, TN.....	\$250

Summer Is Here!...

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our members are very busy with their own affairs, we will not teach the Bible to those who are not Christians until after the first day of September?" I am personally 100% against the idea of putting such a sign on our building because I know the Lord wants us to keep on teaching the Gospel this summer, just like always! Be sure of one thing: while some Christians are resting or minding their own affairs this summer, Satan will not have a vacation, but will be very active trying to hinder people from being saved (1 Peter 5:8). Brothers and sisters, let us not forget to sow the seed this summer (Luke 8:11)!

Summer is not a time to dress immodestly. In some places it is hot in the summer. In other places it is so hot that people literally die due to the extreme heat. How should a Christian dress when it is hot outside? Is it acceptable for a child of God to wear clothes that are comfortable and cool? Of course, but he must always wear clothes that are modest. After Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden, *"The eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons"* (Gen. 3:7). However, Jehovah was obviously not satisfied with their effort to cover their nakedness, for it is written that after this, *"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them"* (Gen. 3:21). God was concerned that Adam and Eve dress modestly.

Today, many are like the Jews of Jeremiah's time who committed sin, but they were not ashamed and did not blush (Jer. 6:15). Unfortunately, even some members of Christ's church dress immodestly and do not blush! The New Testament instruction for sisters in Christ is, *"In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety..."* (1 Tim. 2:9). Yes, brothers must also dress modestly!

Dressing modestly and with shamefacedness includes the idea of dressing in clothes that does not draw the attention of others. It also

means to wear clothes that sufficiently cover the body (skin), that are not too tight, and by all means, does not cause some to look upon us and have improper lustful desires of the flesh. Jesus said, *"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"* (Matt. 5:27,28). According to Jesus, when a man looks on a woman that is not his wife and in his heart has a desire to have physical relations with that woman, then he commits sin ("adultery"). Now sisters, if you do not wear enough clothes to cover your skin, and as a result, a male looks on you with "evil eyes," then he sins (Jesus said so, Matt. 5:28), but so do you in such a situation, for by not wearing modest clothes, you have put a stumblingblock in front of him, and Jesus said "woe" to one who causes another to stumble (Luke 17:1,2).

Again, we repeat, men must also dress modestly and with shamefacedness, as there is one standard of morality for both men and women. Let us say the following so plainly that all will understand: We often read about Jesus being beside the sea or riding in a boat on the sea. Thus, to go to the sea or river is not sinful. However, it is wrong for a Christian to be anywhere, including the public beaches, in the presence of those of the opposite sex, and to not be dressed modestly. What about modern swimsuits, are they modest? Absolutely not! Any Christian who wears such swimming clothes in the presence of those of the opposite sex is going to cause them to have improper thoughts in their hearts, and thus both the one who looks with "evil eyes" and the one who dresses in such a swim suit stand in danger of eternal condemnation. That is how serious it is, and we are not joking!

Summer is not a time to stop assembling with the saints. Those who followed Jesus in the first century assembled (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; 16:2). Concerning our obligation to attend the services of the church, the Holy Spirit instructs us, *"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of our-*

selves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:24,25). It is plainly the will of the Lord God that His children not forsake the assemblies (of the church). The Lord Jesus declared, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..."* (Matt. 6:33).

What about each of us this summer? Will God still be first in our plans, like always, or will we forsake the assemblies of the saints? The Holy Spirit also exhorts us, *"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"* (Col. 3:2). Will we consider spiritual affairs as most important, including assembling with the saints, or will we instead do what we want to do?

I know that each summer, beginning about this time, many Christians throughout the Ukraine tell their brothers and sisters in Christ, "I will be gone for several weeks, and will be back by the end of August." What does that mean? I understand every word of that statement, but I cannot understand why a Christian would have a plan to not assemble with other saints to worship. What about worshipping the Lord of heaven during the summer? Is it not as important in the summer as it is in winter or spring? Without doubt, it is! If we are going to be gone this summer (or any other time), then we really need to do one of two things: 1) plan our trips and activities in advance so we can attend the services of a faithful congregation on the first day of the week in another city, or 2) go work in the garden or travel somewhere else, but come back to our home congregation in order to assemble with the saints each Sunday.

Brothers and sisters, we write these things not because we do not care for your souls, but rather just the opposite! The time has come for many of us to have in our spiritual diet not only milk, but also strong meat by which we can grow (Heb. 5:12-14). We wish for each of you a safe and enjoyable summer, but let us never forget our responsibilities to the Lord and His kingdom. May God richly bless each of you as you live for Him.

