

# 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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## REACHING THE LOST WITH ERROR?

*Marvin L. Weir*

Some who have received their education from sources **not** to be confused with the Word of God are now boldly advocating reaching the lost with error. The October issue of *The Christian Chronicle* (not known for taking a Biblical stance) notes that **Max Lucado** and the Oak Hills church have decided to add an instrumental service and then adds:

Other churches known to have added instrumental services – besides 3,800-member Oak Hills – includes Northwest, Seattle, the largest in that region; Amarillo South, Texas; Farmer's Branch, Texas; and Southlake Boulevard in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

The director of church growth studies at Harding University, Flavil Yeakley, says, "Is this a trend? I would think of it as five isolated tragedies." John Ellas, director of the center for church growth in Houston "sees a small trend related to music tied to a larger reality." Ellas also says, "A much larger trend is the willingness to reevaluate previous theological positions, and a growing number of members are coming to very different conclusions about numerous church practices."

One would have to have his head buried in the sand to not see that for several decades liberalism has infiltrated congregation after congregation of the Lord's people. Thus, no

longer content to respect the authority of God's Word, many brethren are now working feverishly to lead all who will follow them into apostasy.

Rubel Shelly, ultra liberal preacher for the 2,200 member *Woodmont Hills Church* in Nashville, says:

I am deeply committed to a cappella music. I do my best to make a strong, reasonable, biblical case for it. I would oppose anyone's effort to introduce it into our congregational worship at Woodmont Hills. In my view, it would be divisive and therefore wrong for anyone to attempt to do so. I'm not about to champion instrumental music for the Church of Christ. I do plead, however, for a more creative, passionate, and worshipful use of vocal music. Human voices compelled by hearts zealous for Christ are capable of producing powerful, God-honoring, and participant-inspiring praise. I am an unabashed defender of our a cappella legacy. But when someone wants me to go further and to condemn to hell someone who doesn't agree with my view, or to criticize congregations that choose to use instruments because they believe it will assist their outreach in a community different from mine, I

have no interest in pursuing the discussion.

Instrumental music and the atonement are not of the same status or consequence to the human soul and its eternal welfare.

On the one hand, Rubel boldly proclaims he will not be the one to "champion instrumental music for the Church of Christ," but on the other hand he will not "condemn to hell someone who doesn't agree with [his] view." The "I'm okay, you're okay" approach is mighty soothing! It is, however, the Bible view that matters. Instrumental music is not in the same optional category as eating meats (Rom. 14:1-3,15). Yes, Rubel, adding the instrument to God-authorized singing will be of eternal consequence to the human soul (Rev. 22:18-19)! The liberal's only concern is "outreach" — filling the building with people who are willing to fork over a dollar!

The preacher at Southlake Boulevard, Keith Luttrell, defends adding the instrument by saying, "Relevance is driving it. Relevance to our community. Reaching out to seekers." It is stated that over 850 attend each week and more than 600 attend the service that uses the instrument. One thing is amazingly clear — this group of people prefer **relevance** over **Scripture** as the driving force!

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**Reaching The Lost...**



Guest Editorial

## THE SPIRIT OF DIOTREPHESES

Jacob Campbell

*Brothers and sisters who have the spirit of Diotrephees and whose love for preeminence takes precedence over truth have caused Gospel preachers to lose their jobs, elderships to fall apart, and congregations to split.*

**“I**wrote unto the church; but Diotrephees, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church” (3 John 9,10).

There are many examples of great men and women of faith recorded in both the Old and New Testaments. These are written for our learning and encouragement (Rom. 15:4; Heb. 11:1-12:1), and we would benefit greatly to imitate those good examples (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1). Then, on the other hand, there are records in the Bible of people and individuals whose examples we would certainly not want to follow. These examples of unfaithful and unbelieving men and women are written for our admonition and warning, and we would do well to study and learn from them, lest we also fall in the same manner they did (1 Cor. 10:1-12; Heb. 3:7-15; 4:1-11). One such bad example is that of Diotrephees (3 John 9,10). His example is not one we should try to imitate, but rather, one that we should be familiar with so that we do not find ourselves guilty of the same sins he committed.

