



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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A GROWING OMISSION IN MODERN DAY PREACHING (NOT PRESENTING THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION)

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

Why are more and more of our preachers omitting the plainly stated stipulations of the Gospel plan of salvation in EVERY sermon they preach? I would not dare do this. I am now in my 63rd year as a preacher and each time I have given the invitation, I have told people what to do to be saved. I emphasize *hearing, faith, repentance, confession and baptism* (Rom. 10:17; John 8:21,24; Acts 17:30; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 2:38 or Mark 16:16). I also make a point to tell any erring member of the church who needs to be restored what God's plan of salvation states (Acts 8:22; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9). I have done this consistently from 1949 to 2012 and plan no change in this. I feel strongly that we are not ready to sing the invitation song until the above has been done. Should this not be the sentiment of EVERY Gospel preacher?

I preached in a West Tennessee meeting some years back. I gave the Gospel plan of salvation at the initial service. Present for that service was a visitor from the state of Washington. He had come back to his West Tennessee home area to visit relatives and dear friends. As he shook my hand at the door he said, "I have not heard my local preacher in Washington give the plan of salvation in a dozen years. I commend you for doing

it today in your first sermon of this meeting." I asked him, "Do you not have elders there?" He assured me they did. I asked, "Why have they not corrected it?" He knew they had no justification for their lack of corrective action. In this case, both preacher and elders were at serious fault.

Our elders here at Ripley, Tennessee, insist the plan of salvation be given at EVERY service. I did this for 36 years and our new preacher, Justin Paschall, continues this well established practice. No one leaves a Sunday morning, Sunday night or Wednesday night service without hearing spelled out the Gospel plan of salvation. This is the way it should be everywhere, but alas it is not!

Some years back we were having a Gospel meeting here at Ripley. Consistently, we have always had excellent attendance with many from the community in attendance. On a particular night of that meeting we had a well-known religious leader visit the meeting. This was the first time I had ever seen him at one of our services and he has not been back since. The visiting preacher did not give the Gospel plan of salvation anywhere in his sermon. After the meeting was over one of our alert elders said in my hearing, "A man like ___ should never leave one of our services without hearing the Gospel plan of salva-

tion. The visiting preacher had to be corrected on this for the rest of the meeting.

I remember hearing the late and lamented Guy N. Woods say, "If I were preaching to a group of elders and preachers, I would still give the Gospel plan of salvation at the end of the service. I do not want to get out of the habit of doing it. That is my sentiment 100%. Why is not such the sentiment of ALL our preachers?"

Some years back when I preached at Ripley, Mississippi, I preached Sunday morning, conducted the funeral for our oldest member early that afternoon and drove to Middle Tennessee to begin a Gospel meeting that Sunday evening at 7:30 near Columbia, Tennessee. On the way, late in the afternoon, I picked up on radio the evening service from a nearby congregation. The program came on at 6:00 and lasted one hour. Hence, I heard its entirety. At no time in all that sermon did he tell his congregational audience or his radio audience what to do to be saved. Surely, there were many people traveling or confined at home listening to that radio sermon. In all probability there were people listening to that wonderful medium of radio who did

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A Growing Omission...



Editorial...

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Garland M. Robinson

I grew up hearing brethren say (at the Lord's table from time to time) that the Lord's supper was a remembrance of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord. I never questioned it. Never thought anything about it. Even repeated it. And then, many years ago, I heard a sermon where the points discussed showed that the Lord's supper was a memorial of the Lord's suffering and death, not His resurrection. Having never heard that before, it was new to me. But, after considering the subject, I understood it more perfectly (cf. Acts 18:26). When we learn better, we do better.

These are the verses which speak about the Lord's supper.