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BE NOT DECEIVED

Terry L. Mabery

Deception is a terrible thing. It can come from another or one can deceive himself. Regardless, it is terrible because it can bring such tragic results. One time, it almost cost my father his life. At the time, he was a lineman working for the St. Joe Lead Company. He told me he had climbed up onto some power lines and was straddling them while working. A fellow worker came along and told him to get down as carefully and quickly as he could because the lines were live. Dad said that there was no power to the lines, and to prove it he carefully climbed off the wires to a higher level. Then he dropped a large gauge copper wire across the wires he had been straddling. The copper wire melted quickly from the resulting short. Fortunately for dad, his clothing had insulated him enough that he had not been electrocuted. However, he climbed down from the high wires and was finished for the day. He was too weak and shook up to continue. Whether someone had accidentally told him wrong or he had made an improper assumption, he had been deceived into thinking he was safe — and it almost cost him his life. The greatest of all tragedies is if one is deceived spiritually, for it will cost him his eternal life.

One might deceive himself. Paul wrote, *“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise”* (1 Cor. 3:18). There are those who think they are wise in this world and do not listen to God’s word. Maybe it is because of their own desires. When something is desired enough, they convince themselves that it is correct and are hardened to the truth of God’s word. Paul follows the above statement with, *“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness”* (1 Cor. 3:19).

One might be deceived by his own pride. The Edomites were filled with pride and trusted in their natural surroundings, for their city was easily protected due to its position in the mountains. Obadiah wrote, *“The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground”* (Obadiah 1:3)? There are those who have become self-sufficient in their own eyes. They do not need God. They trust in their riches, their abilities, their accomplishments. Paul knew where his sufficiency was, *“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God”* (2 Cor. 3:5).

One might be deceived by others. Paul warned, *“Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience”* (Eph. 5:6). Some will listen to others, whether it is a trusted teacher, a preacher, friends or even parents. There is danger in doing so blindly (Matt. 15:14). Certainly we should study under and learn from those who can teach us God’s word. That is the way God intended (John 6:45). But each one has a responsibility to study for himself/herself. For even the most trusted can be wrong and deceive others, whether innocently or intentionally.

It is a tragic thing to be killed due to deception. Yet, death is just a departure from this life to another. If one is properly prepared through obedience to God, his death is not so tragic (2 Tim. 4:7-8). However, if one has been deceived spiritually, the departure from this life is tragic because that one departs with an unfounded peace and will enter an eternity of punishment (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:7-9). Paul sums it up as follows, *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting”* (Gal. 6:7-8).

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WHO ARE THE “UNCHURCHED?”

Chuck Pearson

When I was a student at ACU (1995-98), I often heard the word “unchurched” thrown around by students and faculty in the Bible and Missions departments. I was told by my professors that as evangelists, our goal was to reach the “unchurched” with the Gospel of Christ. My initial response was quite positive. After all, if a person is not part of the Lord’s body, his **church**, then that person is not a Christian, and needs to hear and obey the gospel! The problem is that this is *not* what the term “unchurched” means to ACU professors and other liberals!

“Unchurched” is a word used to describe those people who have had little or no “church experience.” The word describes the masses who were not raised with any kind of religious upbringing, are not familiar with the Bible, and who do not participate in any kind of religious activity. Since the United States has sometimes been described as a “post-Christian nation,” with religion taking a less and less active role in people’s lives, this group of people so labeled as “unchurched” make up quite a large segment of the population. The term is also used to describe people in foreign countries (usually in Africa and Asia) who have never been exposed to any form of “Christendom.” Again, a large group of people. According to the ACU Bible and Missions departments, and many liberals in general, these “unchurched” people should be the target for evangelism.

Hopefully, we can all see the problem with this approach. Giving priority in teaching the Gospel to this group labeled the “unchurched” fails to take into account a sizeable group of people who live in this country (and around the world) who have just as much need to hear and obey the gospel of Christ — **DENOMINATIONS!** People in denominations have been left out of the equation! And, we need to understand why. The people who use this term and believe that only the “unchurched” need to be taught, also believe that those who are in denominations are already saved, and have no need to hear the word preached!

In 1992, **Randy Mayeux** left the Lord’s church and formed his own congregation called Christ Church North

in Dallas, Texas. He patterned its worship and practices after Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church, incorporating the "Seeker Service" and many other unscriptural innovations. Mayeux stated that part of his goal was to reach the "unchurched." He also stated that he believed the Kingdom of God was much bigger than just the church of Christ, and that he couldn't accomplish what he wanted to within the traditional confines of the church. Mayeux has proven himself throughout the years to be a false teacher. His false doctrines and denominational beliefs have been well-documented and exposed. Yet Mayeux, like his yokefellows at ACU, uses the term "unchurched" to describe his target audience. Why? Because he and other liberals believe that the church of Christ is merely a segment of God's kingdom, and that people in denominations are also in a right relationship with God!

