

# Seek The Old Paths

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

(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 10, No. 8

August 1999

## JEFF WALLING AND THE 1995 CAMPUS MINISTER'S CONFERENCE

*Don Blackwell*

*"...Baptism is silly, no matter how you cut it! Let me make it very plain. If you are out there trying to explain baptism because it makes a lot of sense, and it's this great symbol, and it shows this, and this is the closest thing you ever come to bein buried, you know, when you go down under that water, and come back up. That's the closest you ever come to dyin, and don't you see how. Folks, baptism is dumb from any standpoint other than God's..."* – Jeff Walling

I have in my hand a copy of a tape of Jeff Walling's presentation at the 1995 Youth Minister's Conference held in Memphis, Tennessee. I must admit that the first time I heard the tape it nearly brought tears to my eyes. Without a doubt, it was the most blatant and outright attack on the Lord's church that I had ever heard. Although Walling's "talk" was totally devoid of dignity, I believe it is the most honest and comprehensive outline of the *Change Movement* that I have ever heard.

I have set out to review this tape. I believe the best way to expose Walling and his error is to do so with his own words. For this reason, I have listed various headings indicative of the *Change Movement*, and then typed quotations from Walling's presentation. I have also added some words of review.

The bad thing about an article of this type is that you can not hear the laughter in the auditorium and the various silly voices that Walling does during his presentation. I assure you that even after reading the article, you will not have gotten the full effect until you hear the tape. It is

not my intention to misrepresent Jeff Walling, and lest anyone think I have, I would be willing to send you a copy of the tape so you can hear it first hand.

### THE NON-IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

One very obvious area that is attacked by the *Change Movement* is Doctrine. If it is going to be changed without opposition, it must first be relegated to a position of non-importance. Notice the way Walling does this through the use of humor. He says...

And then somebody says, "Will you come and speak to the, you know, the ministerial conference, with the senior ministers?" We don't call em that, but, you know, the preachin' guys. And that always gives you a headache cause they want to ask you all these questions about stuff that nobody else cares about, you know what I mean? "What's your position on this?" and I feel like saying, "When was the last time a lost person asked you that question, you know?"

### ATTACK ON MUSIC

A second prominent area that is being attacked by Walling and others with the same agenda is music. The trend is to make our worship in song more modern and contemporary. One way in which this is being done is through the use of "praise teams." Praise Teams are nothing more than a group of men and women who are talented singers who stand before the congregation and "lead" the song service. Notice Walling's comments on the "praise teams" at this function.

...two fantastically gifted praise teams have reminded me how much things have changed in the last few years. I mean, I remember coming to Campus Ministries' Seminar when we thought it was cool one song leader used overheads. Whooa, whew, cutting edge man, look out! And now, Lordy, I walked in the back door late, and thought I'm in the wrong building here. I mean, you know? I have to admit though,

*(Continued on page 60)*

**Jeff Walling...**



Guest Editorial...

## A Review of Rochester College, Churches Of Christ, And Nondenominational Christianity #2

Rusty Stark

We continue the examination of President Johnson's paper which was supposed to answer questions about where they stand on doctrinal matters. The first part of this article appeared in the July issue.

### #4 — IS IT TOO RESTRICTIVE TO STATE THAT BAPTISM IS FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS?

We take particular notice of statements made on page sixteen regarding the purpose of baptism. Page 16 is a postscript dated 2/16/99. Someone had raised a question asking why footnote #28 included the words "immersion of believers (Mt 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Acts 2:38, Gal 3:26-27, Rom 6:4)" rather than to refer to "baptism for the forgiveness of sins?" I'm glad someone was astute enough to raise the question. On the surface there is nothing wrong with referring to immersion of believers, especially when accompanied by scripture references. But in this case, as President Johnson explains the wording, it becomes clear that these words hide a false doctrine.

### THE VIEW OF ROCHESTER COLLEGE

In referring to the controversy between Austin McGarey and David Lipscomb, and in taking brother Lipscomb's side, Rochester College makes it plain that they do not believe a person needs to know that his baptism is for the remission of sins in order to be properly baptized. In fact, the statement is made that

brother McGarey's position is the "hard line position that this entire document rejects." They go on to claim that if they used the words "baptism for the remission of sins," they would be taking "the restrictive side" (emphasis from Ken Johnson). Restoration leaders are quoted throughout much of this paper as if their words should be binding on us. Brother Lipscomb was a great man, but if he was wrong on this issue, he was wrong. I don't accept brother McGarey's view or brother Lipscomb's view just because these men held these views. Let's drop the name dropping, and turn to the Scripture.

