

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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"DOES THE CHURCH OF CHRIST NEED TO BE RESTORED?"

Ron Cosby

"Does the church of Christ need to be restored?" Not according to at least two groups. One group tells us that the church was never lost; another tells us that there is nothing to restore. Respectfully, we disagree, and here is why:

Mixing biblical metaphors causes some to deny the need for restoration. "After all," they tell us, "the church is the people. You cannot restore the people." With this group, we need only to remind them that God's spiritual sphere is not only referred to as the church but the same body is alluded to, among other figures, as the kingdom. Having viewed the church from the aspect of a kingdom, this group will be better able to see the potential of restoration.

The apostles pled for restoration of the old kingdom, "*When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel*" (Acts 1:6)? We can all agree that they knew of the principle of restoring kingdoms. Thus, when one views the church as the kingdom, rationale for the plea to return to that which once existed in pristine form is evident.

Another principle that shows that the church or kingdom can be restored is found in 2 Kings 23. God's system of religion deteriorated under the rule of evil kings and lying

diviners. After being enlightened by that which was written, godly princes, prophets and people returned to the Lord by keeping "the passover unto the LORD...as it is written in the book of this covenant" (2 Kings 23:21). Lest someone missed it, they kept the Passover "as it is written"; indeed, as it is written "in the book of the covenant." What these passages tell is that a system of religion (the church or the kingdom) can be restored. Obviously, the Lord was pleased with their return to His way of righteousness.

What we need now is to understand whether or not the church needs to be restored. It depends on the time frame. Has the church of Christ (the kingdom) ever needed restoring? Yes. Wayne Jackson is exactly right when he says "Every biblical passage that warns of a 'falling away' from the faith...contains the implied need for a restoration" (Spiritual Sword, Vol. 23, No. 1). Both Acts 1:6 and 2 Kings 23 verify brother Jackson's basic declaration.

After the apostles established the church on firm footing, false teachers led many astray, even as Paul had forewarned (Acts 20; 1 Tim. 4; 2 Tim. 4; 2 Thess. 2). History shows that the profane so corrupted the church that pure Christianity could rarely be detected, possibly existing only in remote and isolated spots. Thus, having gone astray, the

kingdom needed to be brought back to its original condition.

Changing the time frame to today, we ask, "Does the church need to be restored today?" Herein we answer, "No." However, if providence allows another falling away, God's system of righteousness will need to be brought back into its primitive state.

Admittedly, what we have said up to this time does not fully address the second group's opposition to restoration. Remember they deny that there is anything to restore. Listen to one of their proponents. He says, "The church which the Lord built is a universal, unstructured entity which defies limiting patterns." The writer is saying that no pattern exists. Dear reader, if there is no "limiting pattern," there can be no falling away.

Did the church in the first century have an original condition; that is, a specific pattern that they followed and kept? Indeed it did. The apostles established the church all over the land, with every congregation following the same set of rules. Paul as much as said this very thing to the Corinthians, "*Timothy...shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church*" (1 Cor.

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**Does The Church Of Christ
Need To Be Restored?...**



Guest Editorial...

WOODMONT HILLS AND RUBEL SHELLY BECOME ENTHUSIASTIC PARTICIPANTS WITH BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE

Rusty Stark

LoveLines is the bulletin for the Woodmont Hills congregation where Rubel Shelly works as minister. The September 29, 1999 issue (Volume 25, Number 29) has an article about the fact that Billy Graham will be holding a crusade in Nashville in the first week of June, 2000. Here are some excerpts from that article.

“By now it is likely that you have heard the news that Billy Graham is planning an evangelistic crusade for Nashville in the spring of next year. This crusade has the potential to be a significant event in the spiritual life of many people in our city.” “...Woodmont Hills supports the decision of Dr. Graham and his ministry to be in Nashville.” “...It is important for the members of our church family to understand why we will be enthusiastic participants.” “Billy Graham presents Jesus Christ as mankind’s only hope for eternal life. ‘My one purpose in life,’ he insists, ‘is to help people find a personal relationship with God, which I believe comes through knowing Christ.’ If it is right to link arms with other believers to oppose pornography and drugs, surely it cannot be wrong to join with them to preach Christ crucified.” “...The Graham crusade will challenge the church in Nashville to reap a harvest of souls to God’s glory.” “...The invitation to be given each evening will be for persons to make a decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Respondents will then make a self-designating choice to be counseled about the meaning of their decision by people from several different groups. We will be working closely with the campaign effort to advise those who mark ‘Church of Christ.’ We will also try to contact such persons with a congregation that can administer to them appropriately and help them in their spiritual pilgrimage.” “With the blessings of our shepherds, Rubel Shelly is serving as a General Com-

mittee Member on behalf of this outreach effort. Several of our shepherds wrote letters of invitation to Dr. Graham to encourage him to come to our city. Training sessions for crusade workers will be hosted on our property. And we ask all of you to pray for the success of this effort to exalt Jesus Christ in our great city.”