Matthew 26:26-29, "And as they were eating, *Jesus took bread*, and blessed [it], and brake [it], and gave [it] to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; **this is my body**. And *he took the cup*, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For **this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins**. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Mark 14:22-25, "And as they did eat, *Jesus took bread*, and blessed, and brake [it], and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; **this is my body**. And *he took the cup*, and when he had given thanks, he gave [it] to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, **This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many**. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Luke 22:14-20, "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it

be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide [it] among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And *he took bread*, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, **This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me**. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, **This cup [is] the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you**."

I Corinthians 11:23-30, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the [same] night in which he was betrayed *took bread*: And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, *Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me*. After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me**. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink [this] cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not *discerning the Lord's body*. For this cause many [are] weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

Both Matthew and Mark say nothing more than the bread was the Lord's body and the cup (fruit of the vine) was his blood (that was shed for many for the remission of sins) and that the Lord would not partake of these things with them any more until the kingdom had come (e.g. the church was established).

Luke adds a little more by saying

the bread was His body "which is given for you" and they were to eat it in "remembrance of me" (a memorial).

First Corinthians 11 gives more detail. The bread is His body which is to be eaten "in remembrance of me." Also, the cup is "the new testament in my blood" and they would drink it "in remembrance of me." In partaking of the Lord's supper (both bread and cup), they would be showing "the Lord's death till he come." Verse 29 also says that in the observance of the Lord's supper, it would be "discerning the Lord's body." That is, we make a distinction between the bread and cup of the Lord's supper and a common meal. We must be thinking of and mindful of the Lord's body. That includes his suffering and death. It is not a time to be thinking of worldly things. We must focus our mind on things at hand. The text says, "the Lord's body."

Adding together all that is said about the observance of the Lord's supper, we find:

1) The bread (unleavened) represents and reminds us of the Lord's body.

2) The cup (fruit of the vine) represents and reminds us of the Lord's blood that was shed for the forgiveness of sins.

3) Both are to be eaten in remembrance of the Lord.

4) Both are to be eaten in remembrance of the Lord's death.

5) We must make a distinction between a common meal and the Lord's supper. That involves focusing our minds on his suffering and death — the very things He gave us instruction about.

In observing the Lord's supper, we are "mindful of" and "concentrate upon" the Lord's body, His blood, His death. These are the things specifically mentioned in connection with the observance of the Lord's supper. No mention is made in any of these passages of the Lord's resurrection having a connection or link to the Lord's supper. That does not, by any stretch of the imagination, minimize the importance and essentiality of the resurrection. We know very well, that had He not been raised from the dead, we are of all men most miserable (cf. 1 Cor. 15:19). In the total picture of the Lord's scheme of redemption, the resurrection is paramount. However, all we're able to observe in

what the Scriptures reveal is that inspiration did not directly connect the resurrection with the observance of the Lord's supper. Had God wanted it to be a part, he would have included it.

The fact that the church meets on the first day of the week is, in a sense, a remembrance of the Lord's resurrection. The Lord arose from the grave on the first day of the week (Mark 16:1-6). The apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1-4). The church was established on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1-4). We are to give of our means on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:2). The church in the New Testament ate the Lord's supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

Obviously, saints are always mindful of the Lord's resurrection. We are so thankful for the love of God that sent Jesus to die for our sins, that he was buried and that he arose from the dead for our justification (Rom. 1:4). He ascended back into heaven and sat down on the right hand of God. We therefore follow His instructions in all things, "till He comes again." He gave instruction concerning the Lord's supper. It is to be observed (eaten) upon the first day of every week (Acts 20:7). In so doing, we are mindful of the Lord's body, blood and death. We therefore think of the suffering He endured in His body and His subsequent death. We think of the sacrifice He made for us.

Four questions have been asked in respect to these things. Let's examine them.