### OTHERS WHO HOLD THE SAME VIEW

Rochester College is not alone in their view that people can be baptized without an understanding that baptism is necessary for the forgiveness of sins and still receive the intended effect of baptism. **Jimmy Allen** has taken that stand in his book, *Re-Baptism* (Howard Publishing, 1991). **F. LaGard Smith** in his book, *Who Is My Brother?* (Cotswold Publishing, 1997), also speculates that people who are baptized under the impression that they are already saved may nevertheless have their sins forgiven by such an erroneous baptism (pp.129-130). Talk about putting form before substance! This argument is based on the idea that people can be saved because they get the outward form of baptism right, even though their heart is not following Biblical Truth. This is made clear by F. LaGard Smith's state-

ments on page 131 of his book:

"If there is in fact a special case to be made for those believing adults who are immersed with less than a correct understanding regarding the nature of biblical baptism, there is clearly no biblical basis for extending that special case to all forms and modes of baptism (such as sprinkling, pouring, or infant baptism)...."

So, according to LaGard Smith, if my understanding and intent is wrong, I may still receive the benefit because I got the outward form right. But if my intent is to be forgiven, just as the Bible teaches, but I mess up the outward form, then I miss the intended benefit. And, we are accused of being legalistic?!

### THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD

Is it restrictive to assert that those who did not understand baptism to be for the remission of sins were not baptized properly and therefore were not saved? If so, then label me as restrictive. Is it restrictive to claim that we must obey "from the heart" in order to be set free from sin (Rom. 6:17-18)? Obedience from the heart implies sincerity and understanding. Is it too restrictive to insist we are set free by Truth, not error (John 8:32)? People who believe their sins are already forgiven cannot be set free by that error. Those who are baptized, obeying the false doctrine that baptism is simply the outward show of the salvation they have already received, are practicing a different baptism than that taught in scripture. There is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5).

The New Testament teaches that God, at the point of baptism, raises us from our death in sin (Rom. 6:4). But Colossians 2:12 teaches that at baptism we are raised by faith in the operation (power or working) of God. How can we have faith in the working of God in our baptism if we don't know, or if we deny that baptism is the point at which we are raised to a new life?

But we are told that baptism is about much more than the remission of sins. In fact, look at this quote:

“...to state the words ‘for the forgiveness of sins’ is to inappropriately diminish the Biblical basis for baptism and to disregard the fullness of the baptismal experience. As we understand scripture, other matters far more remarkable than forgiveness of past sins occur at baptism, namely, a new-birthing has occurred, the baptized person is now ‘in Christ,’ the baptized person now belongs to the family of God, the baptized person now has the ‘gift of the Holy Spirit,’ the baptized person now has the righteousness of God perpetually counting for his/her righteousness assuming he/she does not turn away, and perhaps other mentionable matters” (President Johnson’s paper, Postscript, p.16, emphasis mine, RS).

Nothing is ‘far more remarkable’ than forgiveness of sins! This quote gives the impression that forgiveness of sins is a relatively small, inconsequential matter, much less important or remarkable than being born again or made part of God’s family. But forgiveness of sins is the cornerstone of all of these things. Forgiveness of sins shows the remarkable plan of God to be both just and justifier by punishing our sin in the person of Jesus, and by forgiving us in Jesus (Rom. 3:24-26).

Sin is man’s great problem. The other blessings that come to us based on scriptural baptism are only possible once our sins have been washed away. In fact, what makes all these other blessings remarkable is that they are bestowed on those who used to be sinners.

Being in Christ and being born again as part of God’s family are reflective of the fact that the sin which had separated us from God (Isa. 59:1-2) has now been washed away. We could not be reconciled to God, his Son, or his Spirit unless this forgiveness has taken place. Justification means that a guilty person has been declared righteous. So how can our new righteousness be more remarkable than the forgiveness of sins? These are not two different blessings, they are one.

Those who do not understand that baptism is the point at which

sins are cleansed/forgiven/remitted cannot experience this blessing. By taking the stand that they have regarding this matter, Rochester College accepts the baptism of virtually every person in the Baptist denomination (and many others). Why? Because they have the outward form of baptism right. Can’t we see that the inward form of baptism — the purpose for which we are being baptized — is just as important as the outward form?