Far from opposing Billy Graham as a false teacher, this article was written to explain why the Woodmont Hills congregation plans to be “enthusiastic participants.” Let’s notice three things from this quote.

The usage of the term other “believers” is unfortunate and unscriptural. Acts 5:14 and 1 Timothy 4:12 use the term believer to refer to those who are Christians. Other passages refer to those who believed (Acts 2:44; 4:32). Just the fact that someone believes who Jesus is does not make him a believer. In Matthew 8:29, demons confessed Jesus as God’s Son. That didn’t make them believers (in the biblical sense of the word).

It is impossible to join with Billy Graham to preach Christ crucified because Billy Graham does not preach Christ crucified — at least not in the biblical sense of these words. In Acts 8:35, Phillip began to preach to the treasurer of Ethiopia. Luke records that he preached unto him Jesus. The very next verse presents the treasurer as asking if something stood in the way of him being baptized. Phillip preached that Jesus’ baptism was integral to his message. But according to the *LoveLines* article, Billy Graham will invite people to make a decision to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Unfortunately, we all know Billy Graham will not tell people they must be baptized in order to be saved by Jesus. At their website, there is a page on how to become a Christian. It mentions believing, and receiving a

free gift from God, but it never mentions baptism. Billy Graham may claim to preach Christ, but he doesn’t do so as Phillip the evangelist did.

This *LoveLines* article reasons that if it is right to link arms with other believers in opposing things like pornography and drugs, surely it cannot be wrong to join with them to preach Christ crucified. The answer to this is simple. It is not right for the Lord’s church to link arms with people who are not true believers in opposing sin or in supporting that which is right. Christians can be part of the “right to life” movement. Christians can join community programs designed to keep kids off drugs. But Christians cannot join with religious groups or denominations because joining with them makes us partakers of their evil. Since no denomination has God’s authorization, all denominations are sinful (Col. 3:17). False teachers like Billy Graham are to be taken note of and avoided (Rom. 16:17-18). The article uses the term participants, and this is exactly what the word fellowship means. It means sharing or jointly participating. 2 John 9-11 teaches we cannot endorse the false teacher, for in supporting or endorsing him we become partaker of his evil deeds. We cannot support him just in his good, without that endorsement making us partakers of his evil also.

As appealing as he is in his speaking ability, his upright manner of life, etc., Billy Graham is preaching a perverted gospel, and he stands as one who is accursed by God (Gal. 1:6-9). Should we as God’s children think that we can stand with such a one and support him and still hope to escape the curse ourselves?

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Ted J. Clarke of Mammoth Spring, Arkansas wrote... “Brethren, are you crying? Does your heart ache at this kind of news? We’ve come a long way from the time one preacher reportedly cried out to Billy Graham in one of his crusades, “Why do you not teach baptism as essential for salvation?” To which Graham reportedly said, “Well, it seems we have a Campbellite among us. Just go on back to your own little group,” or words to that effect.

How long, O, Lord?”

DLU POLICY OR BIBLICAL TRUTH?

Jerry Brewer

McBride apparently believes that citing a “108-year tradition... at Lipscomb” is taking a significant stand for Lipscomb and “churches of Christ everywhere.”

The verbal obfuscation of liberals and their fellow travelers is keenly focused in the following from the November issue of the *Christian Chronicle*. Lindy Adams’ article reports on the firing of **Doug Varnado** at **David Lipscomb University** because the church where he preaches now uses instrumental music. DLU President **Steve Flatt** plainly indicates that a decision to use or exclude mechanical instruments of music in worship rests upon the “policy” of DLU and a “108-year tradition,” not necessarily Biblical authority, and his fellow traveler, *Chronicle* Editor Bailey McBride, commends his “stand.”

