

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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More Division Comes To Corinth! An Examination of Some of the Teaching of Larry West

The Foote Street Church of Christ of Corinth, Mississippi, has scheduled Larry West to come to Corinth for a "We Care" Campaign. This is the same Larry West we exposed and marked for his teaching in the May and June, 1993, issues of *Seek The Old Paths* when he came to Corinth that year.

Of a truth, it gives me no delight to again bring this to brethren's attention; however, when error confronts us, faithfulness to the Lord demands we sound out a warning (Col. 1:28; Acts 20:31; cf. Ezek. 3:17ff; 33:4ff). Probably the most unpleasant task of a gospel preacher is to expose and refute brethren when they are in error. I wish such was not necessary, but the Lord tells us that "offences" and "heresies" (Luke 17:1; I Cor. 11:19) will come and when they do, they must be dealt with. They serve to prove who is really faithful and who is not. I wish we could turn a blind eye and ignore it or pretend error and division does not exist, but such would not make it so or make it go away. No physical illness can be treated that way and neither can spiritual illness. Romans 16:17 demands we "mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them." Brother West's error has been well documented and therefore stands "marked."

This issue of *Seek The Old Paths* brings to light more of the doctrinal problems connected with the teaching of Larry West. Brethren, error must not and will not pass unopposed!

On the front page of the Foote St. bulletin of Oct. 27, 1994, we read: "We know that Larry West and his campaign

team are sound in the faith and have proved themselves to be successful in reaching the lost." Is he really "sound" as they claim? You be the judge. Please read the article, "What Does It Mean To Be Sound?" on page 2 of this issue. Then, ask yourself these questions:

1. Is it "sound in the faith" to encourage lost souls to sit at the feet of false teachers and learn from them? Larry West did exactly that when he encouraged everyone to attend the 1992 Tulsa Workshop in the Nov./Dec. 1991, issue of *World Radio News*! Instead of ignoring it, the Bible says to "mark and avoid" (Rom. 16:17) and have "no fellowship" (Eph. 5:11) with error and those espousing it.

2. Is it "sound in the faith" to aid, support and encourage false brethren (workers of error) to evangelize - to even teach them how to do it? Larry West did at the 1990 Nashville Jubilee and the 1992 Tulsa Workshop! He also spoke at Tulsa in 1988 and 1990 and is scheduled again to appear this year in March 1995. Lest someone say that brother West went there to rebuke them for their error, they need only to listen to the tapes of his lessons! His messages were to inspire, motivate and encourage. The Holy Spirit said that instead of encouraging false brethren we are not to bid them "...God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11). Unlike some brethren, I haven't learned yet how to get around these verses. But from their camp they keep crying, "I don't believe in guilt by association." Well, if these verses are not talking about "guilt by associ-

ation" then someone please help me to understand what they are saying! Even a first grader can tell you what it means. "If you lie down with the dogs you can expect to get up with the fleas." "Birds of a feather flock together." These may be cute sayings, but oh, what a world of truth lies therein!

3. Is it "sound in the faith" to invite Chuck Lucas, the cult leader of Crossroadism, to preach in your congregation and encourage every member to attend? Larry West's home congregation, White's Ferry Road, did in their Jan. 5, 1980 bulletin! Some will probably say, "Oh, that's old." But, we must ask, when did they ever repent of it?

4. Is it "sound in the faith" to begin a separate organization from the church (Missionary Society) to do the work of the church? Such divided the church a century ago. Larry West is part of a congregation (White's Ferry Road) whose elders and preachers did so on August 25, 1987, when they incorporated the "International Christian Ministries." More information about this can be read in the May, 1993, issue of *S.T.O.P.*

5. Is it "sound in the faith" to have special "group singers" perform during the worship of the church? The White's Ferry Road church, where Larry West has his membership and under whose authority he works and is overseen, does so. Even brother West's wife and daughter have participated! Are you ready to have a choir and solo service in worship where you attend? You can't according to

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MORE DIVISION...

Editorial... What Does It Mean To Be "Sound?"

Garland M. Robinson

Of the 89 times the English word "sound" appears in the Bible, 17 of them refers to the theme of this discussion.