1) *Betrayal was also mentioned in 1 Cor. 11:23 as well as our Lord's return in v.26 "till He come." Are these part of our "remembrance" also? — to be added to death and suffering.*

It appears that the Lord's betrayal is not directly connected to the observance of the supper since it is not represented in the bread or cup. It appears to be an "incidental", in that it is simply identifying the "time" at which the Lord instituted the supper. It was on the same night in which He was betrayed. It's obvious He was betrayed, the text says so. We are certainly aware of that fact and don't deny it. But, is it necessarily an essential part of the supper? I don't see the connection. The fact that the supper is to be observed till

he comes again simply informs us that the Lord's supper is to be observed as long as the world stands. It is a continuous memorial. Man has no right to dismiss it or change it in any way.

2) *Our remembrance would be: betrayal, suffering, death () come again. How could we leave out resurrection?*

Of course we're always mindful of the resurrection; and, so thankful for it. No faithful Christian denies that. But, the Scriptures do not directly link it to the Lord's supper. All the text says is that in the Lord's supper we remember: 1) the Lord's body that was given for us, 2) His blood that was shed for us and 3) by observing the supper, we show His death till He comes. In 1 Corinthians 11:27, the text says that if we eat the bread and drink the cup unworthily, we are guilty of the body and blood — we are eating and drinking damnation to ourselves (v.29). Nothing is said of being guilty of the body, blood and resurrection. Nothing is said about showing His resurrection till He comes. We do that by meeting on the first day of the week. Notice the words, body, blood and death. The resurrection is not mentioned.

3) *Would it be a sin to mention Jesus' resurrection in one's prayer at the table?*

To claim that in observing the Lord's supper we are partaking of a memorial in which we remember the Lord's body, blood, death and resurrection, is saying more than the Bible says. The scriptures specifically mention (link) the Lord's body, blood and death, but it does not mention (link) the resurrection to the observance of the Lord's supper. It is misleading to include the resurrection when the Scriptures do not include it. Again, this in no way diminishes the resurrection, it is essential to salvation. When we pray at the table, we simply seek to do Bible things in Bible ways. It may well be an opportune time to teach on the subject of the Lord's supper and what the Bible says about it and also of the resurrection and what the Bible says about it. But, while we, on the one hand, are so grateful for the Lord's resurrection, on the other hand, in observing the Lord's supper, we are particularly mindful of the Lord's body, blood and death. As Aquila and Priscilla expounded unto

Apollos the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:26), it would be appropriate that we do the same in informing brethren about the Lord's supper and the resurrection.

4) *Is it sin if one thinks about Jesus' burial and resurrection during the Lord's supper?*

It seems appropriate that what has been discussed in question 3 above would fit here. We deem it more fitting to have in our minds what the Scriptures tell us to have in our minds and not add anything to it. In all acts of worship, our minds are filled with the totality of everything involved in our redemption (i.e. everything the Scriptures say on every subject that is connected with redemption, salvation, worship, etc.). But, more specifically, during that part of worship which is the eating of the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:20), communion (1 Cor. 10:16), the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:21), we focus our minds upon that about which the Lord gave us instruction; namely, the body, the blood and the death of our Lord.

Let us all study to show ourselves approved unto God, being a workman that is not ashamed, rightly dividing, handling correctly, the word of truth (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15).

A Growing Omission...

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not know what to do to be saved. If there were, they did not learn it from this incomplete radio sermon.

From 1974 to 2010, I preached about 4,500 radio sermons on WTRB, our local radio station. I was on three mornings each week. I never grew tired of quoting the Gospel plan of salvation at the end of each radio message. We have many non-members who listen to this on a regular basis.

More and more we hear it said at the end of a lesson, "If you have needs, come as we stand and sing." Why not tell how they are to come — obeying the Gospel plan of salvation with both God's first law of pardon and His second law of pardon? Back up each demanded command with a "thus saith the Lord."

This growing omission needs to be corrected, YESTERDAY!!

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DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT

Lloyd Gale

False teachers do, on occasion, accurately teach a portion of the scriptures.