The story contains the following quote from the *Nashville Tennessean*: “If Community church is going to be an instrumental congregation, that’s not in accord with our policy,” Lipscomb President Steve Flatt told the *Tennessean*. “Our identity for the last 108 years has included a cappella.”

Flatt told the *Chronicle*, “Our policy is not meant to reflect who is or is not in the Kingdom. It reflects a small part of an operating procedure which best allows Lipscomb to serve.”

Flatt offers nothing from a Biblical perspective regarding music in the church, only a carefully crafted statement that instrumental music isn’t “in accord with our policy,” and is “a small part of our operating procedure that allows Lipscomb to serve.” That’s a far cry from the biblical position of N. B. Hardeman who debated that issue with Ira M. Boswell in the very shadow of **David Lipscomb College** at the Ryman Auditorium in 1923. Flatt makes instrumental music a “policy” issue. Hardeman taught the Truth on it.

The article further said, “Our policy on a cappella music reflects our primary constituents,” Flatt told

the *Chronicle*.

The implication is that instrumental music would be approved at Lipscomb if their “primary constituents” wanted instrumental music. This is theological subjectivism, not objective devotion to God’s Word.

Flatt then sidestepped the issue with the following statement: “Virtually all churches of Christ are a cappella, and we don’t need to apologize for that. There are good reasons for our stance, including unity and harmony on campus.”

How about a lack of Biblical authority for mechanical instruments? Would Flatt classify that as one of the “very good reasons for our stance?” What does he mean by “unity and harmony on campus?” If mechanical instruments would promote the kind of “unity” (union) called for by the Christian Church, would that be a good reason to permit its use?

In the same issue, *Chronicle* Editor Bailey McBride has high praise for Flatt for “taking a stand.” “The issue of instrumental music has publicly surfaced in Nashville, Tenn. Steve Flatt and the administration of Lipscomb University stood firmly for a cappella music in worship in deciding to terminate the services of Doug Varnado, a visible and popular teacher of 17 years. (See story, p.14.) Such a course of action is never easy, especially when the spotlight of public scrutiny is certain to follow. Flatt’s statements to the press are cautious and cite the 108-year tradition of a cappella music in public worship at Lipscomb and among churches of Christ. We admire Flatt and his administration for taking a stand, one that is significant for Lipscomb and probably churches of Christ everywhere.”

McBride apparently believes that citing a “108-year tradition...at

Lipscomb” is taking a significant stand for Lipscomb and “churches of Christ everywhere.” I don’t know about you brethren, but I will teach the truth on worship (John 4:24) and the principle God has illustrated throughout the Bible that added elements like mechanical instruments to worship is sin. It has nothing to do with “tradition” or the preference of the worshippers. It has everything to do with respect for God’s authority.

Circumventing the truth, Flatt did a devil’s two-step all around the subject with his partner, Bailey McBride and said nothing worth of commendation for “taking a stand.”

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**15TH ANNUAL
“SEEK THE OLD PATHS”
LECTURESHIP
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“HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?”

Bob Spurlin

Ahab, King of Israel, saw Elijah the prophet coming to him and said to the prophet, “*Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*” Elijah replied, “*I have not troubled Israel, but thou, and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandment of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim*” (1 Kings 18:18). Ahab’s house, coupled with his wicked wife Jezebel, had corrupted the nation of Israel with idolatry and in particular the worship of Baal. Elijah challenges King Ahab to gather the children of Israel together at mount Carmel. He further challenge’s Ahab to assemble the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal, which was hand picked by the king, to meet in a contest with the prophet of God. Elijah went to question the children of Israel, “*How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word*” (1 Kings 18:21). Elijah could see that the idolatry poisoned the children of Israel. The false prophets perpetuated this act, and ultimately Ahab. Elijah challenges God’s people to decide, or take a stand for God or Baal. They were unwilling to decide, how tragic. Elijah and the four hundred fifty false prophets engaged in a contest where the prophet Elijah, through the God of heaven, was victorious. God showed the false prophets of Baal who was the true God (1 Kings 18:25-30).

The likeness of the people of Israel and God’s people today have many comparisons, not the least of which is the vacillating or wavering when it comes to making candid choices for truth, right, and goodness.

1. The church must not waver when **Christian schools seek to manipulate the local church** by being included in the church budget. We should be equally concerned about our sons and daughters when we place them in their care. Like

ancient Israel that refused to stand against the false prophets spreading their poison, so today, many schools in our brotherhood are subjecting our young people to error as we place our children under their care. I will not make a full-blanket condemnation on all of our Christian schools. However, Jesus said “*Ye shall know them by their fruits*” (Matt. 7:16).