Webster says "sound" means: "1a: free from injury or disease: robust b: free from flaw, defect, or decay 2: solid, firm, stable 3a: free from error, fallacy, or misapprehension b: accurate, precise."

Strong's gives as the definition of the Greek word *hugiai no*, "to have sound health, i.e. be well (in body); figuratively to be uncorrupt (true in doctrine)."

Thayer says of the same word: "to be sound, to be well, to be in good health. Is used of one whose Christian opinions are free from any admixture of error. True and incorrupt doctrine."

Surely, all desire to be "sound in the faith." Psalm 119:80 says it well, "Let my heart be sound in thy statutes; that I be not ashamed."

In I Timothy 1:10 a list of sins is found that is contrary to "sound doctrine." Sound doctrine is also referred to as: the law of God (Rom. 7:25), the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2), the truth of God (Rom. 1:25), the truth of Christ (II Cor. 11:10), the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2), the faith of Christ (Gal. 2:16), the law of liberty (James 1:25), the words of truth and soberness (Acts 26:25), the truth (Gal. 5:7), the word of truth (Eph. 1:13), the way of truth (II Peter 2:2), the word of God (I Thess. 2:13), the truth of the gospel (Gal. 2:5,14), the word of the gospel (Acts 15:7), the gospel of God (Rom. 1:1), the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16), the gospel of his Son (Rom. 1:9), the gospel of peace (Rom. 10:15), the gospel (Rom. 10:16), Christ's gospel (II Cor. 2:12).

Those who do not consent to "wholesome (sound) words" are "destitute of the truth." We are commanded regarding such people, "from such withdraw thyself" (I Tim. 6:3-5).

A man qualified to be an elder is one who holds "...fast the faithful word as he

hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). He must know sound doctrine when he hears it. And, when he does not hear it, he is able to refute those who are in error. Concerning these false teachers verse 11 says, "whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Those who are teaching contrary to the gospel (the whole New Testament) are to be exposed for what they are. "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13).

Titus was exhorted to speak "sound doctrine" and to teach men to be "sound in faith" (Titus 2:1-2). He was to be a pattern of good works and in doctrine he was to show "uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:7-8). Oh, how we need men today who will heed these words! Where are they? Far too many give an "uncertain sound" (I Cor. 14:7-8) which leads men away from the truth, not toward it.

We are to hold fast the form (pattern) of "sound words" (II Tim. 1:13). "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

The number is growing fewer today who are able to endure sound doctrine or even know what sound doctrine is! It has been so long since they have heard sound doctrine (the "whole counsel of God," Acts 20:27) that "sound words" are "strange" in their ears. There was such a famine of hearing the words of the Lord in Hosea's day that when they did hear it proclaimed they counted His words "strange" (Hosea 8:12). They were

destroyed for their lack of knowledge (4:6).

WHAT CONSTITUTES SOUNDNESS?

To "say" that someone is sound does not mean it is so. There are a number of things that are required in order for one to be counted as "sound." What then is the criteria by which we can determine if one is sound?

1. To be sound, one must LOVE the Truth.

Those in Zechariah 8:19 were exhorted to "love the truth." All must "buy the truth and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23). There are many who do not believe the truth nor love the truth; and, without the love of the truth, one will be content to believe a lie and be damned (II Thess. 2:10,12)! Only the truth will save (John 8:32).

This one point in itself ought to be sufficient to establish if one is sound or not, for if one loves the Truth, how could he not be sound? Who would admit, though, to not loving the Truth? However, it does not necessarily follow that one would be sound simply because he "says" he loves the truth. The points that follow will establish whether he truly loves the truth or not.

2. To be sound, one must BELIEVE and TEACH the Truth.

When the Truth (the gospel) is believed, it will be taught in its completeness without fear or favor of any man. There will be no "testing the wind" to see what brethren will accept and what they will not. The message will be the same to all audiences. Truth is consistent. Paul had declared the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Even though one may claim to teach the truth, it does not necessarily make it so. His teaching/doctrine must be examined. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

3. To be sound, one must LIVE the Truth.

One may teach the truth and nothing but the truth and still not be "sound." No one is sound that does not live according to the truth.

"Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10). Luke wrote of all "that Jesus began both to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). Timothy was to be "an example of the

believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (I Tim. 4:12). Jesus warned of the scribes and Pharisees saying, "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matt. 23:3).

One's life must be in compliance with the Truth, i.e., the Doctrine of the Lord, the Gospel. All of God's Word is doctrine, regardless of the subject matter. The doctrine (gospel/teaching/truth) of the Lord must be obeyed in morality (I Peter 1:15), worship (John 4:24), fellowship (II John 9-11) – ALL that God commands.

4. To be sound, one must DEFEND the Truth.

Defending the truth is certainly involved in "living the truth" as point three describes. However, in light of the fact that so few are obedient to this command, it needs special attention as a separate point.

Heaven's directive is that every child of God "...earnestly contend for

the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Gospel preachers are to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). "No" fellowship does not mean "some" fellowship!

No one is sound that does not defend the faith – the gospel. Paul was always ready to defend the gospel (Phil. 1:7,17). He told the brethren at Rome to "mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18).

To bid God speed to those in error makes one a partaker of their evil deeds. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the

Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 9-11).

To fellowship those in error instead of reproofing them does not make one a "sound" brother. Such an individual may say he loves the truth and teaches the truth, but his practice proves he does not! Such a person is not living nor defending the truth! If he were, he would rebuke those in error.

CONCLUSION

What does it mean to be "sound?" One is sound when he: 1) loves the truth, 2) teaches the truth, 3) lives the truth and, 4) defends the truth. When any of these are absent, a brother is not sound, no matter how much he says he is or how many others say he is! The proof (evidence) is in, not only what he teaches, but also in what he practices. Actions speak louder than words!

The "Gospel" According To Larry West Of West Monroe, Louisiana

Ben F. Vick, Jr.

In our New Testament we have the gospel according to Matthew, the gospel according to Mark, the gospel according to Luke, and the gospel according to John. But in the *World Radio News* (Nov.-Dec., 1993), we have the gospel according to Larry West. In it he accused faithful brethren of preaching the plan, but not the man, or of preaching the doctrines of Christ rather than the gospel of Christ. He preaches a different gospel than what one can read in the Bible. It is contradictory. His views are similar to those of W. Carl Ketcherside, but West pleads ignorance of Ketcherside and his heresy. Though West would not go so far as to say that the gospel should not be preached to the church, he definitely makes a distinction between the gospel and other doctrines. But let the reader judge for himself if the one under review makes distinctions without differences. West wrote:

There is a distinctive differ-

ence between the Gospel and the rest of the Bible. All the Bible (not just the New Testament) points to the Gospel (that's why the Bible is generically called "good news"), but there is a definite distinction between the specific Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:3-4) and the other points of New Testament doctrine (or teachings). Paul still shows there is a difference between them when he said, "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel..." (1 Cor. 1:17). It is interesting to see how Peter distinguishes them by pointing out that when one obeys a particular point of doctrine called the "Gospel," it places one initially into the "house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17); and all faithful Christians must admit, since they were added to the house of God (the

church), they certainly have learned more points of doctrine (milk, then meat, 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 2:2); as Christians, the saved learn more to obey. Paul again shows there is a difference when he explains the gospel was not taught to him by man but came through the revelation of Jesus (Gal. 1:11-12; yet when you read Acts 22:12-16, you learn it was a man who taught him baptism. The Gospel, thus, is distinguished from other points of doctrine (teachings).

It is West's contention that we should preach the gospel which relates to the person of Christ to a lost world but that other doctrines are to be preached to the saved. According to West's gospel,

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LARRY WEST'S "GOSPEL"...

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Col. 3:16 and Eph. 5:19 or any other verse.