One would have to be willingly ignorant today, not to recognize that religious leaders may be found teaching anything and everything that might gain a following. But worse than that is the fact that so many are willing to be led by such blind leaders. However, such is nothing new. When it was brought to the attention of Jesus that He had offended the Pharisees by exposing their false doctrine, here was His answer. *“Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch”* (Matt. 15:13-14).

False teachers do, on occasion, accurately teach a portion of the scriptures. I chanced upon a religious program not long ago that was doing a pretty good job of exposing some of the fallacies of organic evolution while upholding the Biblical account of creation. But then at the end of the program came their man-made doctrine. The preacher said that those who desired to be saved should say a humanly concocted prayer for salvation. This directly contradicts what Jesus and His Apostles taught. We have in the New Testament, clear teaching as well as a number of examples of what one must do in order to have their sins forgiven to become a Christian, and not one time does it involve prayer. Prayer cannot reach the saving blood of Jesus Christ. Prayer is, however, involved in restoring a fallen Christian.

We have the example of Saul of Tarsus who was sent to Damascus by Jesus. He spent three days in prayer and fasting but was still a lost sinner. It was not until Ananias came and instructed the believing and repentant Paul to *“arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”* It was only then that Saul's sins were forgiven (Acts 22:16). Therefore **faith, repentance, confession** and **baptism** were required for the remission of Paul's sins.

The second chapter of Acts gives

an account of the first Gospel sermon ever preached and supplies the answer to the question of what a believer in Jesus Christ as Savior must do in order to be saved. The question of the believing Jews was: *“What shall we do”* (Acts 2:38)? If saying a prayer would save them, then that is what the Apostles should have answered. However, that was not what they told the believing Jews to do. They were told to, *“repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...”* The answer is the same for all who desire to be saved.

We plead for people to understand that we are not going to be judged by any or all of the human creeds and doctrines of men, but by the words of Jesus Christ. 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 12:48).

This is why every Gospel preacher should say and teach that one should not take any man's word concerning salvation; but should only seek to know and follow the words of Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy to study and rightly divide God's word. Now that we have the final and complete teaching of Jesus Christ, we know the exact standard by which we will be judged. There is no excuse for us to be unprepared for the day of judgment (Heb. 9:27). This is why much of the teaching where I preach is done in expository form — a word by word, verse by verse, chapter by chapter, and book by book teaching of the words of Jesus Christ and his ambassadors the apostles. Today, many members of the church of Christ are led astray due to the fact that they are willingly ignorant of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Bible study for many has been replaced by social activities and entertainment.

God's people are specifically instructed not to be conformed to this world but rather to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye

may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2).

The teaching of Jesus Christ is known by three means: 1) *Direct statements*, 2) *The approved examples of the Lord's Ambassadors the Apostles*, 3) *That which is clearly implied*. All things that we do as the Lord's church must have His authority (Matt. 28:18; John 14:6; Col. 3:17). To do that which Jesus has authorized will require all of our means. Again, you need not take my word for it. You must take God's word for it. Jesus said to His apostles, *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you”* (John 14:26; cf. John 16:13). These words contain a two-fold promise. The apostles were to be given supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit that would enable them to have a perfect memory of everything that Jesus personally taught. And second, they would be guided into “all truth.” Therefore when the New Testament was completed, everything God desires that we know, believe, teach and practice is contained in God's perfect revelation, the New Testament. We are instructed not to add to, take away or modify anything contained therein. Just who would want to do so? Satan and his agents!

Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit wrote, *“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). It takes a lot of arrogance on the part of man to attempt to change the terms of salvation, the God approved acts of worship and/or the nature and character of the Lord's church.

Men have established humanly originated churches, written their own creeds and doctrines, called their churches by unauthorized names and have corrupted the work

and worship of the Lord's church. They appeal to the fleshly desires of their followers rather than the instructions of Jesus Christ. Their followers falsely believe they are accepted of God.