While attending Christian schools in the late sixties, it was my opinion that I received an excellent education and never suspected error being taught. Accordingly, they have called upon me to raise money for Christian colleges and schools of preaching over an extended period. We gladly did so and urged others as well. During the process of time, I began to learn that some of these Christian colleges and schools of preaching were not worthy of my financial support. This preacher would hear sad stories from parents who lamented the sad circumstance of their son or daughter that lost their faith at such and such Christian college. God, the author of all righteousness, will forever hold the error that seduced their souls into account (Acts 17:31). When one speaks out about these matters, they usually look upon them as negative. Yet, if we want to save the souls of our children and grandchildren, we must exercise great urgency in view of the error they will face.

Elders should equally be aware of the cunning and subtle approach allowing the college to be a part of the church budget. Just where is the Scripture that authorizes the church to place the college in their budget? One approach has been to sell the church on the predisposition that such support will go to the Bible department. Even if such were scripturally permissible, which I fail to find, to what part of the Bible department would it go?

Several students have visited me from different Christian colleges and

informed me that students have literally protested the error being generated on their college campus. It is my humble opinion that we should monitor any Christian school today. Our young men have some excellent schools of preaching available if the church wishes to prepare him to preach the Gospel. Conversely, they should avoid some schools of preaching due to error being taught. It is no secret that the schools of preaching are producing far more preachers than the Christian colleges. We must guard our sons and daughters against thinking that attending a brotherhood school means that we should blindly accept all that is taught. We should not accept everything a preacher says just because he stands in our pulpit. The ancient Bereans were wise because they verified or searched the Scriptures to see if the spoken word was accurate (Acts 17:11). Just because brethren operate a school does not mean we can trust the accuracy of what they teach as reliable.

2. How long will we be **indecisive when it comes to the recreation and entertainment mania plaguing the church?** All too often we are seeing the church reach further into the field of recreation and cross lines that we have no business crossing. Many churches in our fellowship have built recreational structures under the name of, “Family Life Centers.” The first time I saw a “Family Life Center,” was at a Baptist Church in 1981. Shortly afterwards, churches of Christ began to build similar edifices. Millions of dollars are spent from the church treasury that provides basketball courts, volleyball, a place for “Christian aerobics,” which is beyond my understanding, a tract for walking, etc. Some brethren feel the church must compete with sectarians by providing entertainment (recreation) for its membership. The New Testament offers no authority for such foolhardy things. I do not believe in

a “Church of Christ softball team” any more than a “Church of Christ bass fishing team.” Fishing, hunting, or playing softball is not wrong for members of the church (in and of themselves). But, dear reader, it is not the responsibility of the church to provide such recreation.

The work of the church is confined to three areas: 1) Preaching the Gospel (Matt. 28:18-20), 2) Edifying the church (Eph. 4:16; Acts 20:32), and 3) Caring for the widows, orphans, needy, etc. (James 1:27; Gal. 6:10). Only in these three comprehensive areas is the church authorized to work and use its financial resources.

3. How much longer will we remain mute about **the role of women in the church?** During the last two decades or so we have seen serious inroads of women playing a more prominent role in churches of Christ. Many have asserted that her role has been seriously limited while others suggest there should be an open mind to what she may do, including her participation in the public worship.

The **Nashville Jubilee** had many goals initially, among them was the use of women in the public assembly. They invited sister Jane McWhorter to the initial Jubilee to speak, she assumed, to a group of women. When men began to wander in, this informed sister refused to teach the class due to men being present. I have long admired the courage and conviction of sister McWhorter, but for those who had abandoned the truth and to place her in that awkward position was unconscionable.

We have seen this kind of thing and other digressive practices “*wax worse and worse*” just as Paul declared (2 Tim. 3:13). Paul further said, “*But I suffer (permit) not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*” The phrase “over the man,” modifies “to teach” and “to usurp.” She cannot teach over the man, nor can she usurp authority over the man. She may in a class situation ask a question, provided she is not usurping or taking the authority away from the male teacher. Scripture mandates women to teach children and other women, but deity places a prohibition upon the woman when it comes

to women teaching men. God forbids women preachers, elders, deacons, etc. May we hasten to point out that Philip “*had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy*” (Acts 21:9). The daughters of Philip were teachers of the word of God. Nevertheless, the Bible forbids women to usurp the authority over the man.

