

# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."*

(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 14, No. 7

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## THE GOSPEL IS NOT ENOUGH!

*Steve Armstrong*

I read an article about a preacher who was doing his best to tell of the awful ordeal of the crucifixion of the Son of God, and he realized the people weren't listening very well and some were about to go to sleep. The preacher suddenly began telling a story he made up about a dog getting killed, and the audience began to lean toward the preacher out of their seats! The preacher said, "I was telling you the story of our blessed Savior dying for our sins and you seemed very indifferent. I began to entertain you with an untrue story about a dying dog and I got your undivided attention!" How tragic, the gospel was not enough to keep their attention!

The same article made the comment that if the preacher is not "dynamic," some get bored. His preaching the Word of God and what people need to hear is not entertaining to some. If the preacher doesn't tell some intriguing, gripping, secular story every time he starts a sermon, and then tell several more such stories in his sermon, to some he is boring. How sad, the gospel is not enough for many! According to the words and actions of "Christians" in today's society, and in some churches, the gospel is not enough!

The fact that the gospel is not enough has become so predominant that many religious groups have turned away from the concept of biblical worship to the concept of entertainment and calling it worship. Thus enters "Contemporary praise

and worship services" — the idea that entertainment is the answer. Secular groups have traditional services on Sunday morning, contemporary praise and worship on Saturday night, services for the old people on Wednesday night, and services for the young people on Tuesday night.

"Strike up the bands, get away from the old ways, call in the Alman Brothers to sing 'Jesus is just alright with me.' Let's praise God with rock and roll and Christian rap. Yes, I've confessed Christ and repented of my sins, yes I've been baptized for the remission of my sins and added to the body of Christ. But I still like the excitement and mood of concert style praise and worship because I get excited and I get more out of it." These are the words of a Christian friend, for whom the Gospel is not enough.

That the Gospel is not enough can be seen through men that are excellent speakers, exceptional showmen, men with charisma and a hunger for popularity and the wealth of this world! Men that claim to speak for God himself, men who have a knowledge of scripture, but not a hunger for the souls of men! God help the individuals they have driven away from the Lord! God help those deceived and led into a perverted form of Christianity. How many more are going to waste God's money on luxurious buildings or "temples" for a temporary life in a temporary world instead of concentrating on the teaching of the Gospel of Christ? I

would like to meet one person who can justify and find peace in spending ten thousand dollars on a chandelier with money donated by faithful Christians to be used for godly purposes. That the Gospel is not enough can be seen in the lifestyles of the TV Evangelist and even some in the brotherhood.

The fact that the Gospel is not enough can be seen in the way many pander to young people with every possible game and recreational attraction under the sun. A church of Christ in Nashville has built a colossal two-story game room that cost more to build than their entire new building will cost — and is larger! Unfortunately, many churches of Christ are taking their cues from the denominational world. Many have been employing fun and games ministers for our youth for years, offering outings and trips and fun of every kind. When are we going to admit that you cannot make teens better disciples by feeding them pizza and letting them play video games? Again, it is the word of God that builds up, not mindless pleasure. Fun is great in its place but having a great time doesn't make anyone a committed Christian, does it?

And, it doesn't take much to figure out that most youth are not very spiritually minded. Go to the mall. Listen to their conversations. Check out the Christian chat rooms on the

*(Continued on page 52)*

**The Gospel Is Not Enough...**



Editorial...

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORKS #1

***Many affirm that salvation is solely by grace and man has nothing whatsoever to do with salvation in any respect.***

This series of articles will examine the false doctrine promoted by many that salvation is by “grace only” or “faith only.” It appears that a growing number of those connected with the Lord’s church are embracing this heresy. They are parroting the denominations in saying that “man does not contribute one whit to his salvation.” It is a complete misunderstanding of “grace,” “faith” and “works.”

Before we examine (next month) the different kinds of works mentioned in the Bible, we want to lay down some preliminary thoughts. We will begin with these two scriptures that mention God’s grace. Ephesians 2:8-10, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*” Titus 3:5, “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*” These texts hit at the taproot of man’s gravest problem, SIN. It hits him in an area where he thinks himself to be strongest, his sufficiency.

