

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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Covington Road Church Further Fractures Fellowship

Joe W. Nichols

When any congregation of the Lord's church begins to practice things that are an evident departure from the teaching of the scriptures, we as brethren cannot help but be both concerned and sad.

We are instructed to "hold the pattern of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). We are to "speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions...perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). We express concern for our sister congregation, the Covington Road church in Natchez, in their recent decision to be involved with a Baptist denominational group known as "World Changers." Denominations are man-made institutions with earthly headquarters, manuals, organizations, plans of salvation, worships and works. They are not the church of the New Testament, as is evident from the Scriptures, and work contrary to the Truth of God. We as Christians are not to be "unequally yoked with unbelievers;" "but to come out from among them and be separate, saith the Lord" (2 Cor. 6:14,17). Those practicing Truth and those practicing error, simply put, just do not mix! Admittedly, the "World Changers" probably accomplished some good, but we are not to align ourselves nor support those who teach and practice false doctrine. This is the same reason we do not

support the **Salvation Army**.

Their past questionable actions involve:

1) continuous articles in their bulletin by **Rubel Shelly** who has radically left New Testament teaching and embraced denominational practices;

2) commending of *Image Magazine* a rank liberal publication;

3) recommending the *Tulsa Workshop*, a gathering of liberals;

4) bringing in liberals for meetings and workshops;

5) using a Baptist preacher's wife for a "Stress Seminar;"

6) encouraging attendance at the "Nashville Jubilee" where our youth are corrupted doctrinally to accept instrumental music and other denominational practices; and

7) attending Youth Forums and "Small Group Training" with a known liberal church.

Liberals disregard plain Bible teaching and substitute their will in place of the will of God — "Take heed lest there be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8).


In receiving the *Covington Road News* bulletins and being informed of the coming of the "World Changers" to Natchez, one would consider them to be our Christian youth from churches across the country. They

were not! They were **Southern Baptist youth**. The bulletins were deceptive in that this was never mentioned. It was through the local newspaper that we learned that the youth were **Southern Baptists**. The June issue of the bulletin says, "Let us plan, pray and work for this good effort...." (We acknowledge the work to be good work but the fellowship is unscriptural and sinful. We are to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). The following July bulletins state: "We encourage any — especially our youth — to be involved in this manual labor on behalf of others and to God's glory." "We look forward to this opportunity to serve the needs of others in our community: may God bless our efforts..."

In addressing the results of the "World Changers" work in Natchez, the July 21 bulletin says, "We want to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to Denny (Denny Calloway is the preacher!) for organizing the meals for the "World Changers" this week. He did an excellent job putting it all together including making purchases, picking up meals and delivering them to the worksite. Thanks again Denny, for a job well done."

Dan Huggins of Ellisville, MS, whom we have known for many

(Continued on page 3)
Covington Road...



Editorial... Lectureship Report

Our 11th Annual Seek The Old Paths Lectureship is now over. Needless to say, it was a great success. Any time the Gospel is preached it is a success. We certainly enjoyed a great spiritual feast. Thirty four Gospel preachers delivered 36 Gospel sermons. The application was made to today's world as it should be. Many preachers today fail to make the application to their audience. There were no "uncertain sounds" here as is the norm in many pulpits and lectureships today. Dear reader, how is it where you attend?

Visitors who signed the register came from 16 states and 1 foreign country (Tasmania, Australia). Of the 36 sessions, the average attendance was 135. The highest attended session was 229 and the lowest was 90. Only three of the 36 sessions had less than 100 in attendance. There were 357 people who signed the guest register.

It's sad and tragic that no more brethren from our immediate area came than did (though several did come). It's especially sad that I did not see any elders and only two preachers in this county that came for only one session. How is it that faithful men and women will plan their vacation and drive for hundreds of miles to attend a faithful lectureship when others can drive a few minutes and do not? When you don't love the Truth such will be the case. The land is filled with many who find time to go to Gattlinburg, Branson, Opryland, Six Flags, Jubilee, Tulsa, Abilene, Lipscomb, Harding, etc., for recreation and have their ears tickled with soft-soaping compromise and lies of the devil, but would not even consider sitting at the feet of great men of God and hearing the eternal Word preached. What will they do in the day of judgment?

