

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. 2

February 1999

SHOULD YOUTH GO TO WINTERFEST?

Paul Sain

First, for those who may not be familiar with "Winterfest," it is an annual youth gathering in the Gatlinburg, Tennessee area which has drawn hundreds and hundreds of youth from many congregations.

Second, be assured I am NOT against youth gatherings as such. I have carried youth to, and participated in, some excellent series which have resulted in good fruit. Youth are SO special and very important. They are at a critical time in their lives. Fervently we desire to teach, edify, support, aid and guard them as they mature in Christ.

Third, I am NOT attempting to "police" the brotherhood. Within the last two weeks I have been asked in three separate conversations to help with information about this gathering, advise leaders with the facts and specifically Jeff Walling (the speaker for this year).

Fourth, personal preference, likes or dislikes of a particular event or person, etc., must not determine the right or wrong of going to such activities. We must be willing to "LET THE BIBLE ANSWER" the matter. We MUST make our decisions based on principles and commands found within the pages of inspired Scripture. God has spoken! His Word can and must direct our steps in this age. If indeed we love and are determined to obey God, then we MUST take notice of the overwhelming testimony against support of such activities.

Time and space does not allow

an exhaustive study of these matters, but let's pose the following questions as very pertinent. Then we humbly request an examination of the Scriptures cited.

QUESTIONS: *"Do we not need to address the special needs of our youth?" "Can't we just go and 'hear' the good and leave the 'bad' alone?" "Doesn't Jeff teach a lot of 'good' along with the questionable things?" "Even if we attend, does it mean we agree with (or support) what is taught?" "Do we have the right to 'judge' and 'label' others?" "Well, just what has Jeff Walling taught that is so wrong?"*

Ephesians 5:11 — *"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."* FACT: The apostle Paul is clearly stating the faithful follower of God CANNOT fellowship (have joint participation) with teachers of evil or darkness. FACT: Instead of fellowship, we must be willing to reprove them. (If you disagree with this, take it up with the Almighty Father who inspired the writings of Paul.)

2 John 9-11 — *"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."* FACT: It is possible to be religious, a teacher of spiritual matters, a pow-

erful and persuasive speaker, but NOT teach the doctrine of Christ. FACT: A person such as this has "transgressed" (sinned). FACT: In God's view, such teachers are engaging in "evil deeds." FACT: Faithful Christians must NOT "receive" and "bid" (support, condone, encourage) God speed to them. FACT: If we bid God speed to them, we become partaker of their evil deeds! FACT: We can bid God speed to them by financially supporting them, encouraging them by purchasing their books, tapes and supplies.

Galatians 1:6-9 — *"...there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."* FACT: It is possible to trouble and "pervert" the gospel of Christ (then and now). FACT: To preach a different gospel than the gospel of Christ is to be condemned in God's sight.

Titus 1:11-13 — *"Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake....Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith."* FACT: False teachers destroy and subvert whole houses.

(Continued on page 11)
Winterfest?...



Editorial...

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Garland M. Robinson

We receive a tremendous amount of mail as is evident from reading the Mailbag on the back page in most every issue. We have always printed whatever someone has to say, both positive and negative (within space limits). I don't know what the percentage is exactly, but I would guess that better than 95% is positive as you can read for yourself. The vast majority that is negative is simply someone asking to be taken off the mailing list which we have always done. We are often sent the names of people to add to the list by a good brother or sister that is concerned about their friends and family. And, often, these people do not want to hear the "whole counsel of God" and therefore ask to be taken off the list.

Recently, we have received mail from some of the students of **David Lipscomb** who pose a number of good questions which I will seek to respond to below. I by no means want to discourage these young people. Instead, I want to encourage and challenge them to "...stand...in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein..." (Jer. 6:16). I do not want them to respond as the people of Jeremiah's day did by saying, "We will not walk therein." I want to aid and help them while at the same time, being faithful to the Lord. I want them, as well as everyone, to think for themselves and examine to see whether these things be so. I've been led to believe things in years gone by but found out later (by further study) that things were not always as they were represented. I am very conscious of the seriousness of these matters and pray that we seek only to please the Lord and not be concerned whether certain brethren or schools are pleased.

I have taken certain questions and comments from these letters

and have replied in part as follows.

WRITER'S COMMENT: I feel a need to tell you guys how I feel about **Seek The Old Paths**. Satan is driving our brotherhood to become an issue driven church. The only issue I care about and I feel all true Christians should care about is Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. Everywhere I turn I see some brother bashing another brother publicly about some issue that he/she does not agree with.

ANSWER: Thank you for taking the time to write expressing your concerns about what we print in **Seek The Old Paths**. I'm glad you are concerned, far too many are not.