6. Is it "sound in the faith" to have a "Christmas Family Night." You may be wondering, what is a "Christmas Family Night?" According to the flyer handed out at the door, it says "This program is sponsored by the Women's Ministry and Drama Team of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ." This event was advertised on public TV for those in the West Monroe, Louisiana, area and was held on Dec. 6, 7, 1994, in the White's Ferry Road church building. It was complete with young people playing band instruments of religious songs (outside the building), a drama of the "manger scene," individuals dressed like angels along with God on his throne and "Joey's Visit With Santa" by the Bible Hour Puppet Crew. There were numerous male and female solo and chorus performances of religious songs such as "O Holy Night," "God's Sacrifice," "Joy to the World" and many others (performed to the accompaniment of prerecorded instrumental music by the way), one of which was performed by Larry West's wife. She is also listed as the Music Director. Others who received credit for their work were: set design, set construction, set decoration, set painting, adult costume design, children's costume design, sound, lighting, video director, food organization and foyer decoration. This event was video taped by the White's Ferry Road church.

Brethren, are you eager for December, 1995, to arrive so the church you attend can put on a Christmas Drama? Maybe you could get White's Ferry Road to come in and put one on for you. Would you support such a thing where you attend? If not, then why support one at White's Ferry Road?

7. Is it "sound in the faith" to preach: "It is ONLY by grace through faith that we are saved, TOTALLY, 100%, AMEN?" (his emphasis) That's what Larry West said in a lesson entitled, "How God Saved People 2,000 Years Ago" at the 1992 Tulsa Workshop. I have asked him three times if he would explain his words here in this statement so brethren may understand what he believes about grace but he has not explained it for us.

8. Is it "sound in the faith" to say that the Gospel of Christ is NOT the whole of the New Testament and that

"there is a distinctive difference between the Gospel and the rest of the Bible?" This is what Larry West says in an article entitled "What is the Gospel, anyway?" which appeared in the Dec/1993 issue of World Radio News. See Ben Vick's article on this teaching elsewhere in this issue.

9. Is it "sound in the faith" for the church to sponsor sports activities for its members? Larry West says, "I'm all for *gymnasiums*." In speaking about White's Ferry Road, his home congregation, he says, "We have our own church sponsored softball teams, baseball teams, basketball teams" ("How To Win Your Neighbor To Jesus" #1, preached at the Tulsa Workshop, '92).

Brethren, is it the work of the church to sponsor ball teams or other such activities? No, not at all! The work the church is authorized to do lies in three areas: 1) preaching the gospel (Eph. 3:10; Mark 16:15-16; Phil. 4:15-16), 2) edifying the saints (I Cor. 14:12,26; I Thess. 5:11; Eph. 4:16), 3) helping the needy (Gal. 6:10; James 1:27; II Cor. 9:12-13). Playing ball, having skating parties, pizza parties and trips to six flags or Disney Land (which he specifically mentions) is not the work of the church. Individual Christians can do these things, even with other Christians, but for the church to "sponsor" such activities is not its work! These are works of the home, not the church.

Are you ready for the church you are a member of to sponsor such activities? Is that the picture we want the world to see? Is that the work the Lord wants his blood bought body to be doing? Not according to the Bible!

10. Is it sound in the faith to teach that Jesus conquered the grave "...to give us physical immortality?" You read it right. This is not a misprint. This "teaching" is often brought into his message wherever he speaks. This particular quote was taken from an article by Larry West entitled "Let's Make One Thing Clear" which appeared in the Foote Street bulletin dated Nov. 30, 1994, on p.2. This same article also appeared in the Sep/Oct, 1994, issue of *World Radio News*, p.2, a publication of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, under whose oversight Larry West works.

"Physical immortality" is an oxymoron! This is a fancy word which means: "pointedly foolish: a combination of contradictory or incongruous words." Incongruous means: "not consistent with what is logical, customary, or expected;

inappropriate."

1 Cor. 15:44 makes the resurrection at the last day plain, "It is sown a *natural body*; it is raised a *spiritual body*." Our natural, fleshly, physical body is buried, but in the resurrection, it is raised a new, changed, incorruptible, immortal, spiritual body (vs. 36-54; 2 Cor. 5:1-4)! Verse 37 says, "...*thou sowest not that body that shall be...*" Flesh and blood (the physical) cannot inherit the kingdom of God (v.50). John said on the subject, "...*It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*" (1 John 3:2).

We encourage you to read the remainder of this issue, look at the facts and decide for yourself if Larry West is truly "sound in the faith."