From the beginning, God sought to subdue man’s pride. Old Testament teaching abounds in this area. The pride condemned by God is that swelling, vain haughtiness of spirit that causes one to have an inordinately high respect for self above all others. Pride is a **foundation sin that begets many more sins.**

Pride is linked with **destruction**: “*...He shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands*” (Isa. 25:11). “*For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips let them even be taken in their*

*pride: and for cursing and lying which they speak*” (Psalm 59:12). “*Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower...*” (Isa. 28:1). “*Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall*” (Prov. 16:18).

Pride is a cause of **shame and contention**. “*When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom*” (Prov. 11:2). “*Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom*” (Prov. 13:10).

Pride is a **cause of self-deception**. Concerning Edom, we read, “*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)?

Pride is a **cause of hardness of heart**. “*But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him*” (Daniel 5:20).

Pride is **linked with evil actions**. “*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate*” (Prov. 8:13). “*Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase*” (Daniel 4:37). “*Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom*” (Prov. 13:10).

Pride is listed by Jesus along with **blasphemy**. “*Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness*” (Mark 7:22).

Pride is **forbidden**: “*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh,*

*and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world*” (1 John 2:16).

In man’s pride, he believes he is able to provide for himself. But, he is deceived. Man cannot save himself or anyone else. Salvation does not originate or proceed from sinful man.

Salvation is offered to all men by God, but all will not accept it. It is by God’s grace (described as his bounty, benefit, or favor) that man can have forgiveness of sins and thereby enjoy the beauties of heaven some day.

BUT, many have gone to the opposite extreme when it comes to the subject of grace. Many affirm that salvation is solely by grace and man has nothing whatsoever to do with salvation in any respect. The doctrine of Calvinism teaches that man is a passive being, dead in sin, incapable of acting on his own behalf. It therefore demands a miracle be wrought in every case of salvation; i.e., the sinner’s heart must be miraculously sanctified by a direct act of the Holy Spirit of God giving repentance and faith. This view affects perhaps the majority in the Protestant religious world because most are Calvinists in some modified sense. Those holding this view usually erect a straw man (a false position ascribed to others) and then twist Scriptures (cf. 2 Peter 3:16) to fight the straw man.

One of the problems connected with the false doctrine of “grace only” is **the total rejection of the different kinds of works** mentioned in the Bible. They will select one or two kinds of works represented by passages they think favorable to their positions and harp on them to the exclusion of others.

Basic to combatting Calvinistic tendencies are two simple truths: 1) there are different kinds of works mentioned in the Bible: some approved, some not approved and; 2) the Calvinistic position of two alternatives (either salvation is by “grace only” or by “works only”) is based upon a false concept of Scriptural teaching.

In our next issue, we will examine six different “kinds” or “classes” of works mentioned in the New Testament. In dealing with this issue, we will have to conclude that the teaching of salvation by “grace only” or by “works only” is a false doctrine.

# HOW DOES LOVE COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS?

James E. Farley

The Bible clearly teaches us to love all men — even our enemies (Matt. 5:44). Love (*agape*) is commanded (1 John 3:23). The apostle Peter wrote, “*And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins*” (1 Peter 4:8).

How does this work? How does charity (love) cover a multitude of sins? Is it that we just love people so much that we overlook their faults and errors? Is this the way God would have us to interact one with another? Is this real Bible love? NO! A thousand times... NO!

The inspired James has something to say along these lines. He writes, “*Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*” (James 5:19-20). There it is! There is how love covers a multitude of sins! We love people enough to teach them, and in so doing we may have to “*reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*” (2 Tim. 4:2). Sometimes it will take some reproving and rebuking to get people to see the error of their way, and real love, Bible love, will do this. It is not always a pleasant thing to do, and it sometimes can get somewhat “heated,” but do it we must if we are to follow the Meek and Lowly One! The Bible is right when it reveals, “*Open rebuke is better than secret love*” (Prov. 27:5).

Paul wrote to the young preacher Timothy, and told him to “*...charge some that they teach no other doctrine...*” (1 Tim. 1:3). Can you imagine this? This young “boy preacher” was to command some folks to not teach false doctrine with its fables, endless genealogies, etc. And, Paul was careful to tell Timothy what his motive in so doing was to be. It was to be “*...charity out of a pure heart...*” (1 Tim. 1:5). We are indeed to be “*...speaking the truth in*

*love...*” (Eph. 4:15).