Jesus was an issue driven Savior. He dealt with sin wherever and whenever he found it. He sought not only to lift the downtrodden (Matt. 11:28-30) but to condemn sinners (Matt. 23). He showed the true and proper balance there must be in one's life. My granny used to say, "the hurt gets the salve." That is to say, the part of our body that is injured gets not only immediate treatment but much of our attention. While the rest of the body needs our care, the part that is hurt must not be ignored. Call the hurt an "issue" if you like. It needs attention! Shall we avoid the issues? No. We cannot be balanced in our service to the Lord and ignore issues in the brotherhood. My question is, where is the evidence that YOU (anyone, everyone) are dealing with the issues confronting us?

If you are not exposing error (Eph. 5:11), then you are not balanced in your Christian life. Paul told Timothy to "reprove, rebuke, exhort" (2 Tim. 4:2). Shall we ignore or neglect the reproofing and rebuking and emphasize the exhorting? I think not. We must have no friend, school or church building to protect. Our concern and protection must be

toward the precious bride of Christ. The church does not owe its existence and continued prosperity to schools and buildings. Such things may be either an asset or liability. When used properly and wisely they can be of some help, but if they ceased tomorrow, the church would still be here and could carry on its work without either of them. The blood bought church of our Lord will continue (Matt. 16:19).

If we focus our attention on and care about Jesus, we will focus our attention on and care about what he cared about. He cared for and continues to care for his bride, the church. He cares when it is polluted and dragged through man-made innovations and false doctrines. This is evidenced by reading the whole of the New Testament. Purity in doctrine is emphasized (Gal. 1:6-9; 2:5; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Tim. 1:19-20).

If you have evidence to the contrary that shows we have misquoted or otherwise misused what someone has said and taught, I'd love to see it. I assure you we never desire to print anything that is not correct and if we have, will certainly print a retraction and spread it far and wide. However, we must be provided evidence to show we have misquoted or otherwise mishandled these matters.

What is the bashing you're talking about? To bash means to strike or hit with a forceful blow. Where's the evidence that we have bashed someone? We've simply dealt with the facts, the evidence. We don't deal with one's personality or motive (Matt. 7:1-5), we deal with doctrines. However, you can't have a doctrine being propagated without someone proclaiming it. Would you suggest we deal with false doctrines and leave the ones teaching them alone? The apostles didn't do that (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 4:10; 2:17). Are we better than the apostles? The passage in Matt. 7:1-5 which says "judge not, that ye be not judged," tells us to deal with our brother's error (after we have first dealt with our own, verse 5). We have done that. Have you?

Shall we be blind to false doctrine and practice? Shall we accept any and all that comes our way? Is there anything brethren can do that you would oppose? I know you

oppose those of us who are willing to expose false doctrine and those teaching it as per Jude 3, 2 John 9-11, Eph. 5:11 and Rom. 16:17. Is there anything you would oppose other than these verses?

WRITER'S COMMENT: What ever happened to teaching the truth in love? I get so sick of reading your hate mail.

ANSWER: You have absolutely no evidence that we have not taught the Truth in love. If I didn't love the Truth and love the souls I'm seeking to teach, I'd quit right now. Needless to say, it's not a popular work we do — but neither was the work the prophets of old engaged in. They often stood alone — sounds like good company to me. To speak or teach the Truth in love doesn't mean we water the Truth down so that no one's feelings will be hurt. It means we love the Truth of God so much we're willing to speak it to everybody, even when we know some will not like to hear it and will even rebel and fight against it. John the Baptist did this when he told Herod, "It

is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matt. 14:4). Was John speaking the truth in love when he said, "...*O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance*" (Matt. 3:7-8). Was that a kind thing to say, calling these people "vipers?" Didn't he know he should speak the truth in love? Yes, he knew that and that's exactly what he was doing. He loved the souls of people so much that he was not afraid to tell them the truth regardless of how they may receive it or what others would think about it. Shall we charge him with being harsh and unloving? I think not.

Did Peter preach the Truth in love when he told the people on Pentecost, "...*ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*" (Acts 2:23)? It brought about the conviction in heart and conversion of about 3,000 souls. What about Stephen when he said, "*Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did,*

so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it" (Acts 7:51-53). Was that very loving? It provoked the people to stone him to death. However, I submit all these men loved the souls of the people (and the Truth) enough to "tell it like it is" and let the chips fall where they may. I never read of God ever calling someone down for preaching the Truth, no matter how hard they preached it. Do you? Are we better than they?