Diotrephees loved to have the preeminence among brethren (3 John 9). He wanted to be “top dog” in the church. He loved for people to look up to him and would not tolerate any “competition.” He reminds us of the Pharisees, who loved the first seats in the synagogue and greetings in the marketplace (Luke 11:43). Diotrephees was out of line. In the church there is no one more impor-

tant than another (1 Cor. 12:12-31; Rom. 12:3-5). We ought to do nothing with the intent of being praised or respected by others. “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” (Phil. 2:3). Are we full of pride? Do we seek recognition for what we do in the service of God? Do we get angry if we are not always the center of attention?

Diotrephees spoke against his brethren with malicious words and would not receive them (3 John 10). This was a result of pride. John and other faithful Christians were a threat to Diotrephees’ preeminence, so, naturally, they were counted as enemies. Remember, Paul asked the Galatians, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth” (Gal. 4:16)? Diotrephees should have repented of his prideful heart, put on the bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, and love (Col. 3:12-15). He should have received those brethren.

Diotrephees cast out of the church those who supported the true and faithful brethren (3 John 10). Contrast what Diotrephees did with what John wrote in 3 John 5-8. Diotrephees not only rejected faithful Christians, but tried to get others to do the same. Again, we are reminded of the Pharisees. Jesus said to them, “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in” (Matt. 23:13). We see the destructive nature of pride and what it can do to a group of God’s children.

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to hear today of brothers and

sisters who have the spirit of Diotrephees. Their love for preeminence takes precedence over truth, and has caused Gospel preachers to lose their jobs, elderships to fall apart, and congregations to split. Let us avoid becoming like Diotrephees. Let us examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5), always praying that the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace would prevail among members of the church (Eph. 4:3).

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### Reaching The Lost...

(Continued from page 57)

Chris Seidman, preacher at the Farmer’s Branch Church says that since they have added “a Saturday night instrumental service in addition to two Sunday morning a cappella services, they have grown from 1,000 to 1,400.” He says of the new folks they now have coming, “People with religious backgrounds, but who haven’t gone for some time. They were worn out with the same old thing.” One thing the liberal doesn’t mind doing is giving folks something shiny and new and totally foreign to the Bible.

Amarillo South began using the instrument in 2002 and went from 900 to 700 in attendance. However, minister Brad Small says that now they have “grown to 1,200 and the congregation considers itself a non-denominational community church.” Enough said!

The author of the article, Lindy Adams, notes, “The churches who have added instrumental services cite a common motivation — evangelism and outreach. All report increases in attendance since the switch.”

Now to the heart of the matter! God will not accept unscriptural worship — worship **must** be in spirit and truth (John 4:24). There is Bible authority for singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), but no Bible authority for the instrument, so it is not according to truth (John 17:17).

It does not matter how many people you pack into a building — you cannot reach the lost and save souls with error!

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# AHAB'S MARRIAGE TO JEZEBEL

## How It Wreaked Havoc Among God's People

Roger D. Campbell

**A**hab was the 7th king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. All nineteen of the kings that reigned in the North were wicked, but Ahab's wickedness outdid them all. *"But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up"* (1 Kings 21:25). The Bible makes it plain that Ahab's wife, Jezebel, who slew prophets of Jehovah (1 Kings 17:4,13) and ruthlessly got rid of anyone that got in her way, certainly had a hand in his evil activities. What a couple they made!