If a member of the Lord’s church (preacher, elder, etc.) says that he loves another, but will not rebuke that one of error in his life, he does not love him! If he will not warn the erring one of the extreme danger he is in, he does not love him! Love always sounds out a warning of danger!

There are some interesting and convicting words found in the third chapter of Ezekiel, “*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul*” (Ezek. 3:17-21).

These words from God’s Holy Book are strong indeed, and should cause each of us to examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5) to see whether we are doing all we can to help those overcome with sin and error. There is coming a Great Judgment Day when we will all have to give an account of what we have or have not done (Compare 2 Cor. 5:10-11; James 4:17).

Lest anyone should refer to

Ezekiel 3 and say, “Oh, that’s from the Old Testament... We’re under the New Testament today...” I encourage you to turn your Bible to Acts 18:6 where Paul spoke to those unbelieving Jews, and said, “*Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.*” Then turn over and read Paul’s words to the elders from Ephesus, “*And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God*” (Acts 20:25-27). Both of these are direct references to the Old Testament passage in Ezekiel chapter three. Paul went on to say, “*Therefore watch, and remember; that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears*” (Acts 20:31).

Oh yes my brethren, real love does cover a multitude of sins, when we preach, teach and warn people of their error, and exhort them to repent before it is everlastingly too late! Preachers, elders, we have a special interest in this kind of work. Preachers are simply heralds for King Jesus, and must be faithful in proclaiming the whole counsel of God (2 Tim. 4:1-5). This means we are to warn folks of danger. Souls are at stake; hell is real! Elders are watchers for the souls of the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers (Acts 20:28-30; Heb. 13:17). Many are allowing sincere and honest souls to march on toward a devil’s hell with smiles on their faces, because they do not love these souls enough to warn them of danger.

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## The Gospel Is Not Enough...

(Continued from page 49)

Internet. Watch the news. Immodest dressing, rude behavior, statistics on alcohol and drug abuse, a lack of respect for authority, greed and materialism; they are seen and heard everywhere, even in many Christian homes where young people live. It all screams out that decades of the fun and games gospel have done little to really change young people.

Christians must stand firm in the knowledge that *“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:24). We must refuse to allow people to turn our worship into a period of entertainment! Those who seek to be entertained say of traditional services, “I didn’t get anything out of it.” It may be that some don’t get anything out of worship because they don’t put anything in to it! Christians should never attend worship services with the attitude that they are there to see what they can get out of it. They should attend with the attitude that they are there to worship God, with an attitude of gratitude, and do their best to praise and please him!

I heard an audio taped lesson made by a popular preacher at a big religious gathering. He emphasized that worship should be “a party.” He emphasized this in a context in which he made it clear that he thought worship services should be entertaining. He said people are not interested in doctrine, but he said nothing about any of the abundance of passages in the New Testament which emphasize the importance of right doctrine. He was using wrong doctrine to emphasize that right doctrine was not important! He made it clear that we need to have an atmosphere of entertainment in our worship services if we expect to attract people.

Without fail, worship services should be friendly, but being boisterous and loud are not proofs of true devotion and spirituality in worship! God is not a God of disorder but of peace according to 1 Corinthians 14:33. And as I recall, we are to preach the word and our Father in Heaven will give the increase. As I recall, we are taught that if we seek

the truth, we will find it, not the truth to prove I’m right or the truth to prove you are wrong, but the simple truth of the Gospel of Christ. As I recall, my God is the creator of all there is and He still has the ability to touch lives of mankind without our changing the way he would have us be, he is still in charge. As I recall, poor pitiful, wretched man that I am, Jesus Christ my Lord gave his life for ME. His blood was shed for me. I am forever grateful and already I have been given far more than I could ever deserve, and yes, His grace is sufficient. And as I sit in silence in worship to my heavenly Father, I know that I don’t deserve to even be there. But thanks be to my Lord Jesus, I am allowed to be there.

That the Gospel is enough is clearly seen in Scripture. Jude tells us to contend for the faith that was *once for all* entrusted to the saints (saints are not dead people). Paul writes to Timothy and says, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Are there deceitful religious men? Yes! Titus says to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good. In 2 Peter 3:16 it says that Paul’s letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do other Scripture, to their own destruction. What happens when one does not correctly handle the word of truth, or love and seek truth? God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe a lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth! Read 2 Thess. 2:11,12 and 1 Tim. 4:1-3.