In far too many cases, once faithful churches of Christ eagerly follow their example. Some congregations no longer desire to be identified as the church of Christ. Some have added human inventions of worship and work for the church. Some congregations, in the process of stealing the facilities of past faithful Christians, introduce two separate worship services: one they call "traditional" and the other they call "contemporary." This will last until one or the other prevails and the other is driven out of the facilities. It is usually the "traditional" members that are driven out.

IT ONLY TAKES A SLIGHT CHANGE TO CHANGE TRUTH INTO A LIE

The Devil only wants a slight change or variation from the truth. He knows that once men start down the self-will road, it is only a matter of time before they are his.

In Genesis 2:17, God told Adam and Eve that the day they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *"thou shalt surely die"* (Gen. 3:4). Satan quotes God's word with perfect accuracy except he adds one three letter word — "not" — "Thou shalt **not** surely die." That slight change made all the difference in their being expelled from paradise.

Sometimes Satan removes the word "not" from God's word to capture careless souls. James 2:24 says, *"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and 'not' by faith only."* Yet many have been tricked and deceived by Satan's servants in accepting the notion that one is saved by "faith only." The Devil has gotten a lot on mileage out of the word "not" (Gen. 4:1-5). In the account of the worship of Cain and Abel, Abel offered his sacrifice by faith and it was accepted by God. Cain offered his sacrifice by human sight and it was rejected by God. What Cain did was to set aside God's instructions and substituted his own will-worship. Here we have the principal of why all humanly concocted religion is rejected by God. It is

self-willed and not God-directed. It is not by faith and therefore sin (Rom. 14:23).

1. God did not respect Cain's offering because he had "not" done as God instructed.

2. When God questioned Cain about his brother Abel, his answer was "Am I my brother's keeper?" His implication was that he was not his brother's keeper, but of course he was and we are.

Noah preached that in his day the world was going to be destroyed by a universal flood. But Satan convinced everyone except the eight that were saved that it was "not" going to happen.

When one looks to the ten commandments given to the children of Israel (Deut. 5:1-3), the principals of which are included in the teaching of Jesus, every last one has been corrupted by the Devil's "Not."

Beginning with the first of the ten. "Thou shalt have no other gods

before me." The word "not" is implied, yet it has been ignored throughout the ages. Men do have their other gods. Thou shalt "not" make graven images. But men have done so. Thou shalt "not" steal. Thou shalt "not" bear false witness. Thou shalt "not" take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. Thou shalt "not" commit murder. Thou shalt "not" commit adultery. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." Yet all informed people know that "not" has been ignored, or for all practical purposes removed, while men wallow in their sinful conduct. That ye may "keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you" (Duet. 4:2).

Don't take my word for it or any man's word, but do take God's word for it and love it and abide by it.

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THE LORD'S SUPPER

Jesus our Savior suffered and died on the cross of Calvary for the sins of the whole world (2 Cor. 5:14,15; Rom. 5:6-8; Luke 23:33; 19:10; 1 Tim. 2:15). To remember this great event, Jesus gave us the Lord's Supper (Matt. 26:26-29). Christians would begin to take the Lord's Supper when the kingdom came (Matt. 26:29; Luke 22:18). This great event occurred on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-47). They began to take the Lord's Supper and continued to do so (Acts 2:42; 20:7). But what does the "unleavened bread" and "fruit of the vine" mean to the Christian (Luke 22:18,19)? The unleavened bread was to bring to their memory the body of Christ (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). The fruit of the vine was to memorialize his blood (Luke 2:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). This great memorial is to be taken on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

We are told in Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Since Jesus has directed us through his word to eat the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine to remember him on the first day of the week, it would be a sin to eat anything else or to do it on any other day. We sin when we do something that is not authorized by Jesus (2 John 9; Rev. 22:18; Col. 3:17). When we teach something more or different than we find in the New Testament, we stand condemned. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8,9). We should ask by whose authority some churches take the Lord's Supper on a day not authorized by God or take it only monthly, quarterly or annually. It is a sin to worship according to the doctrines of men (Matt. 15:9; Mark 7:7-9).

