

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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THE CONFORMED CHURCH OF CHRIST?

Richard Guill

The church in the twenty-first century must be no different from the church in previous centuries, unless it is in moving closer than ever to the divine pattern, rather than farther away from it

The church of Christ in any community, if it is faithful to its Head, and is abiding by His word, will "stick out like a sore thumb." It conspicuously does not conform to the mold of the other churches in the community. There is no fellowship with the various churches in either their works or their worship. When the various denominations band together for a particular community project, the church of Christ will likely be the only religious group not involved. When the denominational "pastors" get together and form their "ministerial alliance," the "church of Christ preacher" (their terminology), refuses to join the alliance or to attend their meetings. "What an odd bunch that church of Christ group is!"

Sadly, however, that is no longer true of many who wear the name "church of Christ." These congregations are led by preachers who are self-labeled as "progressive thinkers," "scholars," and as "front-runners." These congregations have "elders" (really just spineless imitations thereof) who themselves are led, and allow the congregation to be led, by these preachers into fellowship with denominations. These preachers will begin by participating with the denominations in their "special services," and then it will

not be long until the denominational "pastor" will be invited to speak to the church as well. Soon there is a "joint service" between the two groups.


In such churches the ordained worship practiced for so many years now becomes a source of embarrassment and efforts begin to "jazz-up" their worship by incorporating things seen in denominations. Out goes the old traditional songs and in comes new "contemporary music," even with instrumental music many times. Preaching and teaching is dull, so we bring in "drama." All of this is very pleasing to the carnal mind and entertaining. Before long each act is being applauded and often singing is accompanied with rhythmic hand-clapping. The "change agents" who are initiating such changes are not satisfied with the church as it has been through the ages. Especially distasteful to them is the "isolationist attitude" and they are determined to change the church of the coming century into one that better "fits in" with the denominations in the community and is "user-friendly" to a generation that has grown tired of the old ways. When you observe what and how these congregations change, you can see that this is an accurate picture of what is happening.

It is not easy for individuals or congregations to be non-conformists. It is much easier to blend in and conform. The world, under Satan's guidance, continues to pressure us to conform, conform, conform. That's why Paul warned the Romans, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). The church of the Lord is "sanctified" (set apart, separated) from the world and is expected to maintain that separation (Eph. 5:25-26; 2 Cor. 6:14-18).

Israel of old was often afflicted with the same evil attitude. In the days of the Judges she cast her eyes around to the other nations, all of which had kings over them, realized that she was the non-conformist, and began to clamor for a change which would make her like all the rest. "Make us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5). At a later time some "change agents" had already been at work among them and they had departed from the old ways and adopted some more "pleasing" ways. God's prophet was given a message for them from God. Jeremiah called out, "Thus saith the Lord,

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Conformed Church...



The A.D. 70 System Of Kingism #1 (The Church)

Garland M. Robinson

The task before me in this series of articles is to examine the fallacies of the "Max King Doctrine." Some may yet be unaware what the "Max King Doctrine" is. Briefly stated, it is the fanciful theory (heresy) that all the things for which we look to occur in the future have already come to pass. Those things that brethren have, since the first century, believed and taught (which the Bible so clearly sets forth) that will occur at the Lord's second coming, were all fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in the year of 70 A.D.

As wild a dream as your imagination will allow, can you believe the Lord's second coming is in the distant past, not the future? Can you believe the resurrection of all the dead has already occurred? Will you likewise believe that the judgment and the end of the world had its fulfillment in the first century? Also, will you permit yourself to believe the church, the kingdom prophesied throughout the Old Testament, was not really established on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 in its fullness, glory and power? This heresy says the church began in 70 A.D. when the city of Jerusalem was conquered and destroyed!

BACKGROUND

The subject of this study is known by a number of terms and phrases: The A.D. 70 Doctrine, Realized Eschatology, Kingism or the Max King Doctrine. Each of these are all designations of this wild, reckless and foolhardy heresy.