The simplicity of the Gospel is this, he became the source of salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:9). Come near to God and he will come near to you (James 4:8). Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up (James 4:10). *“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowl-*

*edge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue”* (2 Peter 1:3). And like Paul, I am not ashamed of the Gospel because I know whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day (2 Tim. 1:12). And yes, it (the Gospel) is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16)!

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Ronald H. Allen .....\$30  
 Carl Thomsen .....\$10  
 Carl L. Wright .....\$10  
 Jack Lawyer.....\$25  
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 Evans church of Christ,

Evans, GA.....\$50  
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 Edith Henderson .....\$20  
 George Weaver.....\$10  
 M/M Dan Byrd

(In memory of  
 Marvene Tucker) .....\$100  
 Anonymous .....\$160  
 Anonymous .....\$300  
 Anonymous .....\$20  
 Robert Price ....\$200 (booklet maker)

Beginning Balance.....\$ 3,218.19  
 Credits

Contributions .....955.00  
 Booklet Maker .....200.00

Debits

Postage .....1,510.41  
 Supplies, Ink, Wire .....384.34  
 Booklet Maker .....300.00  
 Paper .....\$ 1,070.75  
 Ending Balance.....\$ 1,107.69

Booklet Maker.....\$13,500.00  
 Contributed .....10,725.00  
 Remaining .....\$ 2,775.00

EDITOR’S NOTE: As you can see, our funds are so low there is not enough money to mail the next issue. If any of you are able to help us financially, we would appreciate it. Thanks for your help. Without you, Seek The Old Paths would not be possible.

# Coming In Through The Back Door

Roelf L. Ruffner

**N**ow these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which were written; that no one of you be puffed up for one against the other" (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV — emphasis mine, RLR).

In this present period of apostasy, it is amazing the lengths that some brethren will go to CHANGE THINGS. They are quite sneaky in their approach to transforming the body of Christ into a denomination. A case in point is the **Richland Hills Church of Christ** in Fort Worth, Texas. These misguided brethren have long been known for their departure from the Truth. Some time back, they decided to appoint female deacons or deaconesses. Of course they didn't call them deaconesses but "Fellow Servants." In fact, Richland Hills no longer has deacons. Both male and females are now called "Fellow Servants." They were presented to the congregation on a Wednesday night and the preacher spoke on the topic of "Deaconesses." It is like calling the job of undertaker a "mortician" or a "funeral director;" they all do the same thing (no offense to this profession.).

There is not one scintilla of scriptural authority for the office of deaconess or an eldersess. Sisters-in-Christ are not to hold positions of leadership in the church. The apostle Paul, speaking on behalf of Jesus, wrote, "*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence*" (1 Tim. 2:12). But apparently, that inspired injunction is not enough for these brethren. The fragile thread of legitimacy they cling to is found in Romans 16:1 concerning Phoebe "a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea." The word "servant" (*diakono*) used in this verse is the feminine form of the word "deacon." But this Greek word is used many times in a general sense in the New Testament. Paul was certainly not a deacon, but he calls himself a *diakonos* or servant (1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6). Most translations use the word "servant" in Romans 16:1, even the notoriously unreliable NIV. There were NO deaconesses in the church in the first century. That office

## 18TH ANNUAL SEEK THE OLD PATHS LECTURESHIP

*What God Has Joined Together Let Not Man Put Asunder*

### SUNDAY, JULY 27

9:30 *Charles Blair* — What God has Joined Together, let not man put asunder  
10:30 *Garland Robinson* — Baptism & Salvation  
7:00 *Jimmy Bates* — Faith and Works  
8:00 *Gilbert Gough* — Death, Resurrection & Judgment

### MONDAY, JULY 28

9:00 *Don Tate* — One Heart and One Soul  
10:00 *Ed Casteel* — Jesus: the Lion & the Lamb  
11:00 *Alan Adams* — Explicit and Implicit Commands  
1:30 *Hayes Grady* — Weeping & Rejoicing  
2:30 *Randy Kea* — Deed & Truth  
7:00 *Victor Eskew* — Christ & the Church  
8:00 *Terry Joe Kee* — Husband & Wife