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Elder's COLUMN THE ASSEMBLY

Jack Gray

How vital is the assembly to New Testament Christianity? Some have false expectations concerning the assembly that come from erroneous ideas concerning its purpose. Perhaps our assemblies will never be as meaningful as they should be until we better understand the purpose for having them in the first place.

1. The Assembly Is For Worship. *“In the midst of the church will*

I sing praise unto Thee” (Heb. 2:12). The assembly is for worship. Not just ritual or ceremony. Not just for observing “the acts of worship;” but for praise, adoration and devotion to God. Perhaps enough of our assembly time is not spent in praising God for His majesty and mercy.

2. The Assembly Is For Teaching. It was a place where complete epistles were read and discussed by Christian teachers (Col. 4:16). Much of this teaching is described as put-

ting “into remembrance” things known before (1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:14; 2 Peter 1:12; Jude 5). This is a vital function of our assemblies today.

3. The Assembly Is For Edification. This is the building up of Christians. The assembly is *“to provoke unto love and to good works”* (Heb. 10:24). Christians need encouragement. They need to know that others understand and care. This need can be beautifully supplied in the assembly, as well as in private deeds of kindness. Some, however, have mistakenly assumed that this is the only purpose of the assembly; and this leads to disappointment if they are not “ministered unto” in every service.

4. The Assembly Is For Correction. Discipline is to be administered “when ye are gathered together” (1 Cor. 5:4). Reproving and rebuking has a place in the assembly (2 Tim. 4:2). Those who sin are to be rebuked “before all” (1 Tim. 5:20). So being taken to the “woodshed” is a purpose to be served by the assembly.

5. The Assembly Is For Evangelism. *“To the intent that now ...might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God”* (Eph. 3:10). The assembly, therefore, is a place for declaring the Gospel as *“the power of God unto salvation”* (Rom. 1:16). It is a place to *“preach the word”* (2 Tim. 4:2). Regretfully, some through the years have tried to play down this purpose of the assembly by saying, “the assembly is for Christians” or “we are to meet to edify and to go out to evangelize.” This, however, is an erroneous concept for the following reasons:

A. It is a denominational concept, by which they have excluded children from their assemblies by saying that the assembly is “not for them.” This has led to Junior Church and other departures.

B. This would not even have permitted the Pentecost sermon of Acts

CONTRIBUTIONS

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North Pickins C/C, Reform, AL.....	\$25	Postage.....	\$1,927.88
Lord's Way C/C, Springfield, VT.....	\$50	Paper.....	\$2,014.50
Church of Christ, Allenhurst, GA.....	\$150	Supplies.....	\$78.43
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		Web Site (1yr).....	\$99.00
		Ending Balance.....	\$4,286.87

NOTE: We finally got our booklet maker (folder/stapler) back and mailed the January issue on 1/31. We were “dead in the water” for about three weeks, but we’re up and running again. The repairs were \$1,400, but good brethren sent contributions at just the right time. We are so thankful for each one of you and pray for you daily. We’ve also had problems with our printer, but right now we have it going again. Don’t know exactly what the final bill for the parts will cost on it. This is a temporary fix, as it will need more repairs before long. We now have over 5 million copies on it. The main ink drum is about worn out and needs to be rebuilt (or replaced). When we took the booklet maker to Nashville for repair, we looked at a machine that would replace all three of the machines we use now (printer, collator, booklet maker), but we can only dream about it. Maybe someday. Again, thank you so much.

— Editor, Garland M. Robinson

2 or Paul's great sermon on Mars Hill in Acts 17 to be repeated in an assembly of the church.

C. The Bible specifically speaks of unbelievers in the assembly in 1 Corinthians 14:23.

D. The mission of the church is to fulfill the mission Christ had when He was on the earth; and that is specifically given as "to seek and save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

E. The NUMBER ONE business of the New Testament church is evangelism. Is it conceivable that the church cannot take care of its number one business when it meets?