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Larry West's Doctrine of the Resurrection

Garland M. Robinson

Among the premillennialists there are a host of false doctrines concerning the resurrection. But they and many others are not the only ones who teach error on this vital Bible doctrine. Larry West of the White's Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, Louisiana, likewise, has a great deal to say in his campaigns relative to the resurrection.

That there be no misunderstanding concerning his teaching, here are his own statements taken from a sermon entitled "Ghosts or Bodies in Heaven?" preached at the Sherwood Church of Christ in Odessa, Texas, Nov. 15, 1994. The sentences in italics are his words. All emphasis is his.

While discussing 1 Cor. 15 and the general resurrection of the dead, he says, "He's talking about our bodies here in chapter 15. ... I am convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that once we humans can get a handle on this point of Bible doctrine, it becomes, in a very practical sense, **the single greatest self motivation** in our lives to not only take care of our bodies... but to keep our bodies for God. Because you see, when we realize we're going to be **stuck with these bodies** ...we are going to have these bodies forever. ... That body you have now, you will have forever."

1 Thess. 5:23. "The Bible says you're not you without your body. And God wants to sanctify, he wants to save the **entirety** of you, and you are not whole, you're not complete without your body. You are whole, complete, entire, only when you are body, soul and spirit. Now, that body of yours is going to change, don't you dare miss that. In 1 Cor. 15, up here in verse 51, he says...we shall not all sleep, we're not all going to be dead when Jesus comes again, in other words. But one thing is for sure, **we shall** all be what? Changed. Changed. So don't miss that point. But what he's saying is, that body of yours, listen, if you'll just come to Christ, if you'll just give yourself to the Lord, if you'll just serve him faithfully for the rest of your life, he's gonna reward you for your service by taking that body of yours, healing it, oh my, beyond your wildest dreams. Honoring it, glorifying it, complementing it, beautifying it, beyond your **wildest** imagination. You're gonna like it! ... Verse 53. For (patting

That body you have now you're gonna have forever!! ... Flesh and bone going all the way to heaven!

himself, *gmr*) **this** corruptible must put on **incorruption**. And, (patting himself, *gmr*) **this!** mortal must put on **onnn**, what? **Immortality.**"

"Paul is simply saying right here in verse 33, look, I'm about to reveal to you humans a new truth. I'm about to reveal to you and explain to you and tell you that the body you have now you'll have forever. So, he says, when you get a handle on that, realize, that if you take that body of yours and you let it hang around other people and these people don't respect their bodies. I mean you watch these people, they pump drugs into them, they booze them up...they fornicate with them. You're gonna be influenced by them to go off into sin with them. ... When you go off into sin with them you are gonna be striking against your own body's eternal destiny. So that's why he says evil companions or evil company corrupts good habits. Don't strike out against your body. That's why he says in the very next verse, verse 34, so, **wake up on the matter!** That's what he's saying. Awake to righteousness and do not sin! **That body you have now you're gonna have forever!!** ... You see, it becomes the single greatest personal motivation in our lives to stay pure."

On June 16, 1993, he preached a sermon by the same title at Corinth, Miss. In speaking of people's hope to have life beyond the grave he says, "...it is possible, it will happen in fact, that we humans can have that life physically, even physically beyond the grave."

When talking about how people say they will go back to dust when they die, so it doesn't matter what they do with their bodies since they only have it one time, he says, "Not according to the word of God! ... Those who are not saved are gonna face God's awful, eternal, condemnation, even with their bodies. ... You may be saying, I'm not sure about this body."

He talks about the Lord's resurrection and says, "Folks, when the Bible talks about resurrection...it is talking about **physical** resurrection. It's talking about with this body."

"These bodies are sown a natural body...But **these** bodies are gonna be raised and **changed**, verse 51 says they have to be changed, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. **Flesh and blood is what we are now. We have to be changed, but it's still this body. This body is changed and simply made a spiritual body, that is, prepared so it can identify with that other realm. But don't you dare miss the point, it is still, it is still, this body!** ...That grave door, the human grave door, Jesus opened so that we are gonna get our bodies back. ...I know this, it's gonna be this body. ... It's gonna be this body folks. ... You're gonna have **your bodies forever!** Realize that, you're stuck with that body! ... Paul...says look, that body you're gonna have forever. Now God's gonna take it and change it...but it is still that body. And you're gonna have **that body forever.** ... So when we realize we're gonna have this body forever, we're motivated aren't we? Take care of it. ... So, that body you're gonna have forever. Now, do you want that body to burn forever and never burn up? ... Are you ready to let that body burn in hell? Or, do you want that glorious, shining, beautiful, honorable, honored body to bow before the throne of the Almighty King of kings and Lord of lords? ... That's where I want this body to go."