I am not at all saying we need to try to be harsh or hateful or see how hard we can preach. I'm simply saying we must preach the Truth, the WHOLE Truth and nothing but the Truth because we love both IT and the SOULS of men. Do you agree?

Thank you for your time.

With kindest regards,
Garland Robinson

Winterfest...

(Continued from page 9)

FACT: The mouths of false teachers MUST be stopped if we are to follow Paul's instruction. FACT: It must be accomplished by loving, strong, faithful Christians. Otherwise, we too might be carried away (Heb. 13:9). FACT: False teachers must be rebuked sharply, to help them be "sound in the faith."

Matthew 7:15 — "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*" FACT: A religious teacher, even a brother in Christ may look like a sheep, but actually be a ravenous wolf! FACT: We must be on guard and watch (Acts 20:31). FACT: Characteristics describing false teachers should cause great concern and alarm: deceitful (Eph. 5:6); seductive (Mark 13:21-22); dogs and evil workers (Phil. 3:2); devils (1 Tim. 4:1-3); evil men (2 Tim. 3:13); hypocrites (2 Peter 2:1-3); false prophets (1 John 4:1); ungodly men (Jude 4); corrupters of the Word of God (2 Cor. 2:17); have corrupt minds (1 Tim.

6:5); creep in (2 Tim. 3:6); creep in unaware (Jude 4); unruly and vain talkers (Titus 1:10); make God's Word of none effect (Matt. 15:6); teach commandments of men (Matt. 15:9); speak perverse things (Acts 20:30); transform themselves into ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-15); speak lies (1 Tim. 4:2); speak words of vanity (2 Peter 2:18).

RELATED QUESTIONS

Let us be open minded and willing to examine facts about this destiny-determining matter.

"*Can we not just go and hear (receive) the good and reject anything taught that is bad (contrary to the Word)?*" First, on the same basis, why would we not go to Billy Graham, Jimmy Swaggert, or Oral Roberts gatherings (though we KNOW they fail to teach the whole truth of God).

For ones who suggest such, I ask, how much error would have to be taught to make it "wrong" to attend? A little? Half? Folks, rat poison (I am told) is 98% harmless. It's the 2% poison that can kill you.

Error kills.

Further, while it might be possible for the "mature" Christian to hear and "discern" truth from error, surely we do not want to place our youth in such a treacherous position! Youth are intelligent, but dear ones, many of them are still "babes" in Christ.

"*What has Jeff Walling taught that is so wrong?*" Space is insufficient to give thorough details to speakers and topics. These have been examined and exposed in various books and publications. A vast amount of material has been available for some time, for any and all who seek the truth and desire to defend it.

How do we determine a teacher of TRUTH versus a teacher of ERROR? Obviously, by taking what he has stated or written (intelligent man is surely able to convey his beliefs clearly where it can be understood).

In the early 1980's (over fifteen years ago), at a youth gathering in Andover, Kansas, Walling was a guest speaker. During a panel discussion, which was being moderated

by Chuck Northrop (a faithful gospel preacher) the question arose concerning the scripturalness of instrumental music in worship. Brother Northrop correctly stated such was not authorized and supported his statements with Scripture. Walling (who was not a part of the panel) came to the podium and declared that instrumental music in worship is simply “*a matter of opinion...a gray area.*” He has continued to defend that position in the years since that time (Cf. **Behold The Pattern**, p.215).

About eight years ago, at the **Soul Winning Workshop** in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Jeff taught false doctrine as he spoke on the subject “*That They All May Be One.*” Specifically he spoke on John 17. The church of our Lord was described in denominational terms. He advocated fellowship with denominations. He taught degrees of fellowship.

In 1994, at the **Pepperdine University** Lectures, he spoke on “*The Community Church...of Christ?*” Those in attendance, taking his lesson at plain and simple value, would believe the denominational community church is designed and acceptable by Almighty God. He advocates the community church as the church of Christ in the New Testament also.

At the recent **Jubilee** (1998) in Nashville, the video tape of Walling’s three evening speeches include *MECHANICAL MUSIC*, a woman giving public testimony before the whole assembly, as well as an apology to the denominational world. The lessons also reflected sarcasm and ridicule of the “old paths” and the faithful, while suggesting change and restructure. From the initial “phone call” to God to his closing speech, the audience was fed a steady diet of liberalism.

Often, Walling (as well as others) makes fun and slurs others who are sincerely striving to walk in the steps of the Saviour. In his book, “**Daring to Dance with God**” he advocates that God is inviting us to come and dance with him...not at arms length; rather he pulls us in tight, taking us for the “dance of a lifetime...” His play on words is offensive, as he associates the holy with the profane. He talks about Christians whose “*dancing shoes are*

too light.” They need to let go and loosen up a little, he teaches. Other Christians he calls the “*Gospel Gestapos*” as ones ever on patrol for those who do or say things not exactly as they think it should be. I suppose anyone who dares question anyone, or who exposed another for teaching falsely would be so labeled.