What do we know about the background of this woman whom King Ahab chose to be his mate? She is described as *"the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians"* (1 Kings 16:31). There are two points of interest from this statement. First, "Zidonians" were the inhabitants of the city of Zidon or Sidon, located on the Mediterranean Sea in the region known as Phoenicia. The Zidonians were counted as part of the Canaanites that the children of Israel were to drive out of the land (Joshua 13:6). Thus, when Ahab married Jezebel, he was marrying a foreign woman and not an Israelitess. Second, Jezebel's daddy's name, Ethbaal, means "man of Baal" or "with Baal." Baal was the name of "the supreme male divinity of the Phoenician and Canaanitish nations" [Smith's Bible Dictionary, p.70]. So, Ahab took to wife a woman that came from a non-Israelite family that was heavily steeped in idol worship. What a choice!

All kings over God's people, including Ahab, had the responsibility to serve Jehovah and guide the nation to do the same. Hear what the Lord God told Israel in the days of Moses about any man that would reign over His people: *"And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book ... And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he*

*may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them...and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left..."* (Deut. 17:18-20). In all seriousness, what were the odds that Ahab would faithfully serve Jehovah when he was united with Jezebel? Honestly, was she the kind of woman that would help him do the things that God charged him to do? Not hardly!

Make no mistake about it, Ahab's "honey" had a horrible influence on God's people, and as we shall see, that influence continued after her departure from this world. Ahab's marriage to Jezebel reeked havoc among God's people in at least the following ways. Read 'em and weep:

1) *Jezebel influenced her husband, Ahab, to worship Baal.* The Bible's record is clear about what happened: *"...he took to wife Jezebel...and went and served Baal, and worshipped him"* (1 Kings 16:31). Ahab was corrupt. Jezebel's influence on him simply took him to a new level of wickedness. As we noted earlier, Ahab did evil "because Jezebel his wife stirred him up" (1 Kings 21:25, NKJV). So, a major point of Jezebel's influence on the people of God was the way she pulled Ahab's string.

2) *Jezebel, through Ahab, caused many Israelites in the Northern Kingdom to worship Baal.* "And he [Ahab, rdc] reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria" (1 Kings 16:32). And who came to worship in the house of Baal? Many children of the living God! The fourth king of Israel after Ahab, Jehu, "destroyed Baal out of Israel" (2 Kings 10:28), but Jezebel's corrupting influence caused untold multitudes to bow the knee to Baal, whom her father served.

3) *The daughter of Ahab and Jezebel was corrupt just like her mother was.* This was truly a case of "as is the mother, so is her daughter" (Ezekiel 16:44). Here is where the plot thickens. Athaliah, daughter of

Ahab and Jezebel, married Jehoram, king of Judah. What? Jezebel's daughter was queen in the Southern Kingdom? That's right. And how did she influence her husband? "Jehoram...walked in the way of the kings of Israel, like as did the house of Ahab: for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the sight of the Lord" (2 Chron. 21:6). Why was it that Jehoram, king of Judah, acted like Ahab's family? Because Athaliah, Jezebel's daughter was his wife. Consider what that means: Jezebel not only corrupted the king of the Northern Kingdom, through her daughter Athaliah, she also corrupted the king of the Southern Kingdom as well!

4) *Athaliah was corrupt.* She corrupted her husband. But that was not the extent of her corruption. She also corrupted her son, Ahaziah. Here is how the Bible describes it: "He [Ahaziah, rdc] also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly. Wherefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord..." (2 Chron. 22:3,4). Why, again, was Ahaziah so awful? Because Jezebel's daughter was his "personal trainer." She was his counselor of wickedness. Ahab's grandson, Ahaziah, was corrupt, and one of the reasons is the woman that Ahab married.

5) *Athaliah became ruler over Judah after her son died.* And what was she able to accomplish? She brought Baal worship into the Southern Kingdom just like her mama did in the North (2 Chron. 23:17; 24:7)! Do not lose sight of the link involved. Jezebel, through Athaliah, helped corrupt God's people in Judah so that they worshipped Baal. What a fine wife Ahab chose!

Ahab was a free moral agent. The people of the Northern Kingdom were free moral agents, as were Athaliah, Jehoram, Ahaziah, and the people of the Southern Kingdom. When these people made sinful choices, they had only themselves to

blame. They alone must take responsibility for their wrong course of action.