### TUESDAY, JULY 29

9:00 *Paul Evins* — Worship: In Spirit & In Truth  
10:00 *Jimmy Young* — The Vine & the Branches  
11:00 *Roger Campbell* — Christ and Doctrine  
1:30 *Jeff Bates* — The Old Testament & New Testament  
2:30 *Paul Curlless* — Grace & Law  
7:00 *Gary McDade* — The Broad Way & Destruction  
8:00 *Ken Burlison* — The Narrow Way & Life

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 30

9:00 *Johnny Burkhart* — Types and Anti-types  
10:00 *Ed Ballard* — Prayer & God's Will  
11:00 *Walter Pigg* — Spreading the Gospel & Defending it  
1:30 *Richard Guill* — Teaching the Lost & Strengthening the Saved  
2:30 *Tom Snyder* — Sin & Death  
7:00 *Tom House* — Seek the Kingdom & His Righteousness  
8:00 *Charles Blair* — The Goodness & Severity of God

### THURSDAY, JULY 31

9:00 *John Cotham* — Ask, Seek & Knock  
10:00 *Melvin Sapp* — Prophecy & Fulfillment  
11:00 *Ronald Choate* — Love & Commandment Keeping

1:30 *G. W. Childs* — Body, Soul & Spirit  
2:30 *Scott Klaft* — Service & Sacrifice  
7:00 *Dwight Fuqua* — Faithful Children and Proper Training  
8:00 *Steven Yeatts* — Go and Teach

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### MOTELS:

Executive Inn 800-354-3932  
Comfort Inn 800-228-5150  
Hampton Inn 800-426-7866  
Holiday Inn Express 800-465-4329  
(Tell them you're with the Lectureship)

Limited housing is available in member's homes. Contact the church office at (662) 286-2040, (ecorinth@bellsouth.net). RV units may park beside the building with water and electrical hook-ups provided (sorry, no sewer hook-up. There is a dumping station in town). We would like to know in advance of your arrival to reserve you a space.

AUDIO TAPES are being offered free by the church. Donations to help defray the cost of these tapes are welcome.

VIDEO TAPES are available for \$40 for the set (postage paid). Order from:

James Green  
2711 Spring Meade Blvd.,  
Columbia, TN 38401  
[www.geocities.com/ljgreencoc](http://www.geocities.com/ljgreencoc)  
(Nothing is being sold by the church)

BOOK of lessons: \$5.00 pre-publication price if postmarked by July 31, 2003. \$6.50 beginning Aug. 1, 2002. Please include postage and handling: 1 book \$1.75, add 50cents for each additional book. Make checks payable to "Old Paths Publishing" and mail to: PO Box 97, Nettleton, MS 38858. These books are not sold by the church.

The latest schedule and information can be found at:

[www.eastcorinth.org/lect2003.htm](http://www.eastcorinth.org/lect2003.htm)

### East Corinth church of Christ

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came along centuries later in the form of the perpetual celibacy of the Nuns and Convents of the Roman church (cf. 1 Tim. 4:3).

But the folks at Richland Hills are just trying to ape their denominational friends. Because of the Women's Liberation Movement in this country, many religious bodies are falling all over themselves to "ordain" women as deacons, bishops and priests. They boast how "progressive" they are. The real word to describe this practice is "digressive" or departing from the pattern of the New Testament. They have digressed "beyond the things which were written" (1 Cor. 4:6) and "goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ" (2 John 9, ASV). It is something not new at all, to seek to adapt to the world. The prophet Samuel heard the ancient Israelites say "Now make

us a king to judge us like all the nations" (1 Sam. 8:5); and that was almost 3,000 years ago.

In fact, the goings on at Richland Hills sound a lot like what happened over a hundred years ago in this country. Digressive brethren, wanting to be like the denominations, moved in a piano or organ into church buildings via the back door. At first, the instrument was placed in the basement to only be used on special occasions. Soon it was in the auditorium covered by a sheet for "convenience sake." Finally, the sheet was removed and the worship of God was profaned (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17). Bible believing brethren were forced to leave because of this "back door strategy." The digressives formed their own denomination, the Disciples of Christ/Christian Church complete with organs and eventually

female elders.

It does not take a prophet or the son of a prophet to see the consequences of Richland Hills' Fellow Servants abomination. Eventually there will be female elders and female preachers. Once we take the broad way "that leadeth to destruction" (Matt. 7:13), we can let the top down, shift into high gear and go full throttle down the paved highway of apostasy. Soon you don't even need a back door strategy, all will be accepted. But any attempt to please ourselves without considering God's will does not please God. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"* (Matt. 7:21).