We are hearing more about women ushers, women waiting on the Lord’s Table, women making announcements, song leaders, and one can easily understand where all this mumbo jumbo is heading. The change agents of the digressive element would take us even further into the mire and morass of apostasy. Jeremiah’s refrain is clear, “*Stand ye in the ways, and see, and*

ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein” (Jer. 6:16).

Elijah urged the children of Israel to take a stand when he said, “*How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, then follow him, and if Baal, follow him...*” (1 Kings 18:21). The response of Israel was no response at all. The similarity between Israel and the church of today is uncanny in their indifference. We urge those who are engaged in unauthorized activities to repent and return to the “old paths.” Conversely, the faithful must always be “*speaking the truth in love*” (Eph. 4:15).

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Does The Church Of Christ Need To Be Restored?...

(Continued from page 89)

4:17). Accompanying this teaching was the warning to remain faithful to what they had been taught: “*Learn not to go beyond the things which are written...*” (1 Cor. 4:6, ASV). Now read what Paul said to Timothy. “*Hold to the pattern of sound words*” (2 Tim. 1:13) and, “*the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*” (2 Tim. 2:2).

Every church was taught the same thing. Paul did not teach one set of doctrines to the Corinthians and then another set to other churches. An equally firm warning was given to the Galatians. They were not to receive anything other than that which was preached to them or/and received by them (Gal. 1:8) — no new teaching.

Therefore, the penitent believer in Corinth did what the penitent believer in Galatia did to become a Christian. He/she was born again (John 3:3-5). Brethren may have dressed a little differently, talked a little differently, met at a different time to publicly praise God, but they worshipped on the same day and in the same way (Acts 20:7; John 4:24; Acts 2:42; Heb. 2:12; 1 Cor. 11-16). Furthermore, whether in Corinth or in Ephesus, God’s people lived

according to the standard laid down in the first century (Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 12:1-2). Clones one of another? No, not at all. Followers of the law of Christ (Gal. 6)? Yes!

Out of the four meanings The American Heritage Electronic Dictionary supplies for the word restore, to “bring back to an original condition” fits exactly what we have been discussing. Builders restore deteriorated houses. Members of antique car clubs take great pride in “fixing up” junkers that have been neglected. The closer they can equip them with the original equipment the more delighted the restorer. Two ingredients are present in any restoration. First, the “original condition” must have existed; second, this primitive state must be sought and attained. So it is with the kingdom. Certain, specific requirements which have been set forth in the pages of the New Testament must be fulfilled before we can have the original.

When we compare what is being taught and practiced to these specific requirements, we will be able to determine whether we have restored, reformed or built anew. Reforming falls short. Building to a new blueprint is forbidden. On the other hand, insisting on the original condition is not only safe, but follows scriptural mandates.

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WALK TO EMMAUS, TUESDAY NIGHT COMMUNION, AND OTHER MATTERS

It is with great sadness that this article MUST be written. Tuesday night, October 5, 1999, the once sound **Highland Church of Christ** in Abilene, Texas publicly proclaimed its ecumenical ties. In the Saturday, October 2, 1999 religious section of the *Abilene Reporter News*, this once rock solid congregation, announced that the “Walk to Emmaus” video would be shown, and that “the remainder of the meeting will include singing, preaching, and Communion.” Yes, you read it correctly.

WHAT WAS SEEN AND HEARD

Due to a prior obligation, I was not able to attend this meeting to see for myself. However, brother **Michael Light** of the Bangs church of Christ did attend. His report, backed up by audio tapes, was absolutely sickening. This article will but touch the hem of the garment. But faithful brethren who still believe we must expose error, need to know what took place on that sad evening at 425 Highland Ave. in Abilene.

There was a full blown band on stage. There was an all woman quartet entertaining the audience. Added to this, there was hand clapping, and hands raised in the air with arms, and bodies swaying back and forth. Some may say this was not the formal worship assembly, and that we should not make a big deal about it. But remember, they were treating it as such when they offered and partook [erroneously] of the communion. And don't forget where all of this started years ago. Just prior to the split of the churches of Christ with the Christian church, “members?” of the Lord's church insisted that they just wanted to use the piano or melodeon outside of the services. You know the rest of the story! Indeed, “A little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump.”