"1 Cor. 6, the body that can now commit fornication is the body that will be raised. So don't commit fornication with it. Don't strike out against that body. You're gonna have that body forever. ...When the Bible talks about the resurrection of Jesus it's talking about the bodily resurrection of Jesus, **applying** itself to our own **bodily** resurrections. Now, you want in on that?"

"Staying faithful then, I look forward to the day when I'm gonna get my body back and it'll be taken to heaven." "Why is there gonna be **one general** resurrection morning when we're all gonna be together? Why? Because **that's when we get our bodies back!** ...And for the Christian, he'll be taking that body all the way to heaven to be with God to live

forever. **Changed, prepared for that other realm. Flesh and blood no more! Flesh and bone?! Jesus is identified, is it Luke 24 when he appeared before his disciples? They thought he was a ghost. Huhh! He says you don't see a ghost have flesh and bone like you see I have. What are you eating? He says give me some of that fish. He ate some fish. You know why he ate the fish? To show that he was standing there with his resurrected human body. So changed. But still this body. Flesh and bone going all the way to heaven!"**

"Stay faithful then, you look forward to the day then you'll come up out of your own graves and go to heaven to live with him in that body. Resurrected, glorified, changed, beautiful body he'll give to you, to live with him forever in that heavenly realm. ...Come on folks, let's get in on Jesus tonight.

When was the last time you ever heard such a far fetched doctrine that was so contrary to the Bible? If we know anything about what the Bible teaches on the resurrection and our eternal destiny in heaven, it is the fact that we will not be in our physical body we now have! Notice the words of holy scripture which contradicts brother West. ³⁶"*Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: ³⁷And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: ³⁸It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. ³⁹Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. ⁴⁰Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption"* (I Cor. 15:36, 37,

44, 46, 50). All these verses set in contrast the physical body with the spiritual body. The physical body and nothing with which it has to do will go to heaven - yea, CANNOT go to heaven! Notice the strong language of verses 36-37, "*Thou fool...thou sowest not that body that shall be.*" The green stalk of corn which comes forth from the soil has no resemblance to the grain of corn that was planted. That which comes forth is not the same as that which was sown! However, Larry West says, "*we humans can have that life physically, even physically beyond the grave.*" He says Christ died to give us "*physical immortality,*" that we will get our human physical body back, "*and for the Christian, he'll be taking that body all the way to heaven to be with God to live forever.*" I don't believe it and neither does anyone else that believes what God says about it!

He says that when people get a handle on this point of what he calls "Bible doctrine" (it's not Bible doctrine at all, it's West's doctrine; i.e. that we get our physical body back), it becomes the single, greatest, personal motivation for one to live for Christ and keep himself pure. Brethren, every physical, fleshly, material thing in this world reminds us of its temporary, momentary, passing nature! How could that serve as an incentive for one to obey the gospel or remain faithful? A true incentive for obeying the gospel is the fact that we will be able to escape our physical human body and that we will be given a new spiritual body.

He makes reference to I Cor. 15:50 saying "*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*" and then turns around and says "*flesh and bone going all the way to heaven!*" I guess, according to West, that if we can only get rid of the blood in our veins the rest of our physi-

cal body can go to heaven. So why, brother West, even get rid of the blood, except to make it harmonize with verse 50? He is trying to make a distinction here the Bible does not make!

Another interesting point to observe is the apparent comparison brother West makes between the Lord's resurrected body and our resurrected body. Since the Lord had flesh and bone after his resurrection (Luke 24:39), he assumes we will have flesh and bone after our resurrection. He says, "*flesh and bone going all the way to heaven.*" This scripture, however, shows the Lord's body had its scars for he showed the disciples his hands and feet. If we will get our physical body back at the resurrection as he claims, then we will get our scars back too. If not, why not? Do you want your scared body back? How many surgeries have you had? How many broken bones? Are you missing a limb or an eye? Do you have some kind of physical deformity? I suppose, according to West's doctrine, since you get your physical body back, you get all its scars too! Jesus' resurrected body had its scars!