If we are willing to accept a baptism that is wrong in purpose, how long until we accept a baptism that is wrong in form? If we accept those who were immersed sincerely desiring to obey God, even though they lack understanding of the design of baptism, why not accept those who were sprinkled, sincerely desiring to obey God, even though they lack understanding of the form of baptism?

We call upon Rochester College to give up this destructive, damnable doctrine.

#### #5 — WHAT IS MISSING FROM THE PRESIDENT’S PAPER?

We want to take time to point out some of the things President Johnson’s paper does not accomplish. In the preface, the intent of the paper is stated. It is to clarify “Who are we, religiously speaking?” If that is the intent, the paper falls short.

Admittedly, no man can or should attempt to write all of what he believes religiously. We have God’s Word in written form already. But our brotherhood is fighting a battle, and clarification from President Johnson or his faculty as to where Rochester College stands on some basic issues would be very helpful. If the desire is really to make known who Rochester College is, religiously speaking, we call upon President Johnson to answer the following simple questions:

1. Are specific acts of obedience on man’s part necessary in order to receive the gift of salvation?
2. According to Scripture, in the New Testament age, can any accountable sinner be saved without being baptized?
3. Is it a sin to worship God with a mechanical instrument of music?

4. May women, with God’s approval, preach, lead prayer, or lead songs at assemblies where Christian men are present?

Now we are getting down to where the proverbial rubber and road actually touch. Here is a serious matter needing an answer — Does President Johnson want prospective students and their parents to know where Rochester College is on these types of issues, or would he rather leave people in the dark?

Nothing in President Johnson’s paper gives plain answers to these or other pressing and serious issues facing the Lord’s church today. Is this document meant to clarify, or is it meant to establish a middle-of-the-road (President Johnson’s words, p.15) facade that will appease supporters?

I wrote to President Johnson, asking him to answer these specific questions. He did respond and acknowledged that man must obey God in order to be saved. (Of course his paper makes it clear man doesn’t have to understand why he is obeying God in the matter of Baptism.) President Johnson did not even refer to the other 3 questions. Why not? Shouldn’t these be easy to answer?

#### CONCLUSION

We call upon Ken Johnson to truly let us know where he and the faculty at Rochester College stand on these kinds of crucial matters. It is easy to speak in generalities that don’t enlighten or inform.

We have offered our pulpit as a platform for the open public discussion of these matters, so that Rochester College can defend the doctrines they put forth in this paper. Ken Johnson has refused, saying that he doesn’t believe further dialogue will be productive.

Again, openly, we offer to President Johnson a platform to come and defend the things he has written in this document. We offer to let him come speak in our pulpit and defend the proposition that a person need not understand baptism to be for the remission of sins in order to be baptized scripturally. We will deny that proposition and show to all those present the error of this doctrine. →



We offer our pulpit as a polemic platform for the discussion of Christians only and the only Christians, or the topic of whether people can be saved in denominationalism, or how broad our fellowship ought to be. But, we doubt that such offers will be taken up. President Johnson has had plenty of time and opportunity before now to make his doctrine fully known if he so desired.

Since President Johnson frowns on honorable debate, not believing it will be productive, we challenge him to simply write a paper making his doctrine fully known, instead of one that is full of obscure rhetoric. Or, perhaps someone on the Bible faculty will take up the challenge to debate these issues personally or on behalf of the college. Then we can all know how to deal with Rochester College.

**After reviewing president Johnson's paper, and after other serious issues surrounding Rochester College, I have reluctantly come to this conclusion: maybe it was best, after all, for them to remove the term Christian from their name.**

We call upon faithful Christians everywhere to rise up and let Rochester College know you will not be supporting them or encouraging students to attend there until such time as they go back to the Truth of God's Word, and clearly let everyone know where they stand and what doctrines will be taught there.

Author's Note: In preparing these articles, care was taken to truly understand and accurately represent the views of Ken Johnson as stated in his paper. Because we have no desire to misrepresent anyone, we welcome any specific clarifications of points we may have misunderstood or misused. General statements of being misunderstood, misrepresented, or mis-characterized are not helpful. We assume that a man in President Johnson's position can make himself clear if he so desires, and therefore we have taken him at his written word. If there are specific corrections which seem valid, we will clarify, retract, apologize, or whatever else seems necessary.

(Second of two parts)  
1495 E Empire Ave.  
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

## Jeff Walling...

(Continued from page 57)

the last group had something, you guys were fantastic, but the last group had something you guys don't have, and that is one of the best looking Christian sister singers that I have seen anywhere.