The good ladies of East Corinth again did a superb job in feeding

those who attended. We fed approximately 130 each day. Food was running over. The church of the first century knew well and enjoyed this period of fellowship together (1 Cor. 5; Jude 12). What a joy it is to visit new and old friends and be with brethren of "like precious faith." Wish you were here!

Next year, the lectureship will be **July 27-31, 1997**. The theme will be centered around what was said to the church at Colosse. Mark your calendar now and plan to be with us.

I asked brother Gilbert Gough to write a paragraph about the lectureship. What he said follows:

"It was a tremendous joy to attend and participate in the eleventh annual **Seek the Old Paths Lectureship** of the East Corinth church of Christ. Words cannot express the appreciation I have for Garland Robinson, director of the lectureship and preacher of the East Corinth church and for **Wallace Benjamin, Earl Case and Edmond King**, the faithful elders of this great congregation. The joy of this lectureship was in the fellowship I had with brethren of like faith. To be of the same mind and judgment strengthens and binds the fellowship we have in Christ. It is a morale booster to be with brethren who love one another and are not suspicious of one another. The prayers uttered and the songs sung were uplifting to every soul who attended. The joy of the lectureship was in the truth which was taught by godly, sound, gospel preachers. They proclaimed the truth in love, in simplicity, and in power concerning the seven churches of Asia. They brought out principles that the church today needs to hear and obey. What a thrill it was to hear the lessons of encouragement and instruction. So, I look forward to next year's lectureship on *The Church at Colossae*."

Below are some unsolicited com-

ments we have received.

LECTURESHIP COMMENTS

We want to express our sincere thanks to all the ladies for the extra work and effort in providing delicious meals for us during the lectureship. It was a very uplifting week as we heard so many good lessons on Revelation. May God continue to bless the leadership in Corinth as they strive to lead in the ways of God. A special thanks in allowing me to preach on Thursday. It was good experience and I enjoyed it very much. Take care and hope to see you all next year.

*Don & Lynda Tate
Ferriday, LA*

Dear elders Benjamin, Case and King; Tanya, Adam, Abby and I want to say "thanks" for such a wonderful lectureship this past week. We appreciate your leading the congregation in this event and the sacrifices you made to make such possible. Thanks also to Garland for doing such a superb job in directing the lectureship, as well as everything else he does at East Corinth. It was an honor for us to attend the lectureship and a special honor to be asked to speak on it. We look forward to supporting it with our presence next year, Lord willing. Again, thanks for an edifying week and keep up the good work! Godspeed!

*Wayne, Tanya, Adam and Abby Cox
Verona, MS*

Wonderful, great, inspiring, instructive, challenging, the adjectives could be multiplied to describe the lectureship this year. I look forward to this event each year and I am already anxiously anticipating next year when we will study Colossians. It should be a rich experience indeed.

Let me express my thanks to Garland and to the elders for including me on the program as one of the speakers. I also thank all who worked so diligently to prepare for this program and to make its execution almost flawless. I know it requires the cooperation of many people to put on such an event. I don't want to forget the ladies either. Their willingness to provide us a delicious lunch each day is greatly appreciated.

*Richard Guill
Cleveland, TN*

Thanks so much for a great lectureship! It was really good, a spiritual re-charge, to be fed the Word of Truth, to KNOW about the seven churches of Asia, to be in fellowship with sound brethren of like precious faith, to be fed great, tasty, physical food, to meet brethren that are contending for the faith, and to meet brethren that I haven't met before, and so forth goes the thanks of being able to be there. Looking forward (Lord willing) for next year's lectureship. The elders here, were pleased to hear about the lectureship. Keep up the good work for His Cause there!

*Milton Mathers
West Jefferson, NC*

Appreciate so much the hospitality shown to our preacher, Milton Mathers, at the recent **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship. Please thank the good elder that opened his home to provide Milton a place to stay. He said the lectureship was great. Keep up the good work!

*Mark Miller
West Jefferson, NC*

Just a note to express my gratitude for the very fine lectureship. I enjoyed the fellowship, the hospitality, the firm stand for the truth and the outstanding lessons presented. Thanks so much for the opportunity you gave me to present the needs of the church here in Clinton. I was really overwhelmed with the amount of concern for the work here that was exhibited by those present. It will always stand out in my mind as a good demonstration of true Christianity. Again, my thanks for a job well done.

