

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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"FELLOWSHIP" IS THE ISSUE! A REVIEW OF THE "CONTEMPORARY DISCUSSION" CONDUCTED AT THE 2005 FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY LECTURES

Jack Simons

It was my privilege to attend the FHU lectures Feb. 7-11, 2005. The theme this year centered on the book of Isaiah. The highlight of the lectures for me was the singing of over a thousand in Loyd Auditorium. It actually brought tears to my eyes. Two of the lectures stood out to me. The first was at 12:45 PM on Tuesday given by David Sain on the topic, *"Seeing My Sinful Self,"* using Isaiah 6:5 as the text. He exalted the Lord God and declared the greatness of His saving grace for such unworthy sinners as we. The second was at 7:30 AM on Wednesday given by V. P. Black on the topic, *"Heaven At Evening,"* using Isaiah 61:3 as the text. Basically he spoke on why I want to go to heaven. It was most encouraging and uplifting.

On Friday morning a contemporary discussion was conducted on the topic, **SHOULD THE USE OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN WORSHIP BE A BARRIER TO FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHERS, SUCH AS INDEPENDENT CHRISTIAN CHURCHES?** Those discussing this issue were **Marlin Connelly** affirming that we should not, and **Phillip Morrison** affirming that we should. I, among many others, was very disappointed at the outcome of this event. It is the opinion of this writer that brother Connelly failed to adequately address the

issue and answer the challenges tended him and the truth by brother Morrison while on the other hand brother Morrison did a very slick job of purveying falsehood concerning it.

Brother Connelly barely touched top, side or bottom of the real issue — **FELLOWSHIP!** He did not define what it is, show the criteria, standard or basis for establishing it. Nor did he answer several of the false concepts brother Morrison set forth such as: unity in diversity fellowship, the old law was not completely abolished, instruments are used in heaven so why not in the church, etc. Brother Connelly also did a poor job in establishing that the use of instruments in worship is sinful and in essence lost the debate! Therefore, that is the reason for this article.

This is not an attempt to attack FHU, brother Connelly or brother Morrison. It is simply an attempt to address the issue discussed in order to propagate and defend the truth concerning **FELLOWSHIP** and the sin of using mechanical instruments in worship to God and fellowshiping those who do so.

First, let us consider what fellowship means. According to *The New Century Dictionary*, fellowship means "communion, agreement, community of interests or feeling, friendship or friendliness, companionship, mutual intercourse." There

are five Greek words used in the New Testament translated fellowship. According to *VINE* they mean:

1 *Koinonia* — "Communion or sharing in common."

2 *Metochē* — "Partnership."

3 *Koinonos* — "A partaker or partner with."

4 *Koinoneō* — "To have fellowship with, to communicate."

5 *Sunkoinoneō* — "To have fellowship with or to communicate with."

Summarizing this, fellowship means to be in agreement with and therefore in league or partnership with and having communion with in common friendship. It implies working together in mutual agreement.

Consider how fellowship is established and maintained by considering the criteria, standard and/or basis for such. Since fellowship exists on a basis of agreement, friendship and common sharing of interest, it demands doctrinal agreement and mutual involvement in spiritual matters or worship activity! Amos 3:3 asks the soul-searching question, *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"* It is rhetorical, implying they cannot! If one wants to go north and the other south, they cannot be in fellowship of mutual action unless

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"Fellowship"...



Editorial...

SHALL YOUR BRETHREN GO TO WAR, AND SHALL YE SIT HERE?

Garland M. Robinson

One of the gravest problems we are now facing in the Lord's church is the fact that so many are standing (or may we say sitting or even lying down) on the side lines and not joining in the fight against digression and error! In my judgment, this is one of the most serious problems in the church today. Will all our brethren be faithful and join the battle?

While Israel was conquering the land of Canaan, we read: *"Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle; The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying, ...if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan. And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben, **Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here?** And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them"* (Num. 32:1-2,5-7).

This text reveals how the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh were content to settle the land east of Jordan and let their brethren, the rest of the tribes of Israel, continue on in their fight for the promised land. The land they desired for their inheritance was now secure. They were at peace. They were ready to settle down and take it easy. They thought their fighting was over.

Since the things written aforetime were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4), there appears a remarkable parallel here for many in the church today. The vast majority of congregations (elders, preachers and

members) are sitting on the sidelines, not lifting their voice nor hand to aid the few who are fighting the onslaught of digression. Where are they? Where is their help? They are content to just sit and say things like, "Oh, we are not troubled with that here. We are at peace. Everything is going well. We are not concerned with problems faced by brethren in other places. We do not believe it is as bad as you say. You are on a witch-hunt. I'm not a watch-dog, etc., etc."

The inaction of brethren who are not assisting in the current fight against digression is a great discouragement to those who are fighting the fight. Notice the response Moses gave to the tribes of Reuben and Gad. *"And wherefore **discourage** ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them? Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they **discouraged** the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them. And the LORD'S anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because **they have not wholly followed me:** Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for **they have wholly followed the LORD.** And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had **done evil** in the sight of the LORD, was consumed. And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of **sinful men**, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel. For if ye turn away*

from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people" (Num. 32:7-15).

When the Reubenites and Gadites heard these words, *"...they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones: But **we ourselves will go ready armed** before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance"* (Num. 32:16-18).