It is quite revealing to note that **Max Lucado** is the one who wrote the foreword to this book. This is the same one who a few months ago taught his radio audience to just let God be their father, and be saved. He told his listeners who had prayed that prayer (often otherwise referred to as the “sinner’s prayer”) they had been saved! Walling acknowledges Lucado for his inspiration, encouragement and letting him call him friend. (Yes, it is true that most often those of like persuasion do associate.) Can you imagine the apostle Paul using a false teacher to promote some work in which he was involved, and thanking him for his encouragement and for calling him friend.

“*But isn’t Jeff Walling also scheduled to be the main speaker at David Lipscomb University soon?*” Tragically, this is true! The powers that continue to chart the course for DLU seem determined to follow the movement of change and restructure. They are aware. Pleas have been made and ignored. The popular course is preferred instead of truth (doctrine).

“*Should we ‘judge’ and ‘label’ one another? Are we not all guilty of sin?*” Yes, we are all guilty of sin (Rom. 3:23). But this does not neutralize our obligation to defend (Phil. 1:7,17) and contend (Jude 3) and guard and warn (Acts 20:28ff). We are commanded to judge righteously (John 7:24). How can one possibly obey Romans 16:17 of marking and avoiding them which cause division due to a “contrary” doctrine, if we do not judge? What does it mean to “label” (draw attention to them) when it says “mark” in Romans 16:17? How can we obey 2 John 9-11 of not bidding God speed to a teacher of a doctrine other than of Christ, unless we “judge?” The obvious conclusion, we must judge, mark, and identify teachers of false doctrines. It will not be pleasant. It is not enjoyable. It may involve a friend or

family member, but it must be done, if we are to obey our Father!

By the way, the “change agents” often charge those who are contending for the faith as being “unloving” and “brotherhood watchdogs” etc. These often declare that we are sinning when we “condemn” others. I have heard strong and vicious attacks made upon the Spiritual Sword journal or Memphis School of Preaching. Surely these inconsistent folks should be scolded themselves for “condemning” others. Are they “unloving” for charging others as being “unloving?” Are they “watchdogs” as they are “watchdogs” over others? Brethren, condemning the condemners is condemnation too!

Be Willing To At Least Answer The Following Questions?

Before you make your final decision, or put this grave issue aside, will you examine the following series of questions?

What would one have to teach to be a “false teacher?” Would accepting and embracing mechanical music in worship be enough? Would fellowshipping ones in man-made religions be sufficient? Would advocating and practicing women leading the worship assembly be adequate? Would teaching one to be saved by merely “calling God your father” be enough? (The “change agents” have done all of these and much more!)

Would it EVER be right to “mark” others as false teachers? In view of the explicit commands in the Word of God, what would it take for such to be necessary and right? Would the passive and “love everybody” brethren be willing EVER to identify and expose the false teacher?

Was the apostle Paul acting as God desired, in a Christ-like manner, setting an example for us, when he spoke of Alexander the copper-smith, Hymenaeus, Philetus as well as false teachers? He spoke by the power of Almighty God. His words are inspired. He acted righteously in these things. We should and must follow His example (1 Cor. 11:1).

We must love everyone, seek the lost with the saving message of the Saviour, but are we not also COMMANDED to fight, war, defend, contend, and stand? Are these a part of

the faithful Christian life? Do we have the right to “pick and choose” what we want to do? Can we fulfill our obligation to the Saviour without a balanced, complete obedience to ALL of God’s commands?

If it would be acceptable to go to and support Winterfest, would it be likewise acceptable to go to and support a **Billy Graham Crusade**? We could take the good and leave the bad, as some suggest. We could probably hear as much truth, as well as error, as many have done at some previous **Winterfest, Jubilee, Tulsa** gatherings.

THINK! Go to the past for a great lesson. In the long ago a prophet of God was charged with being the one who “troubled” Israel. He was not guilty. He was, in fact, the one who was doing what God wanted. Those who charged the prophet were actually the ones who were guilty of being the “troublers” of Israel.

Is it possible that many who are charged today with “troubling” the brotherhood, being “police” and “watchdogs” are actually the ones who are diligently seeking to obey the direct commands of their Lord? Is it possible that those who are so charging others, may actually be the ones who are “troublers” and further are they so weak and compromising that they fail to follow the instructions of God’s Word?

Winterfest Is Dangerous!