### THE ROLE OF WOMEN

A third area that is attacked by the *Change Movement* is the role of women. The change is toward women having a more prominent role in the leadership of the church. See if you notice this tendency in Walling's remarks below.

It is exciting to be here at a place where the ability and the gift of a number of Christian ladies is recognized, and their contribution to what's happening to the brotherhood worldwide. Now, I'm happy to say that specifically coming from California, cause right up the road from me, I know that you see Scott Lambert up here, and the one you didn't see up here is the one that makes Scott look so good, and that's my good sister and friend, and one of the "ministers" of the Malibu church of Christ, Luoana Gill, and I know she's not alone. I know there are a number of other ladies, who whether they call you "minister," or call you "women's counselor," or call you, "oh that gal that helps," whatever title they give to you, praise God for the fact that we are able to tap into the wonderful gifts that God has given, the ladies that He's placed all around us. Amen? Amen! And we need to, let's praise God for that. That's 'propriate to do. (Round of applause goes up.)

### WALLING'S VIEW OF THE CHANGE MOVEMENT

Very little needs to be said about this section. It seems quite evident that Jeff Walling is well aware of his role as a leader in changing the church of our Lord. The fact, however, is that on the Divine side, the Lord's church is perfect. Those who are a part of "the cutting edge of change" will tell you they are seeking to change those imperfections on the human side. The problem with that is that many of the areas being changed are areas that are unchangeable — areas on the Divine side. Walling said,

But I need to tell you, I really believe this is an awfully exciting and important time to be where you are. It's an exciting time to be involved in church of Christ ministry. Of course, we always feel like this is the Golden Age. I don't feel like this is the Golden Age. I do feel like this is the virtual age of, of some kind of virtual reality in churches of Christ, where things are happening so quickly around us. Where the tension level is zooming, as those who would call themselves part of the cutting edge,...you know there's like lots of people out in our brotherhood who would like to take a cutting edge to the cutting edge. Do you understand what I'm talkin about here? There is a great deal of tension, which makes this an exciting time. It makes it an exciting time because things are changing, old habits are being questioned, old tradition, I mean we've got the most sacred of cows being trodded through butcher shops all over this country in churches of Christ where people are willing to ask questions that would have been heresy to even voice before. And I'm not saying that we have lots of sacred cows that need to be slaughtered, but every now and then it's just good to check the herd to make sure you don't have a few goats in there, if you know what I'm sayin.

### PROGRESSIVE CHANGE

It is clear from the following excerpt that brother Walling understands that change must be progressive. He understands that all of the "desired" changes can't be made overnight. People will see through that and rebel against it. If one is going to change a congregation, it must be done slowly. No doubt, this is why they are often very successful. Walling sympathizes with these youth ministers,

...and you are struggling with how do I meet the needs of these young people? How do I help them to understand? How do I be cutting edge, and new wave, avant garde, and and progressive, without losing my job? and making everyone else in the congregation really irritated with me...I have to wonder if you're at a place in your ministry where you don't have to go to the church of Christ either. You've looked around too. And from those of you I've talked to, some of you discuss it with a pained expression of somebody who's got one foot one place and some foot some place else, and

you're wonderin, "How do I make this meet?" How do I keep my balance? How do I be progressive and cutting edge, and try new things without alienating myself from the very people who not only support me financially, but do support me heart wise, and are there for me when I need em?"

### VULGARITY

Vulgarity, per se, is not a trend of the change movement, but a lack of respect toward those things traditionally considered appropriate is. This movement is very much reflective of our society as a whole. Things once considered taboo are now embraced with arms wide open. The following vulgarity makes the point. Walling continues,

...Jesus does have a way for us to keep our balance, and it is only found in him. You see, right in there is where Paul's big "but" comes in. Mark it down in your notes and then turn to Second Corinthians chapter 2 verse 14 to find it. Those of you later reading the transcript of this will not enjoy that near as much as those in the audience did. As you'll note, there's only one "t" in the word that I was referring to out of verse 14...and I'm so thankful for Paul's big "but" that he puts right here in the middle of this text, and I want you to think of it that way. I know you won't remember this, "Did you hear about Walling saying "Paul's big but?" I want you to remember this.

### NO PATTERN THEOLOGY

The attack on doctrine begins with the philosophy that the Scriptures are not a pattern for us to follow. When the pattern is gone, one can only imagine what will come next. Walling states this point very clearly.