God's Word teaches contrary to this digressive nonsense. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). He also said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to **every creature**" (Mark 16:15). Our Lord said nothing about just going to the "unchurched!" Christ came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Those who are members of denominational groups are **LOST** and need to be saved just like those who embrace any and all religions who do not claim any connection with Jesus or have not embraced any form of religion at all. Christ established his church (Matt. 16:18), which is his body (Eph. 1:22-23). Those who are saved are added to it (Acts 2:47). Denominations are outside of Christ's body, and the people within those groups have not been added to his one, true church!

Brethren, be warned! The term "unchurched" as used by many is a code word for liberalism. Do not fall into this trap, thinking our efforts and resources are only needed to bring *some* of the lost to Christ! As Christians, we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). Let us carry out the commission of our Lord and Savior and preach the gospel to **ALL** who need to hear it (including denominations). This is necessary so that all people might obey his word and be saved!

P.O. Box 866
Ringgold, LA 71068

1 4 T H A N N U A L

Seek The Old Paths Lectureship

JULY 25-29, 1999

Always the 4th Sunday in July

Theme: *The Uniqueness Of The Church*

SUNDAY, JULY 25

- 9:30 *Chuck Northrop* — The Kingdom Of God/Heaven
10:30 *Jimmy Bates* — Putting the Kingdom First
7:00 *Garland Robinson* — Misconceptions of the Church
8:00 *Nat Evans* — The Church's Founder and Purchase Price

MONDAY, JULY 26

- 9:00 *Walter Pigg* — The Preparation and Establishment of the Church
10:00 *Richard Guill* — Solving Problems in the Church — Acts 15
11:00 *Mark Lindley* — The Vine and the Branches
1:30 *Kent Bailey* — Worship in Spirit — John 4:24
2:30 *Wayne Cox* — Types/Anti-types of the Church
7:00 *Gilbert Gough* — The New Birth
8:00 *Tom Bright* — The Work of the Church

TUESDAY, JULY 27

- 9:00 *Melvin Sapp* — The Church is Militant
10:00 *Ronnie Whittemore* — Worship in Truth #1 — Singing, Lord's Supper
11:00 *Windell Fikes* — The Church as Seen by the Prophets
1:30 *Jon Macon* — The Spiritual Nature of the Church
2:30 *Toney Smith* — Church Discipline
7:00 *Virgil Hale* — Instrumental Music and Singing Groups
8:00 *Charles Blair* — The Bride of Christ, the Church

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28

- 9:00 *David Paden* — Metaphors Used of the Church: Household, Family, Vineyard, Body, Kingdom, Temple
10:00 *Don Tate* — The Bible School Program of the Church
11:00 *Paul Powers* — Worship in Truth #2 — Giving, Teaching, Praying
1:30 *Bill Crossno* — The Influence of the Church — The Salt and Light of the World
2:30 *G. W. Childs* — The Organization of the Church
7:00 *Gary McDade* — Respect for Bible Authority and the Church
8:00 *Terry Joe Kee* — The Pillar and Ground of the Truth

THURSDAY, JULY 29

- 9:00 *Richard Carlson* — The One Body, One Fold, Non-denominational
10:00 *Jeff Bates* — The Church's People: Full of Faith and Works
11:00 *Robert Taylor* — Church History from the 1st Century Till Today
1:30 *Terry Roberts* — The Church and it's Non-observance of Religious Holidays
2:30 *Ed Floyd* — The Unity of the Church
7:00 *Ken Burleson* — 150 Years of Digression and the Present Apostasy
8:00 *Ed Casteel* — Its Eternal Destiny, Delivered to God

EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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sette tapes from the church.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