We Should NOT Send Our Youth There! We must make decisions on the facts. If we don’t have the facts and were to attend an event and problems arise, then the problems could then be dealt with. But when we KNOW the facts before time, we surely should avoid dangerous situations. An eldership must make decisions for their local congregation. Autonomy is God’s way! Others cannot (and should not) force opinions upon them. But dear brethren, elders MUST follow the Word of Almighty God. Elders can be encouraged to follow that Word. Elders surely are open and receptive to such admonition.

Winterfest has proven itself to be a platform for those who teach a “contrary doctrine.” There is no doubt concerning Jeff Walling being

a “false teacher” ~ one who embraces positions (doctrines) contrary to the doctrine of Christ. He teaches some things right. But think, dear ones, is there anyone who is a religious teacher but what teaches SOME things correctly? Most teach MANY things accurately, but others through centuries of time shout “God demands complete obedience!” “God will NOT tolerate deviation!” “God won’t accept error!”

Why would any eldership allow the flock (over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, Acts 20:28ff), to graze among the wolves? An elder who would knowingly support such an event and false teacher is accountable in eternity for souls lost. They will give account to their Commander-in-Chief for their action.

HARDEMAN LIBRARY

Hardeman Library at Memphis School of Preaching is being planned by the elders of Forest Hill church of Christ and the granddaughter of N. B. Hardeman and her family. It will fulfill the need for more space for the rapidly expanding number of books already owned by the school. The two-story, red brick building will consist of approximately 10,000 square feet and will accommodate in excess of 100,000 volumes. There will be displays of Hardeman’s papers, notes, notebooks, personal correspondence and other memorabilia. There will be sermons on tape and photographs previously unpublished. It will be a source of study for those interested in the history of the church from 1900 to 1965. The purpose of the library is to enable Christians to be better prepared as they strive to tell “the story that never grows old.” Hardeman Library will cost approximately \$700,000 which the Forest Hill church and the Hardeman/Bradshaw family have committed to raise. All parties interested in contributing toward this worthy cause are encouraged to send donations to: Memphis School of Preaching, c/o Hardeman/Bradshaw Family, 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125-2560.

Why would any parent possibly allow their precious young ones to go among and be taught (molded, guided, instructed) by the wolves? Do you want to take the chance of your young people being led astray?

Would we allow our youth to play with poisonous snakes? Would we encourage them to drive reckless or extremely fast (or similar dangerous activities)? Foolish questions? Certainly! But we must NOT allow our young ones to fall prey to wolves in sheep’s clothing.

Jubilee, Tulsa Workshop, Pepperdine, Abilene Christian, etc., have been places where “change agents” (wolves in sheep’s clothing) are (by their teaching) advocating a complete destruction of the unique body of Christ. They are teaching and encouraging fellowship with denominations.

Our youth are precious to us. We should value and treasure each precious opportunity to teach and influence them. Let us make certain, to the best of our ability, what they are taught is good and right. Make certain it is NOT evil and false ways.

*East Hill News, January 24, 1999
P.O. Box 329
Pulaski, TN 38478*

CONTRIBUTORS

- Anonymous\$10
- James L. Shaver\$15
- Anonymous\$40
- Victor M. Eskew\$25
- Andy Anderson\$20
- Bethlehem Church of Christ,
Baxter, TN\$100
- D. H. Franklin\$10
- Chuck and Nancy Verkist\$25
- Seibles Road Church of Christ,
Montgomery, AL.....\$300
- Donald White.....\$60
- James W. Short\$20
- Anonymous\$100
- Anonymous\$25
- Anthony Crowell\$50
- Wilton and Faye Edmunds.....\$30
- M/M Virgil Poe\$20
- Danville Church of Christ,
Rienzi, MS.....\$150

GO YE AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH

Wade Lee Webster

On one occasion our Lord told some Pharisees to go and learn what a statement meant (Matt. 9:13). Although the Pharisees prided themselves in knowing the Scriptures, they often neglected what it taught in order to keep their own traditions. Likewise, today there are many men who pride themselves in knowing the Bible and yet neglect much of what the word of God teaches in order to hold their own doctrines. No doubt, as our Lord listens to many brethren today talk about love, He wishes they would go and “*learn what that meaneth....*” Many brethren are ignorant of what the Bible teaches about love. They have missed so much of what the Lord wants them to know about it. I want to point out some things I have noticed that many brethren fail to mention as they talk about love.