...and all we're doin is sayin, "I just want to do what the Lord calls me to." Course, we don't like followin, we like havin a map. Don't tell me follow you, just give me a map. Some of us think he did, that this is a diagnostic tool. I don't need the leading of the Lord, I've got the Scriptures. It is my substitute for the leading of the Lord. The problem is Scriptures doesn't tell me whether to live in Los Angeles or Atlanta. The Scripture doesn't tell me whether to be in campus ministry, or pulpit ministry, or senior ministry, or just plain ole ministering

ministry. You know, it doesn't tell me. So what have I got to do?...I've got to learn to walk behind Jesus, and say "Father, you lead me." ...And God doesn't give maps because if we ever took a look at a map at where he was headin us, we'd get out of the car right now.

### BAPTISM

One area the Lord's church has been renowned for defending in years past is baptism. Unfortunately, it too has come under attack by some of those who once defended it. Walling asks,

How many of you have been pressed about baptism in the last few years? You guys are water regenerationalists, that's what you are. You believe there's magic in the water, and man we work the water. We try and splain how it makes sense folks. That water makes sense. That water is an important symbol and it shows, and the uniting, and going down and going up. Baptism is silly, no matter how you cut it! Let me make it very plain. If you are out there trying to explain baptism because it makes a lot of sense, and it's this great symbol, and it shows this, and this is the closest thing you ever come to bein buried, you know, when you go down under that water, and come back up. That's the closest you ever come to dyin, and don't you see how. Folks, baptism is dumb from any standpoint other than God's. You (unclear) somebody up there and dunk 'em up and down in the water, and you try to tell me, "This is really, this is serious business." We get little baptismal suits, make it look formal, you know.

The continuation of the discussion on baptism sounds more like something out of a stand up comic routine. Walling uses the "funny" voices and there is laughter throughout. He continues,

"And I ask you now," and they ask them the confession in the water, and I always wondered, why do we do it in the water? These folks are scared, nervous, half the time the baptistery ain't well heated. We're askin them the most important question in the world, and they're scared, nervous, and frightened. We could say, "Taco and a Coke," they'd say, "Uh huh." Am I gettin to you yet? Have I offended you yet? Hang on, we'll get there. I want you to feel the ridiculousness of something that is one of God's choices that I have quit tryin to explain.

There is much more that could be brought out concerning this presentation such as Walling's comments on "brotherhood wranglings," his gross paraphrasing of biblical stories, the use of applause offered as praise to God and several other things. Brethren, the bottom line is this, Jeff Walling is a dangerous man! The evidence is abundant! We need to get the word out, and warn those who are unaware. He is a very smooth talker and sways many people, but the Bible still says, "*mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them*" (Rom. 16:17).

Those interested in receiving a copy of this tape of Jeff Walling, please send me a blank cassette tape, and an addressed envelope affixed with the proper postage.

P.O. Box 1484  
Statesville, NC, 28677

## Contributions

Charles and Nancy Verkist .....	\$25
Austin and Dorothy Gilley.....	\$20
Leo and Mary Parry .....	\$15
Dock J. Campbell.....	\$20
M/M James L. Stroud, Jr. ....	\$10
Nolan and Marilyn Lawson .....	\$40
M/M John H. Brown.....	\$25
Bobby R. Starnes .....	\$10
Anonymous .....	\$5
John L. Moore. Sr. ....	\$10
Danville Church of Christ, Rienzi, MS.....	\$150
Charles and Nancy Verkist .....	\$25
Anonymous .....	\$60
Herschel Bass .....	\$50
Louise Welch.....	\$25
Hubert Morris.....	\$20

Because so many have requested we let them know when **finances begin to run low** in publishing *Seek The Old Paths*, we wish to take this opportunity to do so. We buy paper 30 cartons (less than four issues) at a time to get a lower cost. This amounts to about \$1000. Postage costs this year has averaged \$844 an issue. We print about 9400 a month. As you can see from the mailbag, brethren are being helped and encouraged around the world by this work. If you would like to assist us with these costs, please do so. The paper is free to all who request it. This is only made possible by the contributions we receive. We want to thank you for your generosity.