The sad story of October 5, 1999 at Highland does not end with the above. The speaker at this event

was **Eddie Sharp** of the **University Church of Christ** here in town. First, he read from a book supplied for this “Walk to Emmaus,” and then the audience would then respond from the book. This sounds exactly like Catholic and denominational liturgical nonsense. What was the gist of the rest of his speech to these Emmaus walkers? Church and religious heritage and tradition does not matter. In essence, you can be a member of a denomination, and that is acceptable in God's eyes. Just let Jesus lead you to a church that is right for you. Does that even remotely sound like what we read in the New Testament about one body, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Eph. 4:1-4)? NO! That is ecumenism, and denominationalism pure and simple. How many churches did Jesus build, and die for? ONE (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28).

Let's not forget that they partook of the communion! Listen to this. The communion was administered by Eddie Sharp and another man. Mr. Sharp would break the bread, and give it to the participant who would go to the next man, and there dip it into a large cup of the fruit of the vine, and then partake of the soaked bread. That is Catholicism through and through! Friends, my Bible still says that the early church met and partook of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:1-7) not Tuesday, and that Jesus first blessed and broke the bread and give it to His disciples, and then gave thanks for the cup and then gave it to His disciples [distinctly separate acts, not a dipping combination] (Matt. 26:26-29).

WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN SAID

What did the leadership of the church tell the membership for them to accept such goings on? Or by now, in their indoctrination of the membership to accept anything they are told, do they need to tell them anything at all? Aren't these wolves in sheep's clothing leading

them to the slaughter? You decide for yourself. How long can “knowledgeable” people stay on and support/condone such with their monies and attendance, and still be truly faithful?

FINAL THOUGHTS

Rest assured, we have not heard the last of this digression (I wish this had not taken place, but it did). To those in this congregation I make an urgent plea. If you have friends still involved with congregations such as these, **GO TO THEM NOW** and plead, urge, yes, even beg them, for their soul's sake, to get out now without delay. If you need help, call me and I will go with you. These are soul's on the very verge of eternal destruction. Do we really love them enough to tell them the truth? In some ways I am glad that I did not see this with my own eyes, nor hear it with my own ears. I fear that I would have been sickened to my stomach, and not slept at all that night. Yet, for all those who are in denial or think we can just ignore such as this, I wish we all could have been there to see it, and hear it.

For all such departures from the Lord's body that are causing innumerable souls to be lost, I can but expose the error, and warn the brotherhood, and then echo the words of the psalmist, and Jeremiah. “*Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law*” (Psalm 119:136). “*Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people*” (Jer. 9:1)

Yes, we should weep for lost souls.

Royce Williamson,
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Addendum to The Communicator

CORRECTION: It was not my intention to write again concerning the Tuesday night, October 5, 1999 Walk To Emmaus Program held at Highland Church of Christ. However, on Thursday evening, October 14, 1999, **Mike Cope**, minister for **Highland Church of Christ**, called me at home and wanted us to know that my article mislead people to believe that this was a function of Highland Church of Christ, which it was not. The discussion was amicable, but forthright. I informed him that I would correct this misconception, but that along with many others who read the announcement in the newspaper, I thought that it was being sponsored by the Highland church. For this misunderstanding and misrepresentation, I apologize to the leaders and members of Highland. As for the rest of the article, as I told Mike Cope, it stands without correction or apology.

EDITORIAL: Nobody that I know of likes these types of confrontations, least of all me. However, I will not shirk my responsibilities as a Gospel preacher by not preaching the whole counsel of God, which includes exposing the unfruitful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). I may be wrong about my next statement, but someone is going to have to prove me wrong before I change my beliefs. Even though this event was not sponsored or put on by the Highland Church, by their silence, and refusal to deny the use of their facility for such a function, they DID sanction it. Silence IS acceptance. I don't believe that it can be argued that the leaders did not know about the event, because it was announced in the *Abilene Reporter-News*, religious section.

It was argued that such groups as the Boy Scouts, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters also use the building, and that those are not functions of the Highland church. That is true, but they are known as social organizations (even though they may have prayers or even devotionals as a part of their meetings), and the Emmaus event, and "the remainder of the

meeting" were clearly religious in design. We must not compare apples with oranges.