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## THE ROLE OF WOMEN

James Cossey

When one studies the Bible, it does not take long to realize the marvelous roll that women had in God's glorious plan of salvation. In the very beginning we learn of a promised seed through woman: *"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"* (Gen. 3:15). Without woman, there would have been no savior!

We read of many great women in the Bible. Not too many years after creation and the fall of man, the Bible introduces to us a godly woman whose name was **Jochebed**, the wife of Amram. This woman showed great faith and courage when she defied the wicked Pharaoh's law. *"And Pharaoh charged all his people saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast in the river; and every daughter ye shall save alive"* (Exodus 1:22). Jochebed's faith led her to hide her "goodly child," and when the time came, by faith she put him in the river in an ark, not knowing what would become of him. It was through this faithful and courageous act and the providence of God that Moses, one of the greatest leaders of the Israelites, grew up to serve God. In that same period of time one must not

overlook the faith of the midwives. They, like Jochebed, were faithful to God and not to man. *"But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive"* (Exodus 1:17).

We read of David's great grandmother **Ruth**, who was an ancestor of the Christ. Ruth was a woman of faithful dedication and determined to do right. Note her beautiful words as recorded in the book that bears her name. *"Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me"* (Ruth 1:16-17).

We read of **Esther** and her great faith. She was willing to die for God's purpose and glory. *"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day; I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish"* (Esther 4:16).

In the New Testament, we can learn of many great and godly women. We can read of faithful **Mary**, the mother of Jesus. We learn of the poor widow who had enough faith to cast all the money she had into the treasury. We learn of **Martha** and **Mary**, close companions of the Lord. In the book of Acts we read of **Dorcas**, **Lydia** and **Priscilla**. Great lessons could be taught pertaining to all the women mentioned. This list is not exhaustive by any means, but it will suffice to show that godly women were needed and used in Old Testament times and New Testament times as well. This need has not changed. In fact, if it were not for some great wives and mothers, there would be a lot less faithful men to carry on the work of the church. To this we would all agree.

Since we have shown that God uses women in his work, we need to understand their role in the church today. We should not waver to the right nor left from God's instructions pertaining to them and their work. Paul taught Timothy about the role of women. *"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But (which*

*becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety” (1 Tim.2:9-15).*

Notice some of the instructions Paul gives pertaining to what a godly woman must be. 1) *A godly woman will know how to dress.* Today, it seems that things get shorter, tighter and sometimes just plain sloppy. The disturbing part about this type of clothing is that many of my sisters in Christ are advocating the wearing of such, and have no shame in doing so! I believe Jeremiah was dealing with the same problem in his day when he said, *“Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD” (Jer. 6:15).* Brother Taylor made these comments on how women were to adorn themselves: *“Women are to adorn (make attractive) themselves not by daring displays of female flesh or by external displays of hairdos, expensive jewelry and extravagant garments but by the wearing of modest apparel and the proper manifestation of shamefacedness and sobriety.”* It would do the church well if preachers would preach on this and elders would enforce God’s laws on the matter. Men need the same lessons as well!

2) *The woman’s behavior is to be that of quietness and submission in public worship (vs.11-12).* This is where we have so many problems today in the church. It is not uncommon to see or hear of a woman “pastor” in the denominational world or women serving in various roles. This does not surprise most of us in the church. However, when we see elders and leaders of the Lord’s church allowing women to teach mixed classes, serve on the table, make announcements, pray in service, and such like, we should be horrified! It has been the case that in some churches women have even been allowed to preach. What a disgrace to the Lord! When

this occurs, God’s people should take the sword of the Spirit and defend the bride of Christ. The Holy Spirit says, *“I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but be in silence” (1 Tim 2:12).* This simply means that the woman cannot be the domineering one in the public worship and it is time for us to realize this. This is not a rule men have made. It is a law given by God, and those who disagree with this law should take their

grievance to Him.

The woman’s role is very important to the success of the church. However, when this role is abused and misused it brings nothing but hurt and destruction to the Lord’s church. We should always recognize the beauty and glory that women can bring into the church, but we must never alter God’s word.

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## In the News...