# THE VOICE OF STRANGERS

Victor M. Eskew

**S**trange voices are speaking within the midst of the flock of God. They are saying strange things, such as:

- 1) *Baptism is not essential to salvation.* But Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38 and 1 Peter 3:21 says it is.
- 2) *Instrumental music is acceptable to God.* But Eph. 5:19 and Rev. 22:18-19 says it's not.
- 3) *Women may take positions of authority and leadership in the worship services.* But 1 Tim. 2:9-15 forbids it.
- 4) *Dramatic performances should replace the preaching of the Gospel.* But 1 Cor. 1:21, 2 Tim. 4:1-4 and Rom. 1:16 demands preaching, not plays.
- 5) *There are sincere, knowledgeable, devout Christians scattered among all the denominations.* But Matt. 15:13 says they all will be rooted up by the Lord come judgment day.
- 6) *The churches of Christ do not comprise the one, true church.* But Matt. 16:18 says otherwise.
- 7) *Book, chapter, and verse preaching is old fashion and out-of-style.* But 1 Peter 4:11 demands we speak as the oracles of God.
- 8) *Direct, miraculous leadings and miracles of the Holy Spirit are needed in addition to the Word of God.* But Acts 20:32, 1 Tim. 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:3 tell us the Word of God is sufficient.
- 9) *Grace saves apart from any and all law.* But Rom. 8:1-2 and James 1:25 demand obedience to the law of Christ.
- 10) *Matthew 19:9 does not apply to the non-Christian.* But Matt. 19:1-9 uses the words "whosoever" and "whoso" making it apply to all men.

Sadly, many individuals are giving heed to the voices of strangers. Thousands upon thousands flock to hear these voices which run contrary to the voice of the good shepherd.

These individuals need to hear the teaching of Jesus found in John 10:4-5, "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." Sheep know their shepherd. They will only follow his voice. When strangers enter in among them, they do not give heed to them. They do not snuggle in their breasts. They do not cuddle in their arms. Oh no! Instead, they "flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

This admonition needs to be heeded by all the sheep within the Lord's flock. The voices of strangers are calling. They sound loudly and with great boldness. Many sheep run to them. They assemble at their Workshops and Jubilees. Sheep of the Lord's fold, however, will flee from them. They hear only the voice of the true shepherd of the sheep. "And the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."

400 Cherry Road  
Paragould, AR 72450

# FAITHFULNESS VS. FOOLISHNESS

*It is utter foolishness to follow apostates like **Jeff Walling, Max Lucado, Mike Cope, Rubel Shelly, Rick Atchley, Buddy Bell, Joe Beam, Larry West, Terry Rush,** and a host of others of like-trifling stripe down the super-highway that leads to destruction.*

**J**eremiah was instructed by God to present this message to all who came to worship: "...Stand in the court of Jehovah's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in Jehovah's house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word. It may be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way; that I may repent me of the evil which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings" (Jer. 26:2-3).

God's house has never been the place to fail to teach all God's glorious Truth. The message from God was to diminish not a word! Why would one desire to modify the force of the word of God? The answer is found in verse eight: "And it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that Jehovah had commanded him to speak unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die." Upon arrival of the "princes of Judah" to God's house, the people's sentiments are again expressed: "Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears" (Jer. 26:11).

Jeremiah is declared "worthy of death" because he refused to diminish the word of God! What "worshippers" of the Lord's people in every



congregation need today is a faithful declaration of the “*whole counsel of God*” (cf. Acts 20:27) so they might have the opportunity to turn from their evil ways (cf. Jer. 26:3). The apostate “dreamers” among us may appeal to those who have “itching ears” and a desire to “*turn their ears from the truth*” (2 Tim. 4:3-4), but faithfulness, not foolishness, is what God requires of His followers! The warning given in Revelation applies to that book and all other books of Holy Writ. John says, “*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues*

*that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book*” (Rev. 22:18-19).

It is utter foolishness to follow apostates like **Jeff Walling, Max Lucado, Mike Cope, Rubel Shelly, Rick Atchley, Buddy Bell, Joe Beam, Larry West, Terry Rush**, and a host of others of like-trifling stripe down the super-highway that leads to destruction. An apostate congregation is a curse to the people who attend, the city in which they reside, and to the Lord

Himself! It is a disgrace for a child of God to ridicule and show utter contempt for the inspired Word. O how people need to ask today, “*Is it from heaven or from men*” (cf. John 21:25)?

Jeremiah’s reply to those who threatened him was: “*...amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of Jehovah your God; and Jehovah will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you*” (Jer. 26:13). This is our plea for today’s purveyors of foolishness and false doctrine!

Marvin L. Weir  
5810 Liberty Grove Rd.  
Rowlett, TX 75089

## WHO WILL STAND IN THE GAP?

Joel Morrison

**E**zekiel was a prophet of God in captivity in Babylon when he began to prophesy. He had been taken captive during the second siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonians about 597 B.C. While in captivity he warned of the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the Jews into captivity if they continued their rebellion against God.