*Robert Oliver
Clinton, NC*

Sheila, Jason and I enjoyed attending the **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship this year. I do not attend with intentions to speak, but thank you for giving me the opportunity to present a lesson this year. It was a great experience to be on the same program with such outstanding gospel preachers. The speakers had well prepared lessons. The theme of "The Seven Churches of Asia" was an excellent topic and much background information is presented in the lectureship book. I hope to see you at the lectureship next year.

*Everett Spencer
Krypton, KY*

Covington Road...

(Continued from page 1)

years, being the son of Bill Huggins who labored in past years for the Natchez church, was employed as guest speaker for July 14. Some of the "World Changers," according to the church bulletin, were expected to be present for the morning Bible Study and Worship. We do not know if brother Dan was fully aware of what the circumstances were, but we would only hope that he would not knowingly encourage anything contrary to sound doctrine.

As always with those who enter such fellowships, contrary to 2 Cor. 6:14-17, to justify the interaction, scripture is perverted. Brother Calloway uses Mark 9:38-41 in his defense. This scripture does not imply that the apostles and the man under scrutiny were not believing, teaching and practicing the same

thing. They simply did not know of him and his work. He was working for the Lord and not contrary to Him. This scripture certainly does not authorize nor justify fellowship with denominations who work against the Lord — "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth" (Matt. 12:30). It is clear that the **unsound practices** in the Covington Road Church are reaching alarming proportions and are **further fracturing** their fellowship with the saints in the Natchez, MS, area. We would admonish them to get back to the "Old Paths," and to regain the soundness they were established upon in the past — the Word Of God! There is a grave responsibility placed upon us by the Lord in maintaining **unity and love of brethren.**

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THE HOME FRONT

Jim E. Waldron

When the time came for the construction of the tabernacle, which was to be the center of Jewish worship for over 1400 years, God required that Moses, "make all things according to the pattern shown to (him) on the mountain" (Heb. 3:5). The Holy Spirit has enjoined upon us in the New Testament age, that we, "hold fast to the pattern of sound words" found in the gospel (2 Tim. 1:13). There are two most urgent reasons why this must be done, not only abroad, but especially on the home front. First, if we do not, many congregations will simply disappear into the jumble of American denominationalism. They will become just do-your-own-thing community churches. Secondly, such will destroy the great potential American Christians have for evangelizing the world. Either Jesus Christ of Nazareth is "the way, the truth, and the life" or He is not.

God has truly blessed America. Without fear of contradiction we can say that the people of no country have ever been blessed with the opulence we have in our free land. There is such an enormous difference between our purchasing power, and that of billions in the third world countries, that we, for less than \$100 a month, can support and/or train a gospel preacher abroad. Yet, if we lose our convictions concerning the pattern for the body of Christ we will not care about lost souls at home, let alone abroad. The "you are okay, I am okay" philosophy of standard American religion simply kills the urgency of converting sinners of any kind whether foreign or domestic. Beloved, let us get back to basics, let us "seek the old paths" (Jer. 6:16).

*P.O. Box 171
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Note: Brother Waldron has served for more than 15 years abroad in preacher training schools in Asia, Australia, and the former Soviet Union.

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LECTURESHIP VIEWPOINT

Arlis D. Richardson

...who can deny that any attending the lectures could leave without the realization that they do not stand alone in faithfully adhering to the Word of God.

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Seven different times this statement is repeated in Revelation 2 and 3. Although the message was primarily to seven churches in Asia, the messages are just as timely and applicable to the present generation. Thus, in planning for the Annual **Seek The Old Paths Bible Lectureship** in Corinth, Mississippi, July 28-August 1, the elders of the East Corinth Church of Christ wisely planned five full days of exploration of the messages presented therein. From the time the first lecture concerning the historical background for the studies was presented by brother Windell Fikes Sunday morning until the final “amen” was uttered after brother Charles Leonard’s study of the rewards of the righteous late Thursday night, it had to be admitted that not only were the messages to the seven churches of Asia most applicable today, but also that there are still some very sound brethren throughout the land who are quite capable of proclaiming God’s revealed message, and who will do so!