If it is argued that the elder's policy for the use of the facilities (facilities over which they are shepherds and stewards) does not regulate the activities that can take place therein, what will their response be if a Satanic group, or a branch of the KKK, or some other "hate group" wants to use it for their meeting? If the elders deny its usage then, then there clearly ARE rules and guidelines that must be met. If that is the case, then that tells us that the usage (which included the publicized communion offered on Tuesday night) did not violate their policy for usage. Folks, we cannot use what I call the "Three Monkey's Policy" of see no evil, speak no evil, and hear no evil (which is similar to Bill Clinton's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy on homosexuals in the military) when it comes to the things over which God has made us stewards. I don't see God accepting a "We just didn't know" answer on judgment day. Friends, RESPONSIBILITY still lies at the door of the leadership at Highland. Have they gone to Eddie Sharp and lovingly corrected; rebuked him for his part in all of this? If not, why not? Do they indeed not see the egregious sin in what took place at that facility which belongs to God? And what about some of their own members that may have gone and participated? If they have gone to brother Sharp and corrected him, I will publicly commend them, and say, "Job well done" in our bulletin. This would be the right thing to do, and I will gladly do it.

It will not do to try to make me look like the "bad guy" in all of this. I did nothing more than expose a sinful situation and warn the brotherhood of the problem (Ezek. 33:1-11; Eph. 5:11; etc.). Remember Acts 20:26-31. If it is said that I didn't go to them personally first, remember the context of Matthew 18:15. That was between two brothers, and this was done openly/publicly. Nothing in the article that I wrote was mean spirited, but rather I encouraged the

brethren here to go to anyone they knew and help get them out of such a mess. I would/will do it again if needed. WITHOUT APOLOGY!

I hope this ends this. I am afraid that it will not.

– Royce Williamson,
The Communicator
October 17, 1999
N. 5th and Grape St.
Church of Christ,
Abilene, TX 79601.

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We thank God for brother Williamson's courage and willingness to expose these careless and unscriptural practices at Highland in Abilene. Their explanation for allowing such as this makes no sense at all. Can we expect the Pope of Rome to appear in their building any time soon? – O.B. Porterfield

The church at Highland has not stood for the Truth for many, many years. Their long history has been in support of error. With Mike Cope as their minister, we can expect nothing else. He, along with many others, has been in the forefront of leading the way of apostasy in this decade. The question is, who will follow their pernicious ways and continue in their downward plunge away from the Lord. Wake up brethren. Repent and come out from among them while there is opportunity. – gmr