F. This idea also promotes selfishness. It creates within us a desire to be served rather than to serve. This is not the spirit of Christ (Matt.

10:28).

Thus every assembly does not have the same purpose. We need assemblies for praise, for prayer and for encouragement. We need those designed for teaching and instruction and outreach. Some services may include all of these purposes in one assembly. But perhaps our greatest need is to realize that God is the one to be pleased, others are the ones to be served and that what we derive from any assembly depends so much on our having the right purpose for being there in the first place.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

SEEKING THE PRAISE OF MEN

Roger D. Campbell

People often know about some of the activities in which we engage as Christians. In many cases others actually see or hear what it is that we are doing in the Lord's cause. For instance, when we assemble for public worship, others see that you and I partake of the communion. If we turn in a "visitation report," at least some will learn of our work in this area. And, there is the work of elders, preachers, those who lead in worship, and others — what they do is out there in the open for all to observe.

When you and I visit a sick person in the hospital, is it with the hope that somehow word will get around about our interest in people's welfare and we will be praised? When we teach a Bible class, are we doing so with the desire that others will heap praises on us? If our heart is right, when we do what a member of Christ's church ought to be doing, we are not seeking the praise of men. Our simple desire should be to please the Lord, period.

Jesus spoke of those who "sounded a trumpet" when they gave alms. The Lord called them "hypocrites," saying they did it "that they may have glory of men" (Matt. 6:2). He further labeled as "hypocrites" those who "love to pray...that they may be

seen of men" (6:5). The Christ also identified as "hypocrites" those who disfigured their faces when they fasted "that they may appear unto men to fast" (6:16). Again, He applied the term "hypocrites" to those that "for a pretence make long prayer" (Matt. 23:14).

Giving alms, fasting, praying, loving to pray, and making long prayers (as noted above) was not the problem. None of these things were wrong in and of themselves. Yea, scripturally speaking, what could one have against such actions? The problem with some in the first century was they did these things in order to be seen and praised by men. Their main concern was looking good in the eyes of other people. That was sinful, and that is why Jesus called them "hypocrites."

Later, there were those who refused to confess Jesus. Why? *"For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God"* (John 12:43). We find such an attitude disgusting, do we not? And yet, if we are not careful, we will find ourselves doing things just to please others and to be praised by them.

Beloved, we must strive to please God, not impress men (Gal. 1:10).

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LIFE AFTER DEATH

Job asked, "If a man die, shall he live again" (Job 14:14)? Jesus answered that question when he said, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, **I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living**" (Matt. 22:29-32). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were alive when these words were spoken to Moses (Exodus 3:6) and when Jesus repeated them. God did not say "I was" (past tense). He said "I am" (presence tense). The present tense "I am" is used as an argument by the Lord to confirm there is life after death. If the Bible said nothing more on the subject of life after death, the Lord's endorsement is enough.

Those who have died will be raised from the dead at the last day, confirming there is life beyond the grave. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation**" (John 5:28-29). How could anyone deny there is life after death? We will live again!

The account of the rich man and Lazarus shows there is life after death. "...The beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Luke 16:22-23). These two men were alive and conscious after they died. The rich man was told to remember what he did during his "lifetime" (v.25). They were not on earth. They were in the place of the dead awaiting the final judgment (v.23). The rich man could feel pain. He was in torment (v.24). He desired for one to rise from the dead and warn his brothers of their wickedness because they were heading for the same place of torment as the rich man (vs.27-31). Such is not possible.

If there is no life after death, then why does the Bible tell every one to prepare for it? Why prepare for something if it does not exist? Are YOU prepared?