Many fail to mention that **love involves correction**. In the book of Revelation we read, “*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent*” (Rev. 3:19). Jesus was in the process of correcting the church of Laodicea when these words were spoken. Clearly, our Lord connected correction and love. He wanted these brethren to understand he was correcting them because He loved them. Time after time in the New Testament, we see our Lord correcting men and women out of love (Mark 8:33; 16:14; Luke 9:55; John 2:13-16). He loved men enough to correct them when they were wrong.

Today, He wants us to follow in His footsteps and love as He loved (1 Peter 2:21; John 15:12). When a brother teaches that which is false, or in some other way departs from the truth, Jesus wants us to love him enough to “*shew him the error of his way*” and try to turn him back to the truth (James 5:19-20). If an erring brother will not return to the truth, Jesus wants us to withdraw ourselves from him (Titus 3:10-11; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 1

Cor. 5:13; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:11; 2 John 10). Those today who claim that it is unloving to contend for the faith, mark false teachers, and withdraw from those who walk disorderly, need to learn the meaning of Biblical love. Through His word, Jesus is saying to them, “*Go ye and learn what that meaneth.*”

Many fail to mention that **love involves keeping God’s commandments**. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ clearly understood that love involves doing what God has commanded. Three times within the fourteenth chapter of John, He stressed that those who love Him will keep His word (John 14:15, 21, 23). In simple and straightforward language He said, “*If ye love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15). In like manner, John, the apostle of love, connected love and obedience (1 John 2:5; 3:18; 2 John 1,3,6). In the book of First John, he wrote, “*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous*” (1 John 5:2-3).

Today, we must understand that love involves keeping God’s commandments. We do not really love God unless we are willing to do what He tells us to do. It seems that many within and without the church are trying to separate grace from law, faith from works, and love from obedience. Yet, the Bible clearly connects these things together. Men must learn not to “*put asunder*” that which God has joined together (Matt. 19:6).

Many fail to mention that **love involves continuation**. Our Lord told His disciples to “*continue*” in His love (John 15:9). The diligent Bible student will remember that He had “*somewhat against*” the church at Ephesus because they had left their first love (Rev. 2:4). He understood that love involved continuing to do

that which is right. Likewise, Jude, the half-brother of our Lord wrote, “*Keep yourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*” (Jude 21). Clearly, Jude understood that man must continue in love in order to be saved. In like manner, the apostle John wrote, “*And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him*” (1 John 4:16). The suffix “*eth*” on the end of the word “*dwelleth*” signifies that man must continue to dwell in the love of God.

Today, we must understand the importance of continuing in the love of God. We must realize that unless we continue to obey God, we will fall from grace (Gal. 5:4). Sadly, much of the preaching which is being done on love today does not stress the importance of continuing in it.

When our Lord talked about love, He mentioned correction, obedience and continuation. Surely, He wants us to make the same connections in our teaching and preaching today. No doubt, He wants those who are preaching the “*all fluff*” and “*no substance*” doctrine of love today to go and learn what love means. I agree with these brethren that love needs to be preached. Yet, I believe men need to hear the Lord’s teaching on love and not man’s watered-down version.

1053 Carlisle Circle
Leeds, AL 35094

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ENTERTAINMENT OR WORSHIP

Carroll Sites

“**G**od is a spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24).

I read about a fellow who had been a member of a denominational church for a short time where shouting, hand-clapping, and foot-stomping was practiced. He was not accustomed to such — and he asked the preacher about it. The preacher’s reply was, “If Calvin Hill made a touchdown for the Cowboys, would you shout and whistle and clap your hands?” The fellow answered that he probably would. The preacher then replied, “If you can do it for the Cowboys, why can’t you do it for the Lord?” This seemed to satisfy the man, because so much in the denominational religious world has degenerated into entertainment. This being the reason for choirs and special groups performing in their “worship(?)” period. One denomination had a magician show — another put on a Jude demonstration.

If you think that is far out, in 1980 there was an article in the *Arkansas Gazette* reporting that the First Unitarian Church of Richardson, Texas had a stripper. Their “pastor,” Bill Nichols, said, “But I can’t promise this every Sunday.” According to the newspaper report, exotic dancer Diana King danced for the congregation on Sunday morning, and when she was through there was nothing left but her G-string and the congregation’s imagination. The churches’ 200 adult members and their children watched in fascinated silence as Miss King removed her clothing and did the same dance she performed nightly at a night spot in Dallas.

My brothers and sisters, when we leave the authority of the New Testament in any way — whether something like the above or something else, we have done wrong!! Christians must be careful lest they fall into the error of substituting entertainment for worship. Do we determine the success of the worship period by an entertainment standard? If the song director does not perform to our liking — if the preacher’s sermon is not entertaining — many are likely to be disappointed

in worship because we expect to be “entertained.”