Although much of the things we hear today center around many unfaithful brethren spreading false doctrine and serving Satan thereby, it was like a fresh breath of air to hear some 34 faithful preachers proclaim the “truth” as found in the New Testament. It reminds me of the situation with Elijah as recorded in 1 Kings 19:14, *“And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left: and they seek my life, to take it away.”* In view of the liberalism and modernism which appears so strongly entrenched in far too many areas today, I, as well as many of our

readers perhaps, can well identify with the prophet Elijah. However, note the words spoken to this great prophet by God, *“Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him”* (1 Kings 19:18).

God, of course, has not spoken directly to me nor anyone else today the way he did to Elijah. However, who can deny that any attending the lectures could leave without the realization that they do not stand alone in faithfully adhering to the Word of God. There are still many preaching brethren who are standing solidly where John stood when penning the Holy Spirit inspired messages. Each speaker addressed those assembled as if his life, and that of those listening, depended upon him, and indeed this is so. I, of course, am not speaking of “physical life”, but rather “eternal life.” The messages to the seven churches of Asia were presented by the Holy Spirit inspired John as an example to the church throughout the world and for all time. I dare say that none in their right mind could have sat through this week of lectures and gone away with an indifferent attitude concerning the church for which Christ died.

Another very important part of the lectureship was congregational singing each night. It was once again proven that indeed human voices blended together in song can be the sweetest music on earth. Such puts to shame the argument that some “mechanical” device is necessary to have good singing. Even if that were so, which it isn’t, the Bible still teaches “singing only” is authorized (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). And, thanks to several men in attendance capable of leading, this likewise proved quite a lectureship experience.

Then there were the volunteers for prayer and song leading during each lecture. It was my task to

round up volunteers for this. We are pleased to be able to report that some 60 men made my Job easier by helping. And, even though the task of organizing and conducting the lectureship fell mostly upon the shoulders of the elders, brother Garland Robinson (East Corinth’s preacher), and the scheduled speakers, without the “spur of the moment” volunteers the lectures would have been less successful.

But for a moment, let me direct your attention to another important aspect of these lectures. It has been my privilege to attend nearly every lectureship conducted by faithful brethren in Northern Mississippi since 1986. But this year, having recently moved to Corinth and placed membership with the sound East Corinth congregation, it was my privilege to also see the amount of work inherent in running such a lectureship. Little did I realize just how much work is put forth “behind the scenes” to make the visiting guests feel most welcome and comfortable and to insure that everything moves along smoothly. Little did I realize how closely the elders are observing everything to insure that things are as God would have it. I feel it proper to help our readers understand the vast amount of time and energy the East Corinth Church of Christ puts forth each year. Its elders are to be commended and have been — likewise its preacher. But what many may not realize is the vast amount of work by the East Corinth membership before and after the actual lectureship week. For instance, just one week before the event the elders announced a Saturday work day. There was need to expand the parking area and for new hook up facilities for those coming in Recreational Vehicles, as well as much hauling of furniture, trash, etc. I did not get a count, but I did note that a large percentage of the men showed up. However, due to delays by certain

contractors, it was necessary to plan another day of work. Only three days before the lectures, the new parking facilities, complete with water and electricity for the “camping” brethren, were in place. A tent to protect diners from the elements was in place by the time the lectures began as well as tables and chairs. During the week itself, the elders and members were often seen moving furniture, delivering messages, and preparing coffee and donuts early each morning for those who preferred this to a regular breakfast, etc.

Another important aspect of the Corinth lectures is the role its women play in making the week especially meaningful. They worked hard on cleaning, seeing that visitors had name tags, planning meals, etc., before the actual lectures began. Some were overheard to say their work was especially “fulfilling” for those who attended. The reference, of course, was to the wonderful meals served in the preacher’s home each day. And, what patience the preacher and his wife exhibited, as in the past, as hundreds of feet paraded through their kitchen and dining room at a time when the special pressure of the lectureship was upon them. Angelita, Garland’s wife, is to be especially commended! I know that much planning and preparation went into this and that even some who were not previously scheduled to help, volunteered to do so at other than scheduled times during the week.