And yet, in all of this history,

there is the “unmissable” influence of Jezebel. She had her hand in the corruption of at least two kingdoms and three generations. What a jewel!

## IS FIRST CENTURY UNITY FOR OUR CENTURY?

*Dan Goddard*

**A** study of church unity necessarily involves answering two questions: Was there in the first century “one” visible body or church? If there was “one” visible church in the first century, did God intend for that “one” body to continue as such in following generations?

In this article, I affirm two propositions: first, that in the first century there was one and only one church on earth with God’s approval; second, that God wills the existence of only one visible church on earth now.

It will be observed that I do not, in this article, seek to justify the church with which I am associated. I am merely seeking to uphold a Bible teaching, whether that teaching is fulfilled in my brethren or not.

### ONE CHURCH IN PAUL’S DAY:

Every informed student of the Bible agrees that in the first century, God approved of no differing denominations; that at that time there was only one visible church on earth, made up of identical, visible, non-denominational congregations of people who called themselves just Christians. This is abundantly supported by the following Scriptures: Acts 2:47; 11:26; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:4-5.

### ONENESS WAS TO CONTINUE:

Most denominational theologians agree that what I say in the above division of this article is true. But they deny it should be so today. They say that “today is different.” They affirm that no church is perfect; that all denominations are branches of “the great invisible church of the redeemed,” etc., etc.

But I affirm that first century oneness was to continue; that a division of believers into sects and denominations is expressly condemned in the New Testament.

### 1 COR. 1:10-13 FORBIDS DENOMINATIONALISM:

The carnal division described and condemned in 1 Cor. 1:10-13 parallels perfectly, in principle, modern denominationalism and sectarianism.

### EPH. 4:3 DEMANDS ONENESS:

In Eph. 4:3, the Ephesians are urged to “keep the unity of the Spirit.” But that unity was composed in part of one visible church on earth. Therefore, primitive Christians were to keep or hold firmly to one visible church on earth. This “keeping” is still to be kept.

### DENOMINATIONALISM AND SECTARIANISM IS SINFUL:

In Gal. 5:20, Paul describes heresies as being of the flesh. The term “heresies” is translated from a Greek term which Thayer defines: “dissentions arising from differences of opinions and aims.” This definition is a veritable picture of modern denominationalism.

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What if Ahab had never married her? Yes, it is possible that he and all the others that we have noted would have been evil anyway. But, can anyone that reads the biblical record honestly say that Ahab made a wise choice when he married Jezebel?!

Sometimes we talk about a marriage being doomed before it ever gets started. That, good people, was surely true in the case of Ahab and Jezebel’s union. Oh, they may have been deeply in love with one another. They may have supported and comforted one another as all husbands and wives should. They may have had wonderful and memorable family outings and reunions. All of that means nothing, though, if they helped each other live a life that leads to hell.

Young brothers, it does not matter how pretty, popular, and pleasant a female may be. If she is not a faithful servant of Jesus, but you marry her anyway, she just may do to you, your children, and your grandchildren what Jezebel did to her husband and offspring. Are the souls involved really worth the risk?

And you, dear young sisters, it does not matter how handsome, awesome, and cool a male might be. If he does not faithfully serve Jesus, but you go on and marry him anyway, there is a great chance that he will help drag you, your children, and your grandchildren with him to perdition. He may not intend to do that, but that’s just what happens in many cases.