The World Christian is the official publication of the World Convention. This group claims to be for the union of the churches of Christ, the Disciples of Christ, and Christian Church. In the latest mailing, they list congregations that financially supported the group in the past few months. **Woodmont Hills church of Christ** in Nashville, Tennessee is listed. Also, they have advertise their World Meeting to be held in England in 2004. Hosting one of the tours for the group is **Doug Foster**, faculty member at Abilene.

Not only is the following a waste and misuse of the Lord’s money, it is an unholy alliance and fellowship with denominationalism. Such is forbidden in Eph. 5:11, 2 John 9-11, and Rom. 16:17-18.

### BAPTIST CHURCH, CHURCH OF CHRIST TO SHARE BANNED OKLAHOMA CROSS

*By Jerry Pierce*

OKLAHOMA CITY (BP) — **Quail Springs Baptist Church** and neighboring **Quail Springs Church of Christ** are making room on their adjoining campuses for a 30-foot tall cross ordered removed in February after standing 43 years at State Fair Park in Oklahoma City.

The Oklahoma City city manager ordered the concrete cross to be taken down after letters from James A. Worrell of Oklahoma City and the Wisconsin-based Freedom from Religion Foundation challenged its legality on city-owned State Fairgrounds property.

The City Council of Oklahoma City on May 29 awarded the churches joint possession of the cross. They were among five groups bidding for it.

..... The Quail Springs churches’ high bid of \$5,000 and proposal to display the cross with a lighted prayer garden won city officials’ approval.

“Our motivation in pursuing the cross was two-fold,” said Hance Dilbeck, pastor at Quail Springs Baptist. “First, we wanted to indicate the common bond we have with the Church of Christ next door — both seeking to preach Christ and Him crucified.

“Also, to indicate that no matter what goes on with civil government, churches will be the primary ones proclaiming the message of the Gospel.”

Tony Freitas, outreach minister at Quail Springs Church of Christ, said the north Oklahoma City congregations have worked together with an “awesome spirit” since they began sharing traffic police on Sunday mornings about four years ago.

On June 29, the congregations will co-host their fourth “Freedom and Faith” celebration featuring Christian bands, inflatable games, free food and brief messages from both pastors, Dilbeck and Mark Henderson, the Quail Springs Church of Christ senior minister.

The churches hope to have an “unveiling ceremony” during the June 29 celebration and to include some historical information on the cross when the prayer garden is completed, Dilbeck said.



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

grateful to be able to benefit from your excellent efforts. We pray you will continue your work in these areas. Thank you again" ...**Duluth church of Christ, Duluth, MN.** "Hope this finds you all well. Keep up the good work. I frequently use *STOP* as a reference in teaching and preaching" ...**William Schwegler, Bossier City, LA.** "I enjoy *Seek the Old Paths*" ...**Nolan Isbell, Joppa, AL.** "Please take me off your mailing list" ...**Barbara Mathis, Cookeville, TN.** "Please remove my name from the mailing list. Thank You!" ...**Kathy Burgess, Rayville, LA.** "Check enclosed to aid the church there in its work with *Seek the Old Paths* and as an expression of appreciation for the support of my book in its paper" ...**Frank Chesser, Montgomery, AL.** "Greetings and blessings to you, and may God continue to bless you with good health as you go along to serve Him, so that, continue the good work being done through the *Seek the Old Paths*. This is to let you know, and would like to tell you how much I enjoy receiving and reading the paper. It is very uplifting and interesting article. I hope you will continue to keep my name on your mailing list. I'm happy to inform you also that, since I received *STOP*, we have 10 souls was baptized and added into the Lord's church, and 4 families was restored. We have 30-35 membership in this new congregation right now" ...**Emelito V. Solon, Philippines.** "Thank you for another year of Old Paths lessons and keeping us informed of what is going on in the brotherhood. It is so sad that the liberalism road is getting longer and so many churches are choosing to follow it! May the new year see your mailing list continue to grow and your year be healthy and safe" ...**Name Withheld.** "*Seek the Old Paths* is my paper, I enjoy it so very much. I get 5 papers, only 2 of them teach the truth as the Bible teaches" ...**Gertrude Peacock, New Albany, MS.** "I ask you to please accept my small contribution to your work in defending the faith. I am praying for this work" ...**Name Withheld.** "Keep up the good work. I appreciate the work you are doing. Keep sending it" ...**Ray Swanson, Wauneta, NE.** "Thank you so very much for sending the *STOP* publication to the church that meets in Allenhurst, GA. Please accept the enclosed check to be used in whatever way you deem best in publication and distribution of this outstanding publication. Keep up the good work. May God continue to bless your efforts" ...**Bob Miller, Church of Christ, Allenhurst, GA.** "We appreciate your sending us *Seek the Old Paths*. Thank you" ...**Francis E. Davis, Neenah, WI.** "Thanks for the great work you are doing! We are proud to help you spread the word" ...**Donald Ginn, Saks church of Christ, Anniston, AL.** "Thank you so much for your dedication for the truth and for revealing the much-troubled problems that are facing us in the church today. Please continue to *Seek the Old Paths* because so many are falling away" ...**Art Harris, Bowling Green, KY.** "Keep up the good work" ...**Floyd Roe, Cushing, OK.** "Christian greetings in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior! May the grace and peace of our heavenly Father through our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Thank you very much for helping my ministry through your paper entitled *Seek the Old Paths*. It is very useful in my work of preaching and teaching of the Word of God. You can visit the Philippines to know the spiritual and physical condition of the churches of our Lord, especially in the provinces. I cannot still afford to pay my subscription to *Seek the Old Paths*. So I request again my renewal to it to be free. I thanked you for continue helping my ministry in this country through your paper. As an evangelist, my works are: to evangelize and to edify churches by setting them in order, by straightening them up that are out of order, and by training laborers. I need your assistance in order to accomplish my works. I need your prayers for my works, health, and family. I need some reading materials for free distribution that will and can be used for Sunday Schools. Christian books on various doctrines of the church, and bibles (especially KJV) are needed. Video and audio tapes on evangelism, worship, and holiness are needed also. Yes, I visit to edify churches by preaching and teaching the pure Gospel for God's glory. I invite you to visit the churches where I visit and preach the Word. I pray to our heavenly Father to continue bless you and to give you the heavenly wisdom and good health in order for you to continue doing His will in your area and out" ...**Serafin M. Calixto, Batangas, Philippines.** "I have returned to full-time work and relocated in Eastern