Time and space does not allow for all I would like to say concerning the wonderful week of spiritual and physical feasting in the Crossroads city of Mississippi. Suffice it to say that anyone who was unable to attend missed an insight into what Heaven must surely be like. However, should God decide to let this world as we know it stand for another year, the lectureship is scheduled for the fourth Sunday in July, 1997 (July 27-31). I understand that plans are already in motion to center the theme around what was said to the church at Colosse. Mark your calendars now and plan on being with faithful brethren from throughout the

world. Several who work in other nations were in attendance at this year’s lectures — and one faithful brother from “down under.” I speak, of course, of the land of Australia.

God willing, we will all meet again in Corinth, Mississippi, next July. Pray for another successful lectureship and help make it so by your presence.

Promoting False Doctrine

Jerry W. Joseph

We receive many announcements about gospel meetings, lectureships, workshops, etc., being conducted and asking for our help in promoting such activities. We do not and cannot promote all such activities in the church bulletin, from the pulpit, nor in any other way. It is amazing how some brethren will claim how “sound” they are in the faith, then turn around and advertise and promote in their bulletin a brother who is “unsound” or an event filled with “unsound” speakers.

When we advertise in the bulletin or from the pulpit certain events taking place, we are encouraging others to attend. We are promoting such as “a good thing” to attend. When people say they are not encouraging and promoting an event when they advertise and announce it, they are just fooling themselves.

In February of this year, the elders of the Highland Church of Christ in Memphis invited Rubel Shelly to be one of their speakers on a program for the Christian Student Center. His false teaching is clearly revealed in books and articles he writes as well as by listening to some of his lessons on cassette tape. We are not even going to try to figure out why he was invited to speak in the first place. What we want to emphasize about this is that some congregations who claim to be loyal to the Word advertised and promoted this event in their bulletins and by other means. Something is wrong! When we see advertisements in bulletins, magazines, and other publications promoting events such as the “Tulsa Workshop,” “Pepperdine Lectures,” or the “Jubilee” in Nashville with its line-up of “who’s-who” among liberal teachers, something is wrong. Shame on those who uphold, promote, support, and encourage such activities.

Does Ephesians 5:11 mean anything anymore? *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”* Some would have us think that 2 John 9-11 has lost its meaning. Is it still wrong to bid God speed to one that *“transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ?”* YES! YES! To do so is to become *“partakers of his evil deeds.”* Have we forgotten Romans 16:17 where Paul states clearly that we are to *“mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them?”*

Instead of making excuses trying to justify the use of false teachers, let us *“mark them”* (Rom. 16:17). In stead of advertising and announcing false teachers and their doctrine, let us *“avoid them”* (Rom. 16:17) and *“admonish”* them (2 Thess. 3:15). Instead of encouraging false teachers, let us *“expose them”* (Eph. 5:11). Instead of receiving them (2 John 10), let us *“restore”* them (James 5:19-20). Instead of supporting false teachers, and their doctrine by condoning, rallying around, promoting and upholding them, let us *“speak the truth in love”* (Eph. 4:15) so that they may be convicted of sin, repent of sin, push it aside, and be united once again in fellowship with God (1 John 1:6-7).

We cannot support, uphold, condone, encourage, promote (by word of mouth or way of life) that which is false doctrine without becoming guilty ourselves. We must stand always for that which is good (1 Thess. 5:21) and against anything that is detrimental to the cause of Christ. Because of our love for God, for his Word, for the church, for our souls, and the souls of others, let us be ready always to declare, defend and do God’s will (1 Peter 3:15; Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:2-4; Jude 3; Rom. 12:1-2; Titus 2:11-12).

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IGNORANT ELDERS AND LOCKJAWED PREACHERS

Richard Guill

Knowing that the devil would do all he could to destroy the church of the Lord, God not only gave ample warnings in the New Testament against his devices, but God also placed within the church two key front-line defenses to guard against such attacks. Those two front-line defenses are the eldership and the preacher. When both fulfill their Divine obligations the church can withstand any attack, either from without or within. When either fails, much trouble is sure to follow and many will suffer the loss of their soul.