One final thought for our unmarried saints and kids. It may sound corny, but there really is a lot of wisdom in the words that follow. Before you walk down the aisle to give yourself in marriage to another person, you would do well to take a long, hard, serious look at the parents of the person you plan to marry. I do not mean to take a look at their photographs. Rather, look at their lifestyles. Men, look at how your future mother-in-law treats her husband. Chances are, that is the way your wife has been trained to treat her husband (you). Ladies, check out how your future father-in-law treats his wife. Again, chances are, that is the way your husband has been trained to treat his wife (you). If the potential in-laws drink, count divorce as a blessing, lie, make fun of

“church-goers,” gamble, or watch porno films, you had better watch out. The probability is very high that at least some, and perhaps all, of that same behavior will be repeated in the married life of that son or daughter of theirs that you think you want to spend the rest of your life with. If Ahab looked closely at the lifestyle of his future in-laws, he had to have seen an idol-worshipping family. The handwriting was on the wall. Ahab either missed it or ignored it. Brother or sister, don’t you do the same!

There is no denying this fact: Ahab’s marriage to Jezebel reeked havoc among God’s people for many generations. May God help us all to

see the obvious lessons from the history of their marriage and their horrible influence on their fellow man. I have not written a single word in this article with the intent of “getting on” any person living today that made a poor choice in spouses. Rather, I have written to encourage those that have not yet taken “the plunge” to be careful and prayerful about their choice of a mate. You see, it is possible your choice could help populate heaven through you and your offspring. But, on the other hand, your choice also might help you and yours to be lost. If you think that sounds serious, IT IS!

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## CLOSING WINDOWS

Recently, while opening an account for the local church at a religious book and supply business, the lady manager commented, “Oh, Church of Christ! That’s Max Lucado’s church.” I immediately began to distance myself, and the congregation, from Lucado’s ultra-liberal views and practice.

In further discussion she related how that she and some of her associates “knowing the reputation of the Church of Christ” were quite surprised and amused at the inconsistency of Lucado’s new CD release, *Opening Windows*, featuring an evening of praise and worship, which includes spiritual songs accompanied by musical instruments. I agreed that it was inconsistent with Bible teaching, but asked, “Are you certain there are instruments?” With eagerness she popped a CD in her player to let me hear for myself. The recording began with an introduction of “our minister, Max Lucado,” followed by a rousing round of applause. The manager got a chuckle when I remarked, “Funny! They don’t applaud when I get in the pulpit.” Sure enough, when the first song began, the sound of stringed instruments was obvious. I told the lady that I had heard enough and spent the rest of my time trying to explain that Lucado’s “inconsistency” was not really inconsistent with his liberal attitude toward the scriptures.

A gospel preacher who is a talented writer may author a book which will hit the best-seller list, but he can’t maintain that popularity without modifying his convictions or, at least, holding back truth (cf. Acts 20:20,27). Time and again it has been proven that the general public will not “endure sound doctrine” even if the writing style is desirable (cf. 2 Tim. 4:24). Popularity just among our brethren will never put an author on a best-seller list. Even many of the brethren with whom Lucado has been associated have been alarmed and embarrassed by his compromise on doctrinal issues. But, in reality, he is merely the product of the environment they have created. The brethren at whose feet he sat probably never taught him to seek scriptural authority via commands, statements, approved examples and necessary implications. Or, if they did, they also taught him to make loose application of these principles.

Meanwhile, the list of unauthorized practices and brethren from whom we are forced to distance ourselves mounts.

— Al Diesielkamp

## In The News...

From The Torch,  
Lipscomb University,  
Summer 2004, p.7.

“A new major in worship ministry will be offered by Lipscomb University’s College of Bible and Ministry this fall. Offered in cooperation with the Department of Music, the major is designed to ‘prepare students with the knowledge and skills to assist congregations in meaningful, purposeful times of worship,’ said Dr. Terry Briley, professor of Bible and dean of the College of Bible and Ministry. The new major is a response to a growing interest among churches and worshippers in the nature, effectiveness and unity of worship, he said, “Worship involves the interrelationship of Scripture, song, prayer, communion at the table, and their impact on the lives of members of the body. It is a challenge to coordinate these various aspects of worship in a way that is cohesive, pleasing to God, and effective in touching the hearts and minds of the worshippers,” Briley said. The major is not designed to emphasize a particular worship style, but to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for effective worship leading in any church setting, he said.