"First of all, we would like to thank you for sending us the video tapes. We greatly appreciate them. We currently do not have a preacher and these tapes allow us to hear some very good Gospel sermons. Your congregation is involved in another work we appreciate very much also, the publishing of *Seek the Old Paths*. The congregation here is

Ohio. I have always appreciated you and your loyalty to our Lord and His church. Please place me on the mailing list of *STOP*. Thank you so much!" ...**Jack Openshaw, Hanoverton, OH.** "We are a small congregation in need of good gospel literature such as you provide. We would all appreciate being placed on your mailing list. Thank you!" ...**Crossroads church of Christ, Lynn, AL.** "My husband is deceased but I would like to continue to receive your paper. Enclosed you will find a small contribution. Please use it where needed. Thank you so much for the work you are doing" ...**Margaret Wittig, Bizbee, AZ.** "You are doing a great job writing *Seek the Old Paths*. Keep up the good work. I am thankful for your keeping us informed. God bless. Thanks" ...**Charles Maxwell, Cookeville, TN.** "We appreciate your stamina and persistence in proclaiming the truth. God bless you in your efforts" ...**Donald White, Purcell, OK.** "Enclosed is a check to help in the teaching of God's word. Enjoy the paper very much and the sound articles you print. Wish all of the bulletins by other people could be this sound. May God's blessing always be with you in your efforts to teach his word as it is written" ...**Thresa Weir, Sulphur Springs, TX.** "Please stop all mailing to this address. Thank you" ...**Oliver Seat, Batesville, AR.** "I am a member of the Harmony Church of Christ in Saratoga, AR. I read one of your mail outs and it was a joy to read after being told so many times that we are outdated and should change, but God's word has not changed and I am proud to see someone that stands on that principle. If possible, I would like to have 10 copies for our members" ...**Harmony Church of Christ, James Vaughn, Saratoga, AR.** "We were recently given several copies of this pamphlet and were certainly impressed with each article's clarity and truthfulness always giving Scripture to uphold the truth of God's Word. Please include us on your mailing list. May God bless you in this good work" ...**Charles Nicks, Hayesville, NC.** "Would you please add me to your mailing list? I recently was handed a copy of *Seek the Old Paths* and found it very enjoyable. I would appreciate receiving it on a regular basis" ...**Jesse A. Baird, Jr., Jacksonville, FL.**

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

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