Also consider this. The eleven apostles were witnesses of the Lord's resurrection (Luke 24:33-43; Acts 10:41). They talked and ate with him. They saw his resurrected body - even with its scars! However, when the apostle John was instructed to write I John 3:2 he said, "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*" Since John saw him after his resurrection but before he ascended into heaven; and since John, a few years after the Lord's ascension, wrote that we do not know how we shall appear, it follows that the body the Lord had before his ascension was not the same body that he has now. And, since we shall be like him when he comes again at the last day, it is necessary to understand that the body we have now, we will NOT have forever as brother West affirms!

I must confess, as John said, "*it doth not yet appear what we shall be.*" Though we do not know what we shall be, we do know it won't be what we have now! We now have a body of flesh, bone and blood. It is fashioned for this physical, material, earthly realm.

The Bible plainly says we shall have a "spiritual body" - not this "physical body!"

Let us make plain again, we are dealing with brother West's teaching and have absolutely no ill will against him personally.

**SEEK THE OLD
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The Church at Corinth**

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LARRY WEST'S "GOSPEL"...

(Continued from page 3)

when individuals are baptized into Christ, they are not obeying the gospel but that their obedience is in response to the gospel. But West does not believe that baptism is a part of the gospel of Christ, as he stated,

"Without minimizing either the Gospel or baptism Paul still shows there is a difference between them..."

However, in his very next sentence he contradicts himself by saying,

"It is interesting to see how Peter distinguishes them by pointing out that when one obeys a particular point of doctrine called the "Gospel," it places one initially into the "house of God" (1 Peter 4:17);..."

But since baptism is one of the commands of the gospel, it has to be considered a part of the gospel. Therefore, his view of the gospel is contradictory.

Again, if on the one hand, we are to preach the gospel to the world (but leave off all the other doctrines) and baptism is no part of the gospel (but a response to the gospel), then, we cannot preach baptism to the world. However, if baptism is a point of doctrine called the gospel, then, we must preach baptism to the world; and Larry's view of only preaching the person of Christ to the world falls short of the truth. So, which way does Larry want his gospel preached? I prefer the Lord's way.

But if, as our brother West argues, baptism is no part of the gospel, then, how does one get into Christ or the church (Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13)? Is baptism a part of the gospel, or of the other doctrines of Christ? If baptism be not a part of the gospel of Christ and not among the doctrines to be obeyed by Christians, where is West going to place baptism?

At least Ketcherside considered baptism a part of the gospel of Christ. West denies it and argues throughout his article that we have been preaching the wrong thing to the lost. He wrote,

"Our not understanding the Gospel (and right responses) [by

responses he means acts of obedience, including baptism] has caused, first, too many Christians not to know what to teach the lost to save them. They fear. Thus, it hinders rescue. Second, it has made others teach doctrines not Gospel at all and they, thus, are making unauthorized demands on people for heaven."

The problem West has in reconciling his warped view with the New Testament is that Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch (Acts 8:36); but it is implied that he also preached baptism, which West claims is not the gospel. How do we know Philip preached baptism? Because the Ethiopian asked to be baptized. He would not have asked to be baptized if Philip had not preached on it.

West tells us Paul made a distinction between the gospel and baptism in 1 Corinthians 1:17. It reads, "*For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*" However, Paul was not making a distinction between the gospel and baptism, but between two different actions - preaching and administering baptism.

Larry West believes that we should teach people about Jesus first. Then, after they have become Christians, we can teach them about the identity of the church, acceptable worship, marriage-divorce-remarriage, etc. His view is to get them on board first, i.e., baptized, then to teach them doctrine, or as he sometimes refers to it - "the captain's rules." Is that what the Scriptures teach? The American Standard says Jesus said, "*Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*" (Matt. 28:19-20). The command to make disciples is explained by the participles *baptizing* and *teaching*. Thus, the making of disciples includes the idea of teaching them to observe all things that Jesus commanded.