The worship ministry major will focus on three main areas: leading congregational worship, finding and arranging music appropriate for a cappella worship and working with church singers, he said. Courses will emphasize biblical studies, historical and theological aspects of worship, and development of the musical skills necessary to adapt songs for use in worship, he said. Briley said he believes the worship ministry major is the first to be offered among institutions associated with the churches of Christ. Lipscomb was also the first to offer a children’s ministry major. For full information on the worship ministry major and other biblical studies at Lipscomb, call 615-279-6051, 800-333-4358, ext. 6051, or email michael.moss@lipscomb.edu”

## Comment on the above...

I wonder how the church has managed to worship effectively for 2,000 years without this? And, I wonder what is meant by ‘any church setting’ in reference to ‘worship style?’ Since other schools have followed the lead on children’s ministry degrees, how long before they follow on the worship degree? Are we just getting closer and closer to having a professional clergy? Now we have congregations mandating a degree for pulpit preacher, youth minister, elderly minister, music minister, and worship minister. If you do not have an accredited degree, you just do not have the knowledge capable of being a leader in the church. Some congregations are even mandating a master’s degree.

Intimated by the above article, unless you have this worship ministry degree, you may just be getting lucky in having a cohesive, pleasing and effective worship. After all, it is really hard to sing, preach, give, pray and take the Lord’s supper in a cohesive way. It is really hard to touch the hearts and minds of worshippers, unless you have the in-depth knowledge this degree will give you....

— Freddie Clayton

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*The article quoted below comes from World Christian, Third Quarter, 2002, p.7 (Quarterly Paper of World Convention [Christian-Churches of Christ-Disciples of Christ].*

## STONE-CAMPBELL DIALOGUE EXPANDS TO LOCAL AREAS

“The Dialogue, which has met twice a year since 2000, brings some twenty ministers and scholars from the Churches of Christ, Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, and the Disciples of Christ together for dialogue concerning their differences and their common concerns. The stated purpose of the Dialogue reads: “To develop relationships and trust within the three streams of the Stone-Campbell movement through worship and through charitable and frank dialogue, ‘that the world may believe.’”

“Dr. John Mills, Brunswick, Ohio, chaired this June meeting which was built around an area rally on Sunday

night. Members of the churches of all three branches of the Stone-Campbell Movement gathered at the Okolona Church of Christ for worship featuring the well-known quartet “Acappella.” A leader from each of the three branches in the Dialogue shared briefly their reason for being part of the Dialogue. The leaders were Dr. Doug Foster, Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas, Churches of Christ; Dr. Henry Webb, Milligan College, Johnson City, Tenn., Christian Churches/Churches of Christ; and Dr. Robert Welsh, Ecumenical Officer, Indianapolis, Ind., Disciples of Christ.

“On Monday evening leaders from Louisville area congregations were invited to join in small groups for discussions on the issues facing their congregations and the potential of working together with others of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Sixty ministers, elders, and leaders coming from 25 congregations were present for this event which is hoped to further local dialogue and encounter. Members of the Dialogue dealt with the question “What do we mean by Christian unity?” Brief statements were given by each of the three groups followed by a general discussion. The focus of the Dialogue for the future will be to serve as the catalyst for numerous rallies, joint worship and dialogue in the cities or regions where the Dialogue members live or have contacts who can do this work. The meetings in Louisville will serve as a model for these other events.

“Dialogue members firmly believe the work must go beyond the number of people in the formal dialogue. They recognize that the lack of communication between the three branches of the Stone-Campbell movement has gone on for far too long. The prayer of our Lord in John 17 that “they may all be one” needs to be fulfilled in each city or town. This does not mean merger, but developing working relationships, mutual trust and understanding. For any wishing to begin a dialogue in their area, the papers presented during the first two years of the formal Dialogue are available, as well as a new brochure presenting brief sketches on each of the three groups which was developed for use in the meetings in Louisville.