In view of false teachers who would plague God's people, either from within the church or from without, elders are charged to watch for such, warn the flock about them, and stop the mouths of such before they devour the flock (Acts 20:28-31). *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch* (emphasis mine, RG), *and remember, that by the space of three years I CEASED NOT TO WARN EVERY ONE* (emphasis mine, RG) *night and day with tears."* Paul left Titus in Crete to *"set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every*



city" (Titus 1:5). Paul gave Titus a list of the qualifications elders must meet. Among those qualifications was *"holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince (convict or refute) the gainsayers"* (verse 9). The reason is given: *"whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not"* (verse 11). Thus they were charged: *"Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith"* (verse 13).

Surely, anyone can see that elders must not be ignorant either of the scriptures or of the efforts and devices of those "wolves in sheep's clothing" who would devour the flock. Sadly, many elderships today are very deficient in both requirements.

Although elders certainly have the personal responsibility to study the word and to know about false teachers and their doctrines, to watch diligently lest they slip in, and be prepared to refute them and shut their mouths, at least a part of the blame for elders' ignorance in such matters may be due to preachers who are afflicted with "lockjaw." They never warn elders about such false teachers in the brotherhood, in

the immediate area, or in the congregation. They certainly don't warn the congregation of such. However, a faithful preacher CANNOT BE SILENT about such matters! In Acts 20:31, note that Paul said, *"by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."*

When Paul wrote Timothy, he warned him that *"some shall depart from the faith,"* and then added, *"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ"* (1 Tim. 4:1-6). Then, again in 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Paul warned of some who would turn aside from truth and unto fables. Timothy was charged to *"preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine,"* and to *"watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry"* (emphasis mine, RG).

The truth of God is such a precious commodity that the faithful preacher cannot stand by silently while some pervert it and lead precious souls into error that will condemn their souls. Rather, like Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15, he will engage in dissension and disputation with them. And, also like them, faithful preachers today will still *"give place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you"* (Gal. 2:5). ANY PREACHER not willing to watch for, warn about, and contend earnestly against and with such false teachers ought to get out of the business! He will not only lose his own soul, but will be greatly responsible for many others who will lose their souls as well.

Elders who are not willing to make the effort to know the scriptures and about the false teaching and practices that threaten the faith, and who do not possess the courage to meet these head-on and stop their mouths, ought to resign! Perhaps the congregation has others

4th Annual "Labourers Together With God" Lectureship

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24 Lessons on Stewardship

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more qualified to lead. As those who are charged to watch for souls and who must give account (Heb. 13:17), what will you say on Judgment Day if you have allowed wolves to enter the flock and devour the sheep? Will you plead, "Lord, I didn't know!"

Many congregations of the Lord's church which do not yet have false teachers in their midst and are not yet engaging in activities which have no biblical authority, are actually paving the way for such, sometimes without even realizing it! Let me illustrate by two or three examples:

First, through youth programs and rallies. In genuine concern for their young people and wanting to provide them with activities which will interest them, build them up spiritually, and help prevent losing them, many elderships allow the young people to participate in activities without considering whether those activities are scriptural or whether those leading in such are sound in the faith. Many times the youth become involved in activities at such youth rallies that the congregation would not permit at the local congregation, at least not at the present time. But what's going to happen in a few years when those teens grow up and began to call for such things to be included in the regular services? I continue to get bulletins and brochures from our area and other areas announcing congregations' participation in some youth rally which features "contemporary singing groups", "drama groups" and such like. Do the elders of these congregations ever bother to consider if such things are scriptural? Does it make any difference that many of these groups and speakers at such youth rallies have openly fellowshipped false teachers and their programs both in the church and in denominationalism?

Second, what about class literature which actually contains false doctrine being used in the educational program of the church? Often elderships could not tell you what the children are studying in class. Add to that the church library where books that will be checked out and read by trusting and unsuspecting brethren are being filled with books written by some of the most liberal brethren in the brotherhood. Do

elderships, charged with the responsibility to "feed the flock" (1 Peter 5:2), not realize how many will likely be poisoned by such and that it makes acceptance of such men and their doctrines easier in the congregation?