It is generally understood that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. By this truth, we shall demonstrate the error in "the gospel according to Larry West." Peter wrote, "*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the*

spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (1 Pet. 1:22). "Obeying the truth" in this passage is a reference to the baptism of the readers, because their souls were purified (Acts 22:16; Rev. 1:5; Heb. 10:22). Peter refers to this truth as the incorruptible word of God and calls it the gospel (1 Pet. 1:23,25). To obey the truth is to obey the gospel (1 Pet. 1:22; 4:17). And since to obey the truth includes baptism, then, to obey the gospel includes baptism. This is unget-overable.

The fundamental facts of the gospel are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4), but the gospel certainly includes more than these facts. Paul said he wanted to preach the gospel to those who were at Rome also (Rom. 1:14-15). One cannot obey the facts of the gospel. He must obey the commands of the gospel (2 Thess. 1:6-9). One, having done that, can then enjoy the great blessings of the gospel (Eph. 1:3).

In the eighth chapter of Acts we learn, "*But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women*" (Acts 8:12). Does that sound like the gospel according to Larry West? What was Philip doing preaching concerning the kingdom of God, i.e., the church, since that would not be considered a part of the gospel according to West?

In Acts 13 we see that several expressions are used interchangeably for the gospel. Paul, Barnabas and John Mark had gone to Cyprus where they preached the word at Salamis and then at Paphos. While at the latter place, Sergius Paulus desired to hear the word of God (v.7); but Elymas the sorcerer sought to turn away the deputy from the faith (v.8). But after Paul blinded the sorcerer, the deputy heard the right ways of the Lord and believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord (v.12). Gathering up all of the expressions, we have: the word of God, the faith, the right ways of the Lord, and the doctrine of the Lord. All of these have reference to the same body of truth, the gospel.

The gospel according to Larry West might get some on board; but as soon as they learn of the distinctiveness of the church, they will jump ship or there will be mutiny on board against the Captain of our salvation, Jesus Christ.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

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"Brethren, enclosed is a contribution in publishing S.T.O.P. I look forward to receiving it each month and really enjoy reading it. Thanks very much for the paper and your knowledge" ...*Earon Moore, Coffeeville, MS.* "I look forward to each issue of S.T.O.P. May God bless all of you" ...*James*

gone. I just finished reading William Woodson's book on "Change Agents." With people like you I believe we are gaining ground. Thanks for the fine paper. May God bless all the work there at East Corinth" ...*T. W. Meredith, Coldwater, MS.* "S.T.O.P. is a daring, courageous and fearless publication, and is a glory to God if there ever was a publication that gave God due honor. Your publication exudes with love in various ways: in the proclamation of truth - God's Will, regarding the souls of all mankind and the souls of brethren. I am deeply hurt and concerned when I read words of one Rick Walla as appeared in your January issue. Those as brother Walla will have a difficult task of explaining in judgment (of course there is no second chance) what it was he was really thinking of the Jesus Christ he claimed to love and walk after, when he is under the gavel of the Supreme Judge. The view he and other's set forth is; the Lord Jesus Christ was trying to cause trouble and was not trying to get along with Satan in Matt. the 4th chapter. Even in our Lord's sermon on the mount (Matt. 6:5), if he were here in person, some, as brother Walla, would condemn him for relating to other Jews they were hypocrites. And, the very thought of judging another's religious views with righteous judgment (John 7:24) would be condemned, judged, as seen by the fruits of our brother Walla. It would be interesting to hear brother Walla's explanation as to what caused Stephen to be stoned to death. According to brethren as Rick Walla, Stephen lost his life, not in service to God, but because he was un-loving and did not attempt to get along with those whom he was teaching. The Rick Wallas and Rubel Shellys of our day have always been around to molest the truth. I appreciate S.T.O.P. and such articles as the ones by brother Ben Vick and Dean Crutchfield (Jan/95) are sorely needed and can not harm anyone except as truth is sharper than a two edged sword. When struck with it, I am sure it smarts. Looking forward to the July lectureship and am urging other's to attend. Your publication S.T.O.P. is doing its job! Thanks for sending it to us" ...*Doyle Gough, Dresden, TN.*

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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