Christians do not assemble to be entertained. Christians come together to worship the Lord our God and bring glory and honor to His name through His son Jesus Christ. We should stop “going to church” and begin “going to worship!” When we worship God “in

spirit and in truth” then we will be well pleasing to the Lord. This should be our primary concern.

Let’s consider carefully and cultivate an appreciation for what God has taught us to do in worship according to His Holy Word. Then worship will be given the priority in our lives that supersedes any kind of entertainment.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A FALSE TEACHER

Paul Wilmoth

Men desire positive preaching, fair speeches that makes one feel good. Men like to be praised and loved by others. They would rather not offend anyone. They prefer making friends to making enemies. But this is not always possible nor pleasing in the sight of God. The Bible teaches that each of us must be willing to “*endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*” (2 Tim. 2:3). We are also warned, “*No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier*” (2 Tim. 2:4). When the going gets rough we need to remember to “*...endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory*” (2 Tim. 2:10). That suffering for Christ is inevitable is clearly seen. Paul states, “*Yea, and all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*” (2 Tim. 3:12). If you are not suffering for Christ, then maybe it is because you are not living a godly life!

The church is facing a major departure from the truth today. Most of the congregations in the Cookeville, Tennessee, area are either a part of that digression or are fast becoming a part of it. One false teacher after another is now being paraded into Putnam County and into our city. Preachers and elders encourage their members to attend these meetings. In doing so they are bidding them “God speed” and becoming a “partaker in their evil deeds” (2 John 9-11). How does one recognize a false teacher?

1. One who teaches that one might be saved without doing what

God commanded in His word is a false teacher.

2. When one teaches that God just might not punish anyone eternally in a devil’s hell, is a false teacher.

3. When one teaches that women need to have a different role in the church today, he is a false teacher.

4. When one teaches that elders have no authority over God’s flock, he is a false teacher.

5. When one teaches that instrumental music in worship will not cause one to be lost, he is a false teacher.

6. When one applies Matthew 18:15-17 to public proclaimers of error, he is a false teacher.

7. When one encourages participation and fellowship with denominational bodies, he is a false teacher.

8. When one teaches there is more than one reason for divorce and remarriage, he is a false teacher.

9. When a man accuses others of taking his plain statements out of context in order to cover up his false teaching, he is a false teacher.

10. When a preacher, elder, or editor advertises a gospel meeting of a known heretic, they become partakers of his evil deeds.

11. When preachers fellowship those who teach and/or promote false teachers, they also become guilty.

12. And the list can go on and on.

“*Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity*” (Psalm 94:16)?

P.O. Box 5000
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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