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

one says 'Don't judge too much,' it's God's job. Those are the ones that need to study God's Word and stamp out the false and watered down preaching. God bless you in weeding out those that have no fear nor reverence for the Truth. Keep up the great work. I wish we had more brave Christians to stand up for the Truth. In Christian love" ...**Marie Guice, Irving, TX.** "I appreciate the work you are doing there and desire that you add me to your mailing list for *S.T.O.P.* Thank you very much" ...**Eric D. Gayle, Chandler, OK.** "Please accept the enclosed donation to help in the publishing of *S.T.O.P.* I appreciate receiving them very much. Keep up the good work. Thank you. In Christian love" ...**Jimmy L. Clark, Grand Prairie, TX.** "My husband B. J. and I would very much like to be placed on your mailing list. My father, George Sellers, has been receiving *Seek The Old Paths* for years. The Truth needs to continue being taught. Keep up your faithful work!" ...**Jessica Johnson, Flowery Branch, GA.** "I would like to request your fine paper *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**E. R. Jones, Nashville, TN.** "Please add my name to your mailing list. You have a fine publication. A brother gave me a copy and I enjoyed the very insightful articles" ...**James Marcus, Trenton, TN.** "We deeply appreciate you brethren for publishing this periodical. It is much needed for this day and age" ...**Jack Lawyer, Conway, AR.** "Giving thanks always for the sound, firm gospel Truths you put forth in every publication. Will you please add these dear friends and relatives to your mailing list and truth of God's Word. I wish more people could share in your message and become more aware of the directions some in our brotherhood are taking us. The Lord will take care of those who teach in error but it is up to us to be aware of the wolves in sheep's clothing. Keep up the good work" ...**Mel McBroom, Livonia, MI.** "Keep up the good work!" ...**James Shaver, Flint MI.** "Please put me on your mailing list for *Seek The Old Paths*. I attended the Garden City Church of Christ in Michigan and received some issues which were very informative on some ministers and issues that I have been thinking about lately that bother me. Enclosed is \$\$ to help pay for the issues sent to me. Thanks" ...**John Glover, Cincinnati, OH.** "Please send me the monthly publication *Seek The Old Paths*. Thank you very much" ...**Eunice Francis, Marble Hill, MO.** "Thanks to you for the excellent way you are exposing the change agents. Just wish more people would stand up for God's Word and his plan for salvation. Keep up the good work" ...**Mae Hancock, Decaturville, TN.** "I recently read a copy of your publication *Seek The Old Paths*. Please put me on your mailing list" ...**Carol Antrim, Effingham, IL.** "Please remove my name from your mailing list" ...**Martha Coleman, Shamrock, TX.** "Indeed, we do need to teach and preach all Truth and expose all of the sinful and wicked departures from the faith. Your paper will do much good" ...**Fred Bogle, Orlando, FL.** "A friend passed an old copy of *S.T.O.P.* to us and we were amazed that there is still a paper that exposes liberalism. Please put us on your mailing list" ...**Clyde & Eula Hern, Monroe, LA.** "Please remove my name from the mailing list of *S.T.O.P.* Thanks" ...**J. B. Endsley, Tyler, TX.** "I am an elder in Houma at the Hollywood Road Church of Christ. I recently read a copy of *Seek The Old Paths* and thoroughly enjoyed it. Please start usual, superb. I don't think we could do without it in these times of blatant apostasy. God bless you" ...**Martin Bedford, Tucson, AZ.** "I enjoy receiving *Seek The Old Paths* each month. I love the way you stand for the truth" ...**Hurschel Ray, Jonesboro, AR.** "We enjoy your paper. Keep up the good work" ...**Nancy R. Jones, Euless, TX.** "I'm so thankful I found out about the wonderful paper *Seek The Old Paths*. I wish it came every week. I look forward to receiving it each month. Oh, how my heart aches for those foolish souls who want the paper stopped. How can they live with themselves? Thank God there are a few faithful Christians left who love the truth" ...**Helen Robertson, Arkansas City, KS.** "Brethren, is it possible to have a bundle of 50 of the *Seek The Old Paths* mailed to Canada? There is a definite need for publications of this sort here. The only country wide publication has made a decision not to be "controversial" so will not accept contributions that 'contend for the faith.' Keep up the fine work" ...**Dennis**

"I look forward to receiving this publication. If it were not for people like you standing up for the truth, I hate to think what will happen to the church of the future" ...**Jerrine B. Harrell, Pineville, LA.** "I cannot thank our God enough for those that stand firmly for the Truth. I read that

"**Skip Francis, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.** "Just wanted you to know how I enjoy your paper. I have recently purchased a computer, and just read your article. It is so good to know there are still churches who are striving to teach the straight and narrow way. We have seen churches where we attended get so liberal that we had to leave them. I love your paper, and agree with your teaching in your articles. One church we attended years ago has a big gym and had a big praise weekend last week with a supper Saturday night at \$6.00 per plate. My prayers are with you in your work, and I look forward to getting your paper" ...**Martha Hill.** "I have heard much about you and I love reading your publication, "S.T.O.P." Does Don Blackwell have an e-mail address? One more question, was that guy in the last issue (August) saying that Christian universities and colleges were sinful? I would love a response" ...**Garrett Irby, garrettbrent3@hotmail.com.** [EDITOR'S NOTE: Don Blackwell, blackwell@con-ninc.com. Colleges and universities are not sinful "in and of themselves." However, when they engage in and promote false doctrine, that is what is sinful. Rochester College is full of error.] "I think you are doing a good work with it. Thanks" ...**O. H. Barnes.** "I thank God for your effort in publishing this bulletin. God bless you in your labor for him" ...**Mike Leong, Melaka, Malaysia.** "Egreetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus. Just visited your website for the first time — wonderful! My thanks to you and the elders for this website. I also read for the first time today a published copy of the September, 1999 *Seek The Old Paths* and would like to be placed on your subscriber list. I am a Gospel preacher, working with the Village Meadows church of Christ in Sierra Vista, AZ. I have proclaimed the whole Gospel for 25 years now and have seen some eternally fatal divergences from the Truth. May your efforts aid some in returning to the faith! Thanks, brother. All of you at East Corinth remain in our prayers" ...**Stewart Gillespie, Sierra Vista, AZ.** "Thank you for sending me the most excellent and informative *Seek The Old Paths*" ...**Ewell Pritchett, Greeneville, 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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