It is referred to as the "A.D. 70 Doctrine" because it seeks its fulfillment in the year A.D. 70. It is claimed that all the Bible foretold to

occur in the future was fulfilled in A.D. 70 when the city of Jerusalem was destroyed.

"Realized Eschatology" has to do with the fulfillment of "final" or "last" things.

- a. The word "eschatology" is a compound word of two Greek forms: *eschatos*, which is the word for last or final things; and, the word *logos*, which means something said or taught (instruction). *Logos* is commonly translated by our English term "word." Therefore, "eschatology" has to do with the Bible's teaching of those things that have to do with the "end of time."
- b. The word "realized" suggests the concept that something has already happened or occurred. If something is yet future, then it has not been realized. Things which are in the past have been realized.
- c. Therefore, to speak of "realized eschatology" simply identifies that all those things which have to do with the end of time, the future, have already been realized or come to pass.

It is called "Kingism" or the "Max King Doctrine" because this teaching has been popularized by a man whose name is Max King who was once a faithful Gospel preacher. King debated the late Gus Nichols in July, 1973. The proposition King affirmed was: "The Holy Scriptures teach that the second coming of Christ, including the establishment of the eternal kingdom, the day of judgment, the end of the world, and the resurrection of the dead,

occurred with the fall of Judaism in A.D. 70."

IMMEDIATE REACTION

Each one that first hears of this fanatical illusion cannot believe their ears! Their thought is that this is so far fetched, ridiculous, ludicrous, absurd, preposterous, asinine, outrageous and wild, how would or could anyone be persuaded by it? Immediate questions arise, "if the end of the world has already occurred, then what are we doing here?" "If the resurrection of the dead is long past, why are the cemeteries still full?" Good questions! But, as unbelievable as it is, we know by experience that however ridiculous or absurd a teaching might be, no matter how contradictory to clear and plain passages, some people will believe it and promote it. This doctrine is no exception. It has captured the attention and ensnared in its tentacles of error a number of our own brethren. It appears to be gaining ground in some areas. Therefore, it is necessary that we spend some time studying it so that we may be able to help those who may be enticed by it and others who have already been caught in its trap. Hopefully, we will be able to snatch some "out of the fire" while there is yet time (cf. Jude 1:23).

I want to examine five major doctrines (as outlined above) in a series of five articles. The first one will be concerning the church.

1. THE CHURCH WAS NOT ESTABLISHED ON PENTECOST, 33 A.D.

The church was not established on Pentecost, 33 A.D., as is commonly believed - so say the proponents of Kingism! What they actually say is that the kingdom did come on Pentecost, but not in its glory and power - it was not complete until A.D. 70. Nothing is further from the truth according to the Bible! In the *Spirit of Prophecy*, a book by Max R. King in which he sets forth his doctrine, we offer the following quotes. When discussing why it is error to tie together Mark 9:1 and Acts 1:8 he says: "The kingdom was to come with power, and Acts 1:8 does not mention kingdom." "The apostles'

question and the Lord's answer concerning the kingdom, places its coming in power beyond Pentecost" (p.138). "Mark 9:1 is parallel with Matt. 16:27-28." "Instead of coming in his kingdom on Pentecost, Christ had gone to receive it" (p.139). "There is nothing contained in Dan. 2:44 that makes Pentecost the necessary date of its fulfillment" (p.140). (Burluson, Ken, 8th Annual Seek The Old Paths Lectures, East Corinth Church of Christ, Corinth, Miss., July 1993, p.49-50). King plainly says that "Christ did not come in his kingdom with power on Pentecost" (p.138) yet on the next page he says, "Pentecost was the beginning of his kingdom, but the fall of Jerusalem was the climatic state of its development and manifestation in power, glory, and judgment" (p.139).

The refutation of this teaching is simple, though not accepted by Kingites. It is obvious that whatever Scripture refutes their doctrine must be explained away and so they make such an attempt as is seen in the quotes above with Mark 9:1.