— Editor, Garland M. Robinson



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

"The *Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies* will host their 20th Annual Lectureship on Feb. 19-23, 2012. The theme is: 'Virtual Sermons and Object Lessons.' 28 speakers, nwfsbs.com. Phone (850) 474-9257. 4051 Stefani Rd., Cantonment, FL 32533. Book orders can be made at: oldpathsublishing.com" ...**Editor,**

gmr. "The Southwest church of Christ in Austin, Texas, is pleased to announce its 31st Annual Lectureship, April 7-11, 2012. The theme this year is *Meeting Christ: Called Unto Heaven*. Twenty speakers have been invited to come and lecture to a large number of brethren who will gather in Austin from across the nation to attend this year's lectureship series" ...**Rick Brumback, Lectureship Director, Southwest church of Christ, 8900 Manchaca Rd., Austin, TX 78748, office@swcofc.org.** "We have moved. Please change our address. Thank you for sending this good paper over the years. We look forward to receiving it every month. We are enclosing \$\$\$" ...**Memphis, TN.** "Thank you for your bold and timely articles. May you continue in defense of the faith once delivered" ...**Steve Thayer, Higginsville, MO.** "Please use the amount enclosed for *Seek The Old Paths* publication. I'm sorry it can't be more at this time but I'm on a very limited retirement income and I'm not currently working anywhere. Thank you for sending me this publication. I greatly appreciate it. I'm so concerned about the future of the church and the lack of godly teaching. I share the concerns written in the September 2011 mailbag. It is getting harder and harder to find a sound church. I haven't heard a sermon on why instruments aren't used and why we are a chaste and pure people in years. I am so concerned about America who rises up and worships sex and money. God help us all!" ...**Name withheld by request, TN.** "Thank you for sending STOP this year. We use it and pass it on to other brethren here in this area. God bless!" ...**Maurice Brown, Broadway Church of Christ, Rockford, IL.** "Please take Keith & Lynn Strandtman off your mailing list. We do not read your publication because we are not interested in the information. We belong to another faith and we are satisfied with the church we go to" ...**Keith Strandtman, Raleigh, NC.** "Please put my friend on your mailing list for *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Honey Grove, TX.** "I am sending you two names for you to put on your mailing list. I have enjoyed getting STOP" ...**Vernon Bracknell, Baldwin, IL.** "I appreciate your magazine, *Seek The Old Paths*. I enjoy the articles so very much and use them in the Bible Correspondence Courses. Keep up the good work" ...**Willine Sullivan, Manchester, TN.** "Please remove our name off your mailing list. Thank you" ...**Washington Street Church of Christ, Fairview, WV.** "Please send 10 copies of *Seek The Old Paths* to the Moodys Church of Christ. My donation seems so small for the great work that you are doing and may you be blessed for it. Thanks" ...**Delano Coppedge, Kansas, OK.** "Please cancel our subscription to *Seek The Old Paths* as we can read it online" ...**Tom Cope, Sierra Vista, AZ.** "I have been receiving *Seek The Old Paths* for quite some time. I want to thank you for all the good messages you have in the paper. May God continue to bless you in proclaiming God's word. I want to send a contribution to you to keep on keeping the good news coming to us. I also would like to send some names of my friends to receive your paper. May God bless you with many more years of service to our Lord and Savior. I hope this is not too many to request from you. Also, please count the contribution and my name anonymous. Bless you always" ...**Big Sandy, TX.** "Tom Bright of Dyersburg, Tennessee, has passed away. He was a faithful Gospel preacher that worked extensively with the *Online Academy of Biblical Studies* (www.oabs.org). I knew Tom for many years. He helped us in our annual *Seek The Old Paths Lectureship* numerous times. The oabs.org website is a wealth of video lessons including the sermons from numerous congregations, lectureships and debates. Many participate in their online school. You would do well to check it out" ...**Editor, STOP, gmr.** "Please take note of our address change. Thank you" ...**Willard Cox, Big Cabin, OK.** "Please change my mailing address. Keep up the good work" ...**Albert D. Jones, Hudson, FL.** "I commend you for the effort and time you spend prepar-

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Seek The Old Paths is a monthly publication of the **East End 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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