Third, look at the men invited for a gospel meeting or some special function, or the promotion of such events in other congregations. Sometimes the preacher invited is a known false teacher, has been marked, proven and exposed as such, and is supposed to be "avoided" (Rom. 16:17). However, some congregations will still have such men and other congregations which would not actually invite such men themselves will announce and promote such meetings at another congregation. Then there are also some preachers who may not be charged with teaching false doctrine, but who want to fellowship both the liberal and the conservative brethren. They will fellowship the liberals and their works, but also expect conservative brethren to allow them into their pulpits without a word of censure or criticism. Are such men "sound in the faith?" Do elderships not realize that brethren can be guilty of sin and error by association with those who are known to be false teachers? Romans 16:17 says we are to "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Ephesians 5:11 says, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; but rather reprove them." False teaching is certainly a work of darkness, not light! Second John 9-11 instructs us that such false teachers are not to be invited into our house or given greeting or in any way be bidden god-speed. The warning is given that to do so makes one guilty of their evil deeds!

Therefore, why would any eldership, if they knew it, invite such false teachers, or those who have thus compromised and fellowshipped such, into the congregation for a meeting or any other activity? Sometimes the answer to that question is that the eldership is ignorant of the danger, or of the participation of someone in such things, or both! And, the reason for such ignorance is usually because the elders have not

kept themselves informed of such matters, and the preacher is afflicted with "lockjaw" and will not open his mouth to warn against and oppose such things!

Brethren, what a congregation is now, and especially what it will be ten, fifteen, or twenty years from now is being decided RIGHT NOW in the leadership of its elders and the stance of its preacher. In the apostasy of the previous century, we lost eighty-five percent of our congregations to the digression. It was virtually because of the same problem. How many of our congregations will be lost to the current digression that is assailing our brotherhood? Elders and preachers, will you be responsible for saving or losing your congregation? How many souls will perish if you fail to take a firm stand and "fight the good fight of faith?"

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

Pagel, Joplin, MO. "I would like to be put on your mailing list. I so enjoy your articles you write in the Seibles Road Church of Christ bulletin. I really believe that all church of Christ preachers should stick to the Bible as it is. Truth is truth when it comes from the Word of God. **Larry West** and all others should be withdrawn from. I would like to say for you to keep up the great work for the Lord who made it possible for us to be true Christians" ...*Bill Atkinson, Cullman, AL.* "Please mail this copy to someone else. Read the Bible and you can understand. Take nobody word. The Bible will stand for itself. It is to much confusion in the churches" ...*Edith Nash, Baxter, TN.* "A paper that I appreciate tremendously" ...*John David Wright, Mt. Pleasant, TX.* "Keep up the good work" ...*Charlie Turner, Rock Island, TN.* "We have just received the August, 1996, copy of *Seek The Old Paths*. Peggy and I appreciate you having added us to your mailing list several months ago; however, we would appreciate you removing our names from your mailing list, as we **strongly** believe that the cost would be more beneficial for the "cause of Christ" if the copy were mailed to a non-Christian. We believe that there is too much time and funds being spent on bulletins and other mail-outs to members, when more consideration should be given to converting the world" ...*C. Richard Dobbins, Corinth, MS.* **[EDITOR'S NOTE:** We have mentioned before and will do so again that *Seek The Old Paths* is not intended for non-Christians. It's design is to *strengthen, edify, exhort and warn* members of the church of the current apostasy among churches of Christ. If such is not done, (1) faithful members of the church may be caught in the trap of error, being unaware of the slyness and devices of the devil, (2) Christians in error, being rebuked through this means of spreading the gospel, may not repent, and (3) in the end, non-members will not be taught the Truth because there will be no faithful members of the church to teach them. When liberals evangelize, their converts are no better off than they were before because they have not been converted to the Truth of the Gospel to begin with. They are made "twofold more the child of hell" (cf. Matt. 23:15). Of all the epistles and letters of the New Testament after the establishment of the church, not one was addressed to non-members. They all addressed problems in the church and the world. To follow their example (1 Cor. 11:1), we must do likewise. Some of the contents of *Seek The Old Paths* (namely, those things that have to do with error in the church and those teaching and defending it) is no more pleasant for readers to read than it is for us to discuss, but nonetheless, it is every Christian's duty to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3) no matter how unpleasant we may deem the task. The printed page is just one of the means (methods) at our disposal of obeying Jude 3. The question is, "how or through what means are you, dear reader, obeying the command to "earnestly contend for the faith?" Or, are you obeying it at all? One of the problems is that few are obeying it! —gmr] I am sending a check to help with your expenses for S.T.O.P. I enjoy the paper very much. Keep up the good work standing for the truth. May God bless you" ...*Beatrice Womack, Marion, NC.* "Have been enjoying S.T.O.P. for years. Your staff writers are faithful enough to speak the truth and expose those who do not. Keep up the good work" ...*Hughlin Word, Russellville, AR.* "Thanks for *Seek The Old Paths*. Appreciate you" ...*Bobby Erwin, Weatherford, TX.* "May I again thank you for the excellent journal. It is balanced and informative. Literature like this should be widely spread throughout the brotherhood. Keep up the good work for the master. Please find enclosed a small donation for the distribution of *Seek The Old Paths*" ...*Ian McPherson, Tasmania, Australia.* "Please be advised that I do not wish to receive your newsletter" ...*Scott Songer, Tallahassee, FL.* "Please send me *Seek The Old Paths*. I have enjoyed reading it" ...*W. B. Foster, Columbia, TN.* "I am sending a check to be used for publishing S.T.O.P. This is a much needed message for all Christians today. We pray that we all will be fighters of the Faith. May God's richest blessings be on all his defenders. I receive my copy from the Sandy Hook Church of Christ. We appreciate your efforts" ...*Kitty Wood, Mt. Pleasant, TN.* "I would very much appreciate it if you would send me S.T.O.P." ...*James Kinard, Tallassee, AL.*