enjoy "Seek The Old Paths." We appreciate all the good things you brethren there do for the Cause of Christ" ...**Brodie Johnson, Savannah, TN.** "I have moved and would like to continue receiving STOP. Thank you for your continued stand for the Truth and God bless you all" ...**Ted Parks, Vacaville, CA.** "We really appreciate your publication. We are in Las Vegas, Nevada and are fortunate to have a sound congregation to attend. I wish more members here would subscribe. There are several in our group that attended Lipscomb and your recent articles have been very interesting. Keep up the good work" ...**Hwhkjb.** "I appreciate the work you do" ...**Ian McPherson, Tasmania, Australia.** "I appreciate your teaching. Sure wish all congregations could see the damage that a little drifting and innovations cause. Please continue to stand for the truth and know that some of us are still pleased with the old paths" ...**Bill Howell.** "I wanted to thank you very much for sending me *Seek the Old Paths*. I really enjoy reading it. It is sad that so many congregations are falling away" ...**Jason White.** "I'd like to be placed on your monthly mailing list for the "Seek The Old Paths" publication. Thank you" ...**David W. Creech, Panama.** "Thank you for knowing the truth of the gospel. May God bless you in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Peace be to you" ...**Jeffery Winston.** "Please add me to your snail mail distribution list to receive S.T.O.P. I stumbled across your website on the internet and have been blessed by the way you present issues concerning the Lord's church. I have been called to preach in the Lord's church, so your publication will definitely aid me as the Lord continues to call me to serve. Thanks again for your efforts in helping the just to live by faith by seeking the old paths!" ...**Chris Sedlak, Indianapolis, IN.** (NOTE: All men and women are called by and through the Gospel (2 Thess. 2:14). "I very much look forward to reading the material you post on the net and have taken the liberty to print off some to send overseas to more than one missionary. Thanks very much!" ...**Dennis Johnson, Columbia, SC.** "Just a note to express my appreciation for the December/98 issue of STOP. The publication ALWAYS takes a strong stand for God's truth, however, I appreciated especially the articles in the December issue by Roger Campbell re: reactions individuals have who cannot answer the truth, and Ben Vick on Weigh Down Workshops" ...**Kent Bailey, Lenoir City, TN.** "I just wanted to take a few minutes to thank you for the wonderful job you are doing for the Lord. In a world where denominationalism is rampant, it is so refreshing to see someone standing for the Truth. Keep up the good work, and my God bless" ...**Eric Simpson, North Augusta, SC.** "Thanks for S.T.O.P. We look forward to each issue. Keep up the good work and continue to stand for the truth" ...**Jerry Joseph, Tiptonville, TN.** "RESCUE THE PERISHING is the theme for the eighth annual TRUTH FOR THE WORLD Mission Forum, which will be held August 13-15, 1999. It will be conducted at the Olive Branch church of Christ, 9100 East Sandidge Road in Olive Branch, Mississippi. (Olive Branch is just outside Memphis, Tennessee). Speakers this year include: Perry B. Cotham, Johnny Robertson, Rod Rutherford, Jon Macon, John Grubb, Cy Stafford, Kevin Ruiz, Jimmie B. Hill, Earl Edwards, Paul Meacham, Jr., Keith Cozort, and Phillip Gray. Countries discussed this year will include: Micronesia, India, China, Tanzania, Italy, and Latin America. There will also be mission reports by various missionaries on Friday and Saturday night. In addition, Kevin Ruiz will present a lesson entitled "Youth In The Mission Field" for the young people while Jimmie B. Hill will host a session for those involved in or those who want to be involved in our Bible Correspondence Course program. (We now have more than 105,000 people who have enrolled in one of our courses.) Earl Edwards will deliver his lesson at our annual dinner. You may contact TRUTH FOR THE WORLD, P.O. Box 751135, Memphis, TN 38175-1135, or contact us by e-mail: tftworld@aol.com or jmgrubb@indy.net" ...**John Grubb, Indianapolis, IN.** "I have been reading your articles which are published on the internet and would like your publication sent to me. I understand that it is free. Your articles on liberalism have been very helpful to me. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. May God's blessings be with you" ...**Steffie Stewart, Riverview, MI.** "My

"First of all, I would like to say that I really enjoy reading "Seek The Old Paths." I would like for you to send it to my deaf preacher George Myers as he really enjoys reading it too. He would like to get it, so can you send him one? Thank you! May God bless you all" ...**Dawn and John Alman.** "We always

wife and I read the December 1998 publication and found it to be a breath of fresh air. Could you please put us on your mailing list" ...**Todd & Donna Grant, Plymouth, MI.** "We appreciate the paper. Keep up the good work" ...**Lenard Hogan, Hornbeak, TN.** "I received the lectureship book on the *Home* and enjoyed it very much. I love and appreciate good sound teaching. I also get your paper, S.T.O.P. I thank you so much for it and the way the truth is upheld, and the way false teaching is condemned. May God bless you and the work that East Corinth church is doing. I am sending you some to help with the cost of mailing" ...**Deward Franklin, Gulf Shore, AL.** "May God bless and keep you in His service" ...**Rocky Craig, Troup, TX.** "May God continue to bless you as you stand for the truth" ...**Mike Jones, Andalusia, AL.** "We enjoy having access to good, sound material. We look forward to receiving and reading the publication" ...**Hank & Georgia Swope, Jack & Bonnie Rouse, Yreka, CA.** "Thanks for your work, and service to our Lord. Great Web Site. God Bless you" ...**Donald Fox, Salttilo, MS.** "We no longer wish to receive your publication. Please take us off your mailing list" ...**Tim & Jenny Farrar, Pearl, MS.** "We have enclosed a check for \$\$ to help defray some of the expenses of the *Seek The Old Paths* publication. We appreciate your efforts for the truth" ...**Donald White, Maysville, OK.** "You may take us off your mailing list. Thanks" ...**Terry Lee Johnson, Red Boiling Springs, TN.** "I would like to be placed on your mailing list to receive *Seek The Old Paths* publication. Thank you! In Christian love" ...**Woody Hoyman, Belington, WV.** "I came across your Website while surfing on a computer at work. I enjoyed reading articles in *S.T.O.P.* I would like to receive the paper" ...**Craig Young, Birmingham, AL.** "Thank you for sending me *Seek The Old Paths*. I also enjoy your Website" ...**Chig Gunter, Johnson City, TN.** "We have learned much from your efforts over the years. If you would be so kind, please send *Seek The Old Paths* to the addresses on the enclosed list. Thank you and may God bless you richly in this New Year" ...**Anonymous, AZ.**

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**

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