list for any articles in the future. Keep up with your good work. May God's blessing be always on you as you labor in his kingdom" ...**Peter Bang, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.** "I just wanted to take a few minutes to thank you for the wonderful job you are doing for the Lord. In a world where denominationalism is rampant, it is so refreshing to see someone standing for the Truth. Keep up the good work, and may God bless. Thank you all so much for your encouragement. It really means a lot to me" ...**Eric Simpson, North Augusta, SC.** "Hope all is well with you and that the work there in Corinth is going well. Just thought I would send you this note to let you know how much I enjoy reading *Seek the Old Paths* each month, and to let you know that after I read it I share it with others who are seeking after the truth. As always the articles that you include each month are scriptural and to the point. Too many people have gotten away from preaching the truth and exposing error, and I am afraid that because of this the church of our Lord is suffering badly. Please keep up the good work. Again thank you for your stand for the truth" ...**Danny Box, Cottondale, AL.** "I receive STOP and enjoy it very much and intend to order back copies. Thank you" ...**Don Stingle, Clearwater, FL.** "I receive your publication, and I get great enjoyment out of it" ...**Russell Tuttle, Mount Morris, MI.** "Greetings brethren. Just a little note to let you know of my appreciation for the paper *Seek The Old Paths.*" Keep up the good work. The silence of the scriptures on many topics, such as instrumental music, just doesn't seem to phase a lot of people. I am convinced that if Noah had used any wood other than what the Lord told him to use, the ark would have sunk. God didn't have to tell him, "Don't use mesquite, or oak or pine or cherry." He said, "Gopher wood," and that was good enough for Noah. When we are told to sing, that should be good enough for us. I used to play trumpet solos in the Methodist church and I sang in the choir. When it was pointed out to me what the Bible says, there was no question about it for me and my wife. The reason — we were searching for the truth. We obeyed the gospel the first Sunday in January of 1965 and a year and a half later I started trying to preach and I'm still trying. May the Lord continue to bless those souls who are looking for the truth of God's word, find it, obey it, and live the rest of their lives worshipping God in spirit and in truth" ...**Neal Michael, Springfield, CO.** "I preach for Kweikuma Church of Christ. The congregation is a young one with an average attendance of 100. I have been receiving your publication *Seek The Old Paths* since 1996 and I know you teach, uphold and stand for the truth. In order to help me defend New Testament Christianity and also combat false teachings amongst brethren with the help of *S.T.O.P.*, I usually pass on the paper to other preachers and church leaders. In fact, among the brotherhood publications I receive, *S.T.O.P.* is one of the best" ...**Ken Dadzie, Ghana, West Africa.** "Please don't stop sending your future issues. Your publication is informative and a good source of encouragement, knowing that somebody out there on the other side of the globe is fighting the same enemies we are fighting here in the Philippines. False teachers need a visa but false teaching can cross territorial boundaries without a passport. Your publication can go to different nations as well without a visa and passport to expose false teachers and their pernicious teachings. Thank you and I hope to see your excellent publication for a long, long time. More power" ...**George Villanueva, Manila, Philippines.** "May God richly bless you in your work" ...**Luke Finley, Clarksville, TN.** "Thanks for permission to use some of your articles. I appreciate the work you do for the Lord. Mississippi (as well as else where) needs the good influence of the congregation there in Corinth. God speed" ...**Brian Adkins.** "I have enjoyed receiving your newsletter and have learned so much about all the liberalism that is prevailing in our brotherhood. My husband and I moved to Augusta, GA last June not realizing we were moving into a hot-bed of false teaching and weak congregations. We are worshipping at a small, sound congregation without elders because our only other option is a larger congregation whose elders support Jubilee and our claim-to-fame false teacher **Joe Beam**, who is just a skip, hop and jump over the state line in North Augusta, SC. Our eyes have been opened by your newsletter and I want to commend you for all the fine work you, your congregation and elder-

ship are doing in the name of the truth. I have been looking for information specifically about **Winterfest**. I am trying to point a friend in the direction so that she can read articles about Winterfest to come to the conclusion that there is false teaching and denominational worship occurring at this function. If you can direct me in the right direction or know of any publications with specific articles related to Winterfest...please let me know. My husband and I are alumni of **Harding University** and we were saddened to see that Harding's Spring Seminar titled "Church and Family" has a full-page advertisement in the publication for the Tulsa International Soul Winning Workshop. Also, they have **Jeff Walling** as a keynote speaker for a summer youth forum. It looks as if our "christian education" options are becoming quite limited for our children. Thank you for your time and I am looking forward to hearing from you" ...**Betsy Lacy, Augusta, GA.** "Dear Brethren, We really wish to continue receiving *S.T.O.P.*, we have received it for more than 5 years and would like to express our sincere gratitude for all the good work you are doing spreading the Truth all over the world. Your magazine helped us a lot when we had some problems with women's translation and asked you and other faithful Christians in the USA for consultation 2 or 3 years ago. All the articles published by you are to the point and are used by us sometimes as a basis while preparing sermons, Wednesday studies and sometimes even at schools where some of our brethren and sisters teach English. God bless you and remember that you are always in the hearts and prayers of Christians" ...**Riga, Latvia.** "Please add me to your mailing list! For me, your publication is not only comforting but has also given me hope when I had almost none left. I am only 19 years old, yet I have seen two churches split as a result of the false doctrine that is making its way into the churches of Christ. After seeing such horrible, painful things, it is a great relief to read your paper and know that I am not alone in "fighting the good fight." I want to commend you, encourage you to ALWAYS seek the truth, and most of all thank you all for making a stand" ...**Aimee LeBlanc, Flower Mound, TX.**

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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.

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** / Associate Editor: **Jimmy Bates**

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