Mark 9:1 coupled with Acts 1:8 and Acts 2:4 has been used effectively by the Lord's people since the establishment of the church/kingdom on the day of Pentecost. Jesus said, "...Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power" (Mark 9:1). The pronouncement of the Lord was that the kingdom would "come with power." The kingdom (which is the church, Matt. 16:18-19) would make its appearance with power, i.e., be accompanied with power. Therefore, to learn when the kingdom came is to learn when the power came; or, to learn when the power came is to learn when the kingdom came. Both the kingdom and power would come at the same time. In Luke 24:49 Jesus said, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." On the day Jesus ascended up into heaven He told His apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father which they had heard of Him (Acts 1:4). "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him,

saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..." (Acts 1:6-8). With this passage, we learn the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) would come upon the apostles when they received power; and, they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came. To receive the one (power) was to receive the other (Holy Spirit).

"Rightly dividing" (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15) these verses is to learn that the "kingdom" was to come "with power" (Mark 9:1) and the power would come with the "Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:8). To learn when any one of the three came is to learn when all three came. Acts two reveals when the Holy Spirit came. The twelve apostles were assembled in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus. "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:2-4). The Holy Spirit had come upon them! They received power to speak in languages they had never learned (along with other miracles) and the kingdom was established, all at the same time. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. ... Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:41,47). The kingdom/church came on Pentecost! Did the kingdom have its full glory and power on Pentecost? Kingites say "no." However, read the following verses and judge for yourself.

Colossians 1:13 states that when one becomes a Christian, he/she is delivered from the "power of darkness" and translated into the "kingdom of his dear Son." Does this mean a sinner was removed from the power of Satan but was void of the power of the kingdom for the first 40 years of the kingdom's existence? That would be the case if the kingdom did not come in its full

glory and power until A.D. 70! The next chapter plainly says these brethren were "complete" in Christ (Col. 2:10). To be complete means to be full. How could Christians be complete or full, when according to Kingism, they were members of a kingdom which was not complete or full until A.D. 70? Further, Colossians 1:9-12 speaks of being "... filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰... all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work... ¹¹Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; ¹²...made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." These were all long before A.D. 70!

Jesus said to the apostles, ²⁴...I appoint unto you a kingdom... ³⁰That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom... (Luke 22:29-30). The table of the Lord was the Lord's supper that every congregation took part in every first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The Corinthian church/kingdom were partakers of the table of the Lord (1 Cor. 10:16-17). In verse 21 they were even rebuked when we read, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." But, when congregations partook of the Lord's supper for 40 years prior to A.D. 70, was the kingdom, in which the table of the Lord existed, a gloryless and powerless kingdom? If so, where is the evidence to support such? The fact is, none can be found!

Ephesians 3:10 makes clear that the church was in its fullness before A.D. 70. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." God's manifold wisdom was THEN being made known by the church. The text says NOW, not in the future. This was before A.D. 70!

The apostle Peter was given the keys to the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19). The keys were used on Pentecost, A.D. 33 according to Acts 2. But, if Kingism be true, the keys were not used until A.D. 70. By this time, practically all the apostles were dead!

(Part one of five)

Conformed Church...

(Continued from page 1)

Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." But they said, "We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16).

These preachers and churches today who are conforming to the ways and manners of the denominations around them present quite a paradox. They ridicule the idea of a pattern, reject "pattern theology" and sneer at the references to the "old paths." But, what they fail to realize or admit is that all they are doing is just switching patterns! They are casting away God's pattern for the church and its work and worship, sneering at such a concept, and then follow the pattern of denominational doctrines and practices. Where is the evidence that any of the changes advocated by them did not come from some denomination and has been practiced by them for years?

These "change agents" are simply trying to conform the church into the image of those denominations around them. Churches that do so conform will surely suffer the same fate: "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

On the other hand, the church of the Lord must be a "conformed church." It is expected to conform to the pattern, image, ideal, and plan of God. If it does not do so, it cannot be God's church and have his approval.