The walls of Jerusalem had suffered damage due to the two assaults on the city by the Babylonian army and there were many breaches or gaps. Soldiers would have to literally fill those gaps or breaches against any enemy until it could be repaired. But there were gaps more serious and important than the physical gaps in the walls, there were spiritual gaps. These gaps were caused by idolatry, ungodliness and rebellion. The prophets were doing nothing to repair these gaps. They were speaking lies and telling the people they had nothing to fear, but that God would be with them and would protect their great city. Through Ezekiel, God warned: “*Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ... they have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them...*” (Ezek. 13:2,6).

God said, “*And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap...but I found none*” (Ezek. 22:30). He also said, “*Ye have not gone up into the gaps...*” (Ezek. 13:5). God could find no one to fill the gaps and stand against the enemy.

The church of Christ — spiritual Jerusalem — is under assault from without and within. There are breaches (gaps) in the walls. Sin and wickedness, false doctrines and erroneous practices on the part of some among us are causing these gaps. Change-agents and false teachers among us, like the false prophets of old, are following “*...their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ... they have seen vanity and lying divination.*” They were crying “*Peace, peace; when there is no peace*” (Jer. 6:14). Such workers of error bring nothing but trouble, conflict and a continual destruction of the old paths and sacred truth.

Who will stand in the gap and “make up the hedge” against Satan and his forces? Beloved, the ancient city of Jerusalem was destroyed and her inhabitants were carried away into captivity because no one would stand in the gap and correct the wrongs that prevailed. Will spiritual Jerusalem, the beautiful bride of Christ, be swept away again into

apostasy because no one will arise to fill the gaps (1 Tim. 4:1-2; Rev. 3:1-6; 15-18)? Will we allow the change-agents and false teachers among us, with their smooth words, fair speeches, pseudo-intellectualism and self-righteousness (Rom. 10:2-3), to convince the masses that all is well and that all the changes, innovations and departures are acceptable to God?

May God open our eyes to the destruction and devastation around us, and like the Jews of old, may we see the need to “*rise up and build*” (Neh. 2:18). But while the repairs are being made, who will stand in the gap? Will the faithful of God arise and “*put on the whole armor of God*” (Eph. 6:10)?

The battle rages on. It could very well be that the faithful are in the minority at this present time. But let us not forget that with God, Gideon’s 300 men defeated the mighty Midianite army (Judges 7). If we stand in the gap, “*fight the good fight of faith*” (1 Tim. 6:12), and “*purge out the old leaven*” (1 Cor. 5:7), God will surely be with us and we will be able to defeat this monstrous army of Satan in our midst.

Will you stand in the gap?