"I receive S.T.O.P. and enjoy it very much. Thank you for sticking to the truth!" ...*Melanie Pinkston, Swartz Creek, MI.* "I will be glad if my name will be listed. May the work done by your hands proceed ceaselessly" ...*Lucas Simon Mphande, Kalopa, Malawi.* "Thank you and God bless" ...*Scott & Angie*

"A great work! I appreciate it so much" ...*Ethel Blevins, Shady Valley, TN.* "Am sending just a little to help on postage. I sure do enjoy the paper. You all stand for the truth and we need a lot more like you. In Christian love" ...*Marguerite Johnson, Coldwater, MS.* "I am so grateful for the voice you add to those calling for a return to the Old Paths. The times in which we live are doctrinally perilous. We need the plain preaching you are doing with your great work" ...*Jerry Brewer, Clinton, OK.* "Thanks for a job well done" ...*Thomas Holiday, Cherokee, AL.* "The articles are true to the Word of God, the Bible. Keep up the good work of "contending for the faith." Thanks for the back issues. I read them all and are excellent" ...*NC.* "Thank you so much for sending S.T.O.P. I look forward to receiving it very much. It is without doubt one of, if not THE, best in the brotherhood. I think the issue of July 1996 is excellent, and certainly fulfills the admonition of Jude 3. Unfortunately, it seems that there are far more liberals than faithful men in the church. Ecclesiastes 10:1,2 is not to be challenged. The enclosed check is to help with the postage for mailing. I pass it on, and we love it. Keep up this good work, it is needed. Yours in the faith" ...*Alfred Chetham, San Lorenzo, CA.* "*Seek The Old Paths*" is an inspiration to us. Thanks. May the Lord continue to bless you" ...*Charles Copeland, Statenville Church of Christ, Lake Park, GA.* "Please take my name off your mailing list" ...*Martha Oakley, Tucson, AZ.* "Stop sending me this publication. I did not request it, and do not want it" ...*David M. Smith, Nitro, WV.* "I would like to be placed on your mailing list for receiving *Seek The Old Paths* monthly magazine. I saw my first and loved it, July '96! God bless you and keep up the good work" ...*Jimmie Walker, Irving, TX.* "Once again I'd like to commend you on *Seek The Old Paths*. I have really enjoyed reading it very much. Keep up the sound doctrine. We need something to hold on to in these days of spiritual turmoil" ...*Tommie McCravy, Brent, AL.* "*Seek The Old Paths*" has been such a blessing to me as I pray for boldness to teach! May the Lord continue to bless the seed that you sow" ...*Marietta, GA.*

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; II Peter 2:1; II Peter 1:12. All mail received may be published unless otherwise noted. Articles are also welcomed.

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