The first congregation of the Lord's church was established in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2). "And they continued steadfastly (they conformed their actions) in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers" (verse 42). That was not the manner in which they had formerly worshipped, nor was it the manner of worship of their Jewish neighbors, friends, and family members. Yet you do not hear them complaining that they were "different."

Soon other congregations were springing up in different localities. As each was established and began its work and worship, it is notewor-

thy that they followed the same pattern. All those churches conformed to the same image or pattern. Whenever there began to be a deviation from that pattern in any congregation, instruction was given them to conform to that original pattern (1 Cor. 1:10).

There were already "change agents" at work in the first century. For hundreds of years the Jewish religion, under God's law, had required circumcision of all its adherents, whether Jews, or Gentiles. However, this new group, "the church of Christ," did not require circumcision of any member and did not observe the law of Moses. Certain "change agents" soon began to try to get the church to "conform" to those old laws and customs. They began to advocate that the Gentiles be required to be circumcised according to the law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:1). Paul and Barnabas opposed them vigorously and stopped their evil works. They, along with other brethren, declared that the Lord's pattern for the church's faith and practice had not changed and would not change.

Those who would not "conform" to preach and teach only what the apostles had delivered would have the curse of God upon them (Gal. 1:6-9). If any preached a different doctrine that would bring division and offenses, they were to be "marked and avoided" as those who served not God (Rom. 16:17). If any came to town and needed lodging or assistance, but preached a different doctrine, they were not to be greeted, housed, or otherwise encouraged or assisted in their evil work (2 John 9-11).

Whenever any attempt was made to change the church in its organization, its worship or its work, it was met with vigorous opposition. Such change was quickly halted and they were urged to "conform" back to the pattern of the other congregations. They were to "all speak the same thing, have no divisions among you, but be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10); now that's conformity!

This kind of conformity to the Divine pattern by each congregation brought the kind of unity which God demanded and approved, and

allowed the various congregations to cooperate fully in the great task of evangelizing the world. It did not bother them that they "stood out" from the rest of the community and were hated and persecuted because they would not compromise and "conform." They counted it as something to rejoice about when they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41).

Much has been written and spoken recently concerning the church and what it will be like in the twenty-first century. Will it still be relevant? Will it continue to exist? Must it change and conform to be more like the churches all around in order to still attract people? Must it conform to the growing trend of dropping its name, broadening its membership requirements, up-dating and enlivening its worship services, and simply call itself "The Community Church" or "God's Family?"

The church in the twenty-first century must be no different from the church in previous centuries, unless it is in moving closer than ever to the divine pattern, rather than farther away from it. Rather than conforming to the world and its religious diversity, which is to perish in the fires of the last great day, the church of Christ **MUST CONTINUE TO CONFORM** to the Divine pattern set forth by Christ and his apostles in the New Testament. We must continue to call upon men to conform themselves and their religious beliefs and practices to that Divine pattern, rather than to expect the church to conform to their varied ideas of what the church ought to be like. Remember, Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:4).

Yes, the church must conform; but to which pattern: God's, or that of the world? Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!

4865 Bates Pike SE
Cleveland, TN 37311

Find us on the Web at:
<http://www.tsixroads/~ecorinth>
You may Email us at:
ecorinth@tsixroads.com

Mark And Avoid!

Jimmie 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. This is true concerning the single word of the text. However, the context of Romans 16:17 demands the act of taking note of false teachers so that we might be able to avoid them and to warn others of them. This text demands that those who teach things contrary to the doctrine of the Lord be branded or exposed in some way for what they are. Still, some 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 the Sadducees."

He also said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Did not Jesus love them? Was Christ unkind? 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 that propagate and promote divisive doctrines must be dealt with. Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said we are to "mark...and avoid" them. Therefore, there must be a constant vigilance in everyone who follows Christ to observe, look toward, take aim at, take heed to, mark, the false teacher (Rom. 16:17; 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? Brother 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 offences 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

An Honest And Good Heart

Charles A. Pledge

We often get things turned around in our thinking on simple biblical matters. One of these commonly reversed matters is in the realm of the heart. How often do we refer to the good and honest heart? We think if a heart is good it will either be honest or become honest. But that is getting the cart before the horse. Jesus stated it in Luke 8:15 in this order: "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." The order is **honest**, then it can be **good**. If the heart is not honest it can't be good. It must first be honest, then it can be good.