624 Ridgeway Dr.  
Bolivar, Tn. 38008

# MAILBAG



## SEEK THE OLD PATHS

concerning those who would subvert the gospel and turn the church of Christ into a denomination. We live in a time when deprecation is the "in thing." The liberals speak evil of the church, pattern theology, and plenary verbal inspiration, and any who be so "blind" to believe such things. But many "conservatives" have also turned their tongues (and pens) into instruments of lambasting. For some they have new purpose in life, castigate the liberals. It gives them a sense of purpose and joy. They have someone to cast stones at. In that same issue you have an article by Rusty Stark entitled, Not Surprised, Just Saddened. I thought this was a very appropriate attitude. When Christians turn away from the truth it brings sadness, pain. A part of the body has been cut off. It is time for mourning. Those who turn away must be dealt with, absolutely. But Paul says that we must do it "in the spirit of meekness" (Gal. 6:1,2; 2 Tim. 2:25,26). There are even times when strong words should be used. Even Jesus did so in Matthew 23. But that was only after He tried and tried to persuade them to turn from their evil ways. That was at the end of His striving with them and pronounced their doom (Matt. 23:28). But even then Jesus was not happy about it (v.37). Thank you again for your wisdom and kindness, and your willingness to stand for truth. Keep up the good work" ...**Steve Vice, Saipan, Mariana Islands.** "We wish to express our love and appreciation for your S.T.O.P. We desire to be helpful in your labors to get the gospel of Christ to lost sinners and to the saved who will listen and aid in your work" ...**Ector and Cordia Watson, Cleveland, OK.** "One cannot read Mailbag without realizing that S.T.O.P. must stay on the cutting edge! Too, it proves the Lord's church is alive. Re-read the Mailbag entry of the May, 1999 issue. S.T.O.P. gives courage to the young and older alike. We are appreciative of the Corinth church, her Elders and Preacher—Editor of S.T.O.P. God Bless" ...**Doyle Gough, Dresden, TN.** "I appreciate your "testing all spirits" for me and others, but don't judge too much...that is God's job" ...**Todd Inman.** [EDITOR'S NOTE: The Lord is the judge, that is true (John 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:10). However, the Lord also tells us to judge righteous judgment (John 7:24). We are to "...believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). And, "...by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:16,20). This demands we make judgments regarding one's teaching and actions. Otherwise, we would not know who is a child of God and who is not — who is faithful and who is not. We can't judge one's heart because we cannot know it (Matt. 7:1-2), but we can know their life because we can see it.] "Dear brother Robinson, this is to acknowledge receipt of three issues (Dec 1998-Feb.1999) of STOP. I find these copies biblically sound, very useful, and informative. Capitol City 3rd Annual Youth Lectureship & Fellowship was concluded very recently, May 21 & 22. This year's theme is "Let No Man Despise Your Youth." I spoke on the subject: "Be an Example in Upholding Sound Doctrine." STOP was a gold-mine in my preparation of my lectures. In addition to the lectureship and fellowship we have gospel meeting. Five precious souls were added into the Lord's kingdom. Please continue sending STOP" ...**George A. Villanueva, Quezon City, Philippines.** "I sent you my address for your publication when I was in Bonne Terre, Missouri. I was preaching for the church there until I began to take a stand on the scriptures. I taught that the scripture teaches the same things to all people and Bible studies were not "personal opinion fests." I also began to express the restoration principle of "speak where the Bible speaks and keep silent where the Bible is silent." I was promptly labeled an "ultra-conservative" and steps were taken to remove me from the pulpit. I have since "kicked the dust" from my feet and moved to a new work in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. These are faithful brethren that still "seek the old paths." Your publication has been very helpful to me in times of difficulty" ...**Dennis (Skip) Francis, Port Huron, MI.** "I thank you so much and every month when I get my *Seek the Old Paths* I sit down immediately and read it cover to cover. May God bless your work" ...**Debbie Drake, LaRue, OH.** "Thanks again and please continue your fight for the truth. Your publication and beliefs are very encouraging. God bless" ...**Matt LeBlanc, Ruston, LA.** "PLEASE keep

up the good work!!!" ...**David M. Franklin, Greenwood, MS.** "Dear S.T.O.P. Evidently **David Lipscomb** must be doing something right. Your publication spends a lot of time and effort criticizing this good institution. I will definitely consider sending my children there. If S.T.O.P. is against it, it has got to be good!" ...**J. Slater, North Carolina.** [EDITOR'S NOTE: Isaiah 5:20 says, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" I guess it depends on whether you love the truth or not. I have no friend but Jesus. I'll uphold the Lord, not human institutions. He died for the church, not man-made digressive organizations.] "Dear Brethren, I pray that this finds you in good health and high spirits, and your labors in the Lord abounding unto the glory and praise of the Almighty. I am currently on your mailing list to receive STOP and I appreciate receiving it very much. I am writing on behalf of the brethren, requesting multiple issues that may be distributed among the brethren here. If you are able, we would like to receive 40 copies when each issue is sent out. If there is a subscription charge, please let me know and we will send it out immediately. If there is no subscription charge, I expect the men may decide to send something anyway. Continue the good work and our prayers continue to go with you. Joyfully In Him" ...**Ted Parks, Vacaville, CA.** "Thank you and keep up the good work!!!" ...**Jessie Williams, Orange Park, FL.** "I have recently had the opportunity to read your fine publication. I would like to receive it if I could. I am concerned about liberalism in the church today and appreciate your willingness to stand for the truth. Thanks" ...**Phil Wilson, Wilmington, NC.** "Dear Brothers, Please remove me from your Seeking the Old Paths Mailing list. I have lost all desire to read such condemnatory publications" ...**M/M John McCranie, IV, Santa Paula, CA.** [NOTE: Do you know of a passage that countermands Romans 16:17? It commands us to "...mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."]

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

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** / Associate Editor: **Jimmy Bates**

<http://www.tsixroads.com/~ecorinth>

EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST  
1801 CRUISE ST.  
CORINTH, MS 38834-5108  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
P A I D  
Permit No. 253  
Corinth, MS