“All those concerned about the

unity of the church are invited to join in prayer that the prayer of John 17 might bear fruit in this generation.

Here are some comments regarding the above article:

Abilene professor **Doug Foster** plays a very important role in this apostate fellowship. The only thing the world will believe by watching these folks is that doctrine does not matter. Just ignore differences and get along. The world cannot believe in Jesus and follow the example of these folks. They are mutually exclusive.

Their reference to John 17 demonstrates a severe lack of what our Lord was saying. He wanted his disciples to be one as He and his Father were one. Are those in the Dialogue expecting us to believe that God the Father and Jesus Christ believed that there were differing ways to get to Heaven? Did Jesus have his way and God the Father have another way? Did they just decide to get along even though they could not agree that baptism is essential to become a Christian? Did Christ intend for there to be branches of a movement instead of unity of One? If Christ was meaning that there could be disagreements on doctrine just as long as they all believed in Him and his Father, then Paul was wrong for condemning divisions in 1 Corinthians chapter one.

Also, note the constant use of the phrase, Stone-Campbell Movement. Do they not believe that they are members of the Lord’s church? Why use this phrase unless they also believe there are saved individuals outside of what they term as the Stone-Campbell Movement? I wonder if those of the first century referred to themselves as members of the Peter-Paul Movement? After all, it would be perfectly all right, according to members of Dialogue, if some believed one thing and others another. All that is important is that they all believe in Jesus.

It is a joke when these folks talk about themselves as scholars. A true Biblical scholar would never even suggest that such teaching could be in accordance with God’s teachings.

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# IS IT SCRIPTURAL TO TAKE COMMUNION ON ANY DAY?

*Douglas Hoff*

Occasionally we hear of people eating the Lord's supper on a day other than the Lord's day (i.e., Sunday). The question naturally comes up, "Is this OK?" To determine if God approves of this practice we need to search the scriptures (John 5:39; Acts 17:11). Everything a Christian does is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus (Col. 3:17). Is there any authority for taking communion on a day other than Sunday? If the Bible does not address the matter in any way (i.e., command, example or necessary inference), then there is no authority for the practice and must be rejected.

First, is there a command to partake of the Lord's table on any specific day at all? No. When Jesus instituted his memorial he did not specify the day or days to observe it. However, Christians are commanded to "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). The only way to discover which day to take communion is by considering when the first Christians did so. Since eating the Lord's supper is clearly an act of worship, when would we expect the church to engage in this action? The obvious answer is Sunday. Why Sunday? Well, there are several good reasons. First, it is the day when Jesus rose from the grave (John 20:1ff). Second, it is the day on which the church was established (Acts 2:1). Third, it is the day Paul specified the church was to give of their means (1 Cor. 16:1,2). Acts records that the brethren at Troas met upon the first day of the week to "break bread" and on that occasion Paul preached to them (Acts 20:7). This is an

example of Christians purposely waiting until the first day of the week to take communion (Acts 20:6). Why wait until Sunday to take the Lord's supper with the disciples if it is permissible on any other day? After all, Paul was in Troas a whole week. He stayed there long enough to be able to eat the Lord's supper with them.

Would it be scriptural to take the Lord's supper on any day other than Sunday? No. There is no command to do so, no approved example of the apostles or early church doing so and no reasonable conclusion to justify the practice. Thus, it cannot be done in the name of the Lord Jesus since God's word does not authorize it. To take the Lord's supper on any day other than the first day of the week is vain worship and sinful (Matt. 15:8,9; John 4:23,24; Col. 2:8,23).

Some might argue the point that there is an example of the early church taking communion on a day other than Sunday. They might point to Acts 2:46 which says, "*And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.*" Does this verse mean Christians were taking communion daily in their houses? No. In this verse Luke used the Greek word *trophe* ("meat") which means nourishment. The Lord's supper is not taken to nourish our bodies but ordinary meals are. This is a setting for a common meal, not the Lord's supper.

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