Jesus confronted the Pharisees, Sadducees, and other Jewish religious leaders almost daily. There is no more scathing denunciation of dishonesty anywhere than in Matthew chapter 23. The Pharisees and other leaders knew the works of Jesus proved his claims. His credentials (works and teaching) were impeccable and unimpeachable. The Pharisees, especially, knew this but pretended they were correct instead of Jesus.

Hear Jesus as he rebukes these pretenders in Matthew 23:25-31: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because

ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets." Why so hard on them? Because their actions proved their heart was dishonest. They were but pretenders — hypocrites.

Rubel Shelly once, very aptly cried, "Oh, but for an honest false teacher!" according to some who are quoting him to that effect. But will brethren listen? How can a false teacher be honest? His very doctrine is self contradictory. How can people be honest when their doctrine is evidently crooked, or dishonest?

Rubel, very piously, travels over the country preaching, and as well, writes in the same vein, proclaiming that he offers honesty and simplicity in his Pilgrim Church. He claims to still reverence the authority of the scriptures and the sanctity of the church. But that is all empty air. His Pilgrim Church is nothing more than a denominational concept of Pluralism; everybody is ok. It matters not if one contradicts another; both are ok as long as they aren't divisive in the matter. Doctrine isn't important; believe what you want to, practice what you want to, and teach what you wish. It takes a dishonest heart to deliberately, knowingly, teach and practice such a concept.

Jesus taught that truth is important. We read in John 8:31-32: *"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* One must continue in the words of Jesus because these words are truth. Contrary to Rubel's new definition of truth (the integrity of man — how humanistic do you want it?), Jesus stated very clearly what truth is in John 17:17: *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."* This truth is bound up in the words of Jesus and Jesus gave those words to the apostles. We read in John 17:8: *"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that*

thou didst send me." If you want to know the truth of God which he spoke by Jesus (Heb. 1:1-2), then we must hear the words of the apostles — the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).

Rubel taught the truthfulness of these things for years. Suddenly he got a new revelation that he had a bad attitude and then deducted his interpretation of Scripture was wrong so he turned everything around in his mind. Rubel knows better. He goes for the jugular vein of the church of our Lord. He is angry at all of us who refuse to bow at his altar. He holds our worship in contempt, calling it tired and boring. According to Rubel our service is outdated and antiquated, or worse. Rubel says our preaching is mere recitation of scriptures which can't produce faith in anyone.

Rubel read too many books of human philosophy without correspondingly studying the Bible. If one is going to dabble in philosophy he needs the foundation of faith which can only come by means of God's word (Rom. 10:17). Rubel, apparently missed a step somewhere and now he is on the same level as all the rest of the pluralistic thinkers; subjectivity and worse.

In all this, one of the most contradictory attitudes is expressed by the actions of some who, disclaiming, disavowing, and denying as truth what Rubel preaches and practices, will advertise and promote his books such as **The Second Incarnation**. Churches will support Rubel. Schools will have him on their programs. Some will even clap for him after his speech. We wonder, in all of this, if anyone of these have seriously pondered the twenty third chapter of Matthew? Have they really heard what Jesus said? Do they care? Do they care that in their support of Rubel, and in promoting his person and books, that they are closing the doors of the kingdom upon untold thousands? Do they not see that the false, contradictory doctrine Rubel espouses will destroy souls? Or, do they care? We believe this latter question is valid in light of their actions.

Many find themselves in a quandary concerning Rubel. They wish to call him a good man. At the same time they are forced to admit that his pluralism is self-contradicto-

ry and, therefore, dishonest. They also admit Rubel must know what his course is and where it is leading him. They can't call him honest, while at the same time, some of them won't say he is dishonest. How, in light of what Jesus said in Luke 8:15, can they call a man good who is not first intellectually honest? When someone gives me a Scripture explaining this contradiction, then I will relent in the matter. Of course, if we accept the idea of disparities in the gospel, I suppose we could find a scripture that would "jar" this one out of place, couldn't we? But that concept is God dishonoring and Scripture denying!

We suggest to many brethren that they read very carefully Matthew 7:15-18. Jesus teaches that a good tree will not bring forth evil fruit and a corrupt tree can't produce good fruit. Rubel is producing much evil fruit. The consequences and results of his teaching is producing havoc with the faith of many young people, and a few older ones. One of the results is division which Rubel pretends to abhor. Another result is the incorrigible attitude toward us poor peasants who are too ignorant to accept his ecclesiology.

We have no malice toward Rubel personally. But we hate his doctrine with a passion. We can't respect his refusal to debate his cause. We love Rubel's soul but his demonstration of agnostic, humanistic, subjective approach to Scripture leaves us a bit chilled in appreciation of Rubel's new gospel and/or those who support, encourage, advertise, and promote his doctrine in any way.

7 West Colorado
Sheridan, WY 82801

CONTRIBUTORS

Jo Begley.....	\$10
W. H. Dell	\$10
Bruce Reichel.....	\$25
Gilbert Gough.....	\$25
Charles Verkist	\$25
Joe M. Dawson	\$40
Jim Waldron	\$20
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Scriptural Church Growth

John M. Brown

All Christians are interested in the growth of the local church! Certainly we want to see men and women obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ! We are interested in fulfilling the charge of the Lord (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

I don't mind telling you that I am a preacher that is interested in numbers! Why? Because numbers represent souls! We, at the Flatwoods church of Christ, baptized twenty last year. For God's increase we are truly thankful. And, my prayer is that we can do even more this year! Yes, it is exciting to see people obey the God of heaven and put on His Son. I am interested in people!

However...that statement MUST be qualified. I am interested in numbers but I am not interested in numbers only! If our ONLY concern were numbers, I am sure we could double the size of this congregation shortly. How?

1) Well, we could bring in a hill-billy band every Sunday, playing some fine bluegrass music. Here in these Eastern Kentucky hills, that would surely bring in a crowd!

2) We could find other means of entertainment after all, why should people go to church and sit bored for an hour. Surely we could "liven it up" with singers, dancers, programs and performances! That would have to work!

3) We could bring in large screen televisions for those who don't want to miss the Sunday morning matinee or their favorite late afternoon sports event. With free popcorn and soft drinks, that would naturally be a big hit!

4) What about door prizes? Perhaps tickets with "end of service" drawings? Many would come for the chance of a big win! And free tickets would be better than the lottery!

5) Finally, I know the sure-fire way to increase the crowd: advertise in the paper that every person in attendance would receive a brand-new, crisp, fifty dollar bill! Many would fill the pews for that opportunity. It is a sure thing!

There is only one problem with

my suggestions: they are not God's Scriptural plan and pattern for church growth! If we are interested in the souls of men AND we are interested in obeying God, then we must use God's pattern for church growth. Anything else, anything less, or anything beside, simply will not accomplish the work and do the job.

It is God's plan that the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4) be His method for church growth. The Gospel is His power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16).

And, in spite of big numbers, we must remember, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1). If our work is not what the Father plants, it "shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13).

Interested in numbers? YES! But never forget: if it's not God's way, it will not endure (Matt. 7:24-27). It takes the Gospel, not gimmicks or schemes, to build for eternity!

P.O. Box 871
Flatwoods, KY 41139

Not A Peep?

Robin W. Haley

Believing that they have us over a barrel, those who advocate the use of women to translate spiritual instructions to audiences which include men quibble over the "silence" as found within 1 Corinthians 14. It must be observed and admitted that the "silence" of this verse is different from the "silence" or "quietness" as found within in 1 Timothy 2. The word found in 1 Timothy has reference to a submissive attitude, where the word in 1 Corinthians means to "hold one's peace; without sound." If we are to allow the teaching of this chapter to dictate behavior today (they say), then a woman would not be allowed to sing, nor to confess her faith or fault before the assembled saints. Is this true?

In a word: NO! The reason is found within a single word also: context. As with any doctrine of the Lord, we must look to the context to understand just what is being said and if there are any limitations placed upon the text. There is silence enjoined upon women within this text, but the same silence is bound upon men twice. What men have this limitation? Gifted men. What women are bound with this silence? Gifted women? No, but all women!

Wherein is this silence to be practiced? Within the realm of teaching, prophesying and interpretation of tongues.

For the men, these things are to be practiced only by two or three and one is to interpret. For women, it is to be done... not at all! Are the women limited because of charisma? No, but because of creation.

What kind of speaking may a woman not do when there is an assembly? She is not to do any kind which gives non-melodic, didactic instruction or interpretation. In this way, a decent and orderly assembly will be achieved (v.40).

"NOT A PEEP"

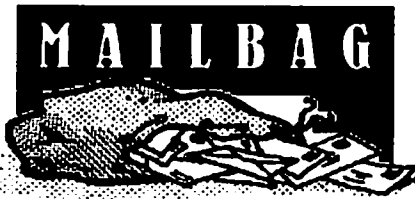
If women are to be silent, they could not sing, etc. because of the word "sigao" (they allege).

IF THIS IS TRUE, THEN...

- The tongue-speaker could not sing nor confess because "sigao" is used with reference to him, v.28.
- The prophet could not sing nor confess because "sigao" is used with reference to him, v.30.

WHAT KIND OF SPEAKING MAY A WOMAN NOT DO?

The Teaching Kind -- It Leads!



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

arrival of each S.T.O.P. We thoroughly enjoy its timely articles and wholeheartedly endorse the manner in which the truth is presented on its pages. At a time when the spiritual eyesight of many appearers to be failing, and the old paths seem afar off, the light which this publication sheds is sorely needed. We are enclosing a small contribution to help with operational expenses" *Charles Dinkins, Fairhope, AL*. Here is a contribution to help with your paper. If you decide to charge a yearly subscription, I will gladly pay for your paper. It is a fine paper" *Danny Penn, Trenton, TN*. [Editor's Note: as long as the church continues to publish the paper it will be free to all who request it. However, it's existence depends upon contributions from good brethren like you. Its monthly expense far exceeds what the church at East Corinth is able to do.] "In my last issue of S.T.O.P. a "financial" notice appeared. Please accept this small check. I deeply regret when my financial situation prevents me from contributing more. Your valuable publication enlightens congregations to the stealth which is invading the Lord's church. For one, I appreciate your continuing efforts to expose false doctrine in the church. When some congregations use Wednesday night Bible study time to promote secular publications such as videos entitled "When God Doesn't Make Sense," it's time for Christians to stop remaining silent. I never thought I'd live to see the day when "thus saith the Lord" would be replaced with quotes from popular Christians and denominational personalities. Thank you for your loving contending for the faith. My prayers are with you" *Jo Begley, Norfolk, VA*. "Keep up the good you are doing" *Freddie Clayton, Dunlap, TN*. "I appreciate the fine material and the true to the Bible teaching" *Charles Maxwell, Cookeville, TN*. "I enjoy getting your paper and think you are doing a good job of proclaiming the truth about the one true church" *Diana Copenhaver, Crockett, VA*. "Enclosed is a check to assist in your efforts in the publication of *Seek The Old Paths*. We wish you well in His service" *Bruce Reichel, Denton, TX*. "Enjoy your paper when it comes" *Ted Knight, Conway, AR*. "What a good work you are doing in your paper *Seek The Old Paths*. We enjoy and profit from it so much. We pray you will continue to proclaim the "full Gospel" and hold on to the "apostles doctrine," but refuting errors that seem to be sweeping through the Lord's church. We will continue to pray for your efforts" *Jimmy Johnson, Jackson, TN*. "Your paper is the most wonderful information next to God's Words and I'm so thankful I can help spread God's Word. Please continue my paper" *Wynema Chenault, Lawndale, CA*. "Thank you for the uncompromising proclamation of the truth as it is in Christ. More voices like yours need to be raised across the brotherhood, especially in our area. The Arapaho church is in a hotbed of liberalism in Western Oklahoma and we need the teaching and warnings in the pages of *Seek The Old Paths*" *Jerry Brewer, Clinton, OK*. "A copy of *Seek The Old Paths* was delivered to me today, for which I need to thank somebody. Your commitment to Truth is impressive. I hope that you will add me to your mailing list" *Phillips Turner, Nashville, TN*. "To whom it may concern: Please remove me from your mailing list" *Jeannie Ebnet, Tyler, TX*. "I recently had the opportunity to read your monthly publication and would like to be added to your mailing list, if possible. Thank you" *Marcia Sansom, Eudora, KS*. "Could you make sure that I get on your mailing list for S.T.O.P. I certainly would appreciate your doing so" *Ron Gilbert, Rossville, GA*. "Please remove my name from your mailing list. (Vol. 7, No. 8) Aug., 1996 is the reason" *David Parsons, Lubbock, TX*. "I was recently introduced to your magazine, *Seek The Old Paths*, and would like to receive this publication. I am the minister for the Augusta Rd. Church of Christ. I believe that the congregation, as well as myself, will benefit from these wonderful articles. Please add me to your mailing list. Thank you for taking the time to distribute information that our brotherhood sorely needs. May God bless you in your efforts to further the Gospel of Christ" *Wesley Crisp, Honea Path, SC*. "I recently came across *Seek The Old Paths* while visiting the Granny White congregation here in Nashville. The topics covered interested me, as a student and as a future minister/teacher. Also, if time permits, could you recommend a few works (books, papers, or both) from our heritage you have found to be valuable? I am an eager student of the

"Please continue on. You are doing a most precious work" *Dorcas McLeod, Lucedale, MS*. "I have enjoyed reading *Seek The Old Paths* as I have seen copies around. I appreciate the tone of the articles and your standing for the truth" *David McElwain, Godfrey, IL*. "My wife and I look forward to the

Restoration Movement and would also appreciate your advice" *Mac Ice, Hendersonville, TN*. [Note: One good book is "Triumph And Tragedy" edited by Paul Vaughn. It deals with the restoration movement in Kentucky. Order from: Paul Vaughn, 297 Picnic Hill Rd., Jackson, KY 41339 —gmr]. "Take us off your mailing list, if you can't say anything good about your brother, you should not say anything at all" *Ruth Hearne, Tyler, TX*. [Note: I guess such people have returned their Bible to God and told him the same thing! Read Matt. 23, on second thought, read the whole Bible! Those who proclaim the Word of God would be out of business. —gmr] "I have just read *Seek The Old Paths* for the first time and was very impressed with the articles. Please put me on the mailing list" *Larry Cook, Omaha, AR*. "Thanks again for this fine and wonderful publication. I am enclosing a small token of appreciation" *Lois Smith, Tyler, TX*. "I was recently introduced to your magazine, *Seek The Old Paths*, and would like to receive this publication. I am the minister for the Edgewood Church of Christ. I believe that the congregation, as well as myself, will benefit from these wonderful articles. Please add me to your mailing list. Thank you for taking the time to distribute information that our brotherhood sorely needs. May God bless you in your efforts to further the Gospel of Christ" *Michael Yates, Piedmont, SC*. "I recently had opportunity to read *Seek The Old Paths* and enjoyed it very much. We have a new congregation here in Huntsville, Texas, and are trying to get good reading material in all our homes. Will you send your publication to the following..." *Weldon Blake, Huntsville, TX*.

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You may Email us at: ecorinth@tsixroads.com

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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