When they learned of their terrible sin of not helping, they repented and joined in the war. Oh how we pray that brethren everywhere today will do as they did. Brethren everywhere must have the attitude toward error and those who promote it that we read about in II Timothy 3:9, *"...they shall proceed no further..."*

*"And Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will **go armed** before the LORD to war, And will go **all of you armed** over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him, And the land be subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and **be guiltless** before the LORD, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD. But **if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned** against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out"* (Num. 32:20-23). These tribes, every man, were to go "armed" and assist their brethren. If they would do so they would be found guiltless before the Lord. Had they not done so, they would have been guilty. Verse 23 says *"ye have sinned."* *"But thy servants will pass over; **every man armed for war**, before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith"* (Num.32:27).

Are you involved in the fight against digression? Will you sit and rest while your brethren go to war? Join the faithful in the fight for truth and righteousness! It is the Lord's will.

WHEN YOU MOVE,
PLEASE SEND US A
CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

OUR PRESENT APOSTASY

Ron Boatwright

Apostasy means, “falling away.” Apostasy is caused by those who “want to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:7). The church in the first century was warned, “*there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies*” (II Peter 2:1). There is an apostasy that is now occurring in many congregations of the churches of Christ. It was predicted in I Timothy 4:1-2, “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.*” The end result of apostasy is that many will lose their soul in eternity.

Many departures have occurred during the past 2000 years which have resulted in hundreds of different kinds of denominational churches. Paul says, “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*” (II Tim. 4:3-4). The apostasy we are facing is not caused by those outside the church, but from within. Paul warned the Ephesian elders, “*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*” (Acts 20:30).

Many in the Lord’s church are wanting to be like the denominations around them just as the children of Israel wanted a king so they could be like the nations around them (I Sam. 8:5). The spirit of denominationalism is steadily invading many congregations of the churches of Christ. Some now claim there are faithful Christians among all the denominations, and that water baptism is not essential for salvation. We read in Galatians 1:6-7, “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another;*

but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.”

It is being advocated that women should take a leading role in the worship of the church by leading prayer, waiting on the table, leading singing, teaching Bible classes with men present, and even preaching. They refer to themselves as a gender-neutral church of Christ. Many congregations have worship teams, also called praise teams, where women with microphones take part in leading the singing. Basically the praise team becomes a choir and is there for the entertainment of the audience, thus God is not being worshipped “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). Instrumental music is again being introduced into worship just as it was more than 100 years ago. To ease it in, some congregations have both an “instrumental” and an a cappella service. Some say that instrumental music is not a doctrinal or salvation issue and that it doesn’t really matter. But Jesus says, “*Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*” (Mark 7:7). “*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist*” (Col. 1:17), which means by His authority. Since instrumental music is by the authority of man and not of God, the worship of one who sings with the instrument is vain.

There are those who are dropping the name “church of Christ” and changing their name to “Community Church” or to other names. They say they are removing Christ from their name in an effort to remove “a barrier”, so they can attract more people. They are ashamed of our Lord and his church. Jesus says in Mark 8:38, “*Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.*” Many have also turned to entertainment to attract more people. In order to keep the people they attract, they don’t want to ever teach or preach anything from the Bible

that might offend anyone.

A number of congregations are having fellowship with denominations through pulpit exchanges, joint worship services, and the ministerial alliance. We are warned in II John 10-11, “*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.*” We must never give a person encouragement in their false doctrine, if we do, we also become guilty and will lose our own soul. The apostasy we are now facing in the Lord’s church will rival and possibly surpass the apostasy that ravaged the Lord’s church in the later part of the 1800s. When that particular apostasy was complete in about 1906, less than 180,000 members remained faithful, but more than one million went into the apostate Christian Church. Most of the problems that are causing the apostasy now, were the same problems that caused the apostasy then. The same techniques which Satan was successful with then, he is using again. Satan just will not leave the Lord’s church alone.

The reason we are facing this apostasy is the rejection of Bible authority and our lack of Bible knowledge. God says in Hosea 4:6, “*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*” Brethren are not studying their Bible the way we did in the past. In our Bible classes, many are studying other books and not the Bible. Instead of Bible study, it has become “book study.” We are becoming Biblically illiterate. Because of our lack of Bible knowledge, digression from the truth is continuing at an alarming rate in which many “*...unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction*” (II Peter 3:16). Some of the Bible class material that is being used in some congregations is denominational material that sup-

posedly has been “edited”, but it still contains denominational errors. If we teach our children denominational material, we will train them to be a denomination of the future. Since we have failed to learn a lesson from past history, we are seeing the same problems arise again today. The attitude today is “I want it and I am going to have it.”

We read in II Thessalonians 2:10-12, “...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” It is a shame millions of good people have chosen to believe the lies of Satan, and because of this, they will have to spend forever and ever in the burning fires of Hell. To protect ourselves against Satan we must have a strong faith. How do we obtain that faith? Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” The more we study the word of God, the stronger our faith will be. We can protect ourselves from the present apostasy if we will only study, believe, and obey the truth of God’s word without any additions or subtractions, and be faithful to it all the days of our life. We must speak out and warn others of our present apostasy so less damage will be done and fewer souls will be lost.

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“Fellowship”...

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one compromises! Though they may agree on some things, they part company if they cannot agree on this! So it is that though we may agree with people of other religions on some things, the cardinal matters we disagree on hinders and stops our fellowship!

God’s word is the only criteria, standard or basis for fellowship of man with God and man with man in mutually serving God. II John 9-10 reads, “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.” The doctrines of men make our religious activity vain (Matt. 15:8-9). Only divinely inspired Scripture is, “Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Tim. 3:16-17). There can be no fellowship where there is diversity on cardinal doctrine (II John 9-11) or on godly living (II Cor. 6:14-18). If such is attempted, we lose true fellowship with God and those who serve Him.

Let us apply this to fellowshiping those who use mechanical instruments in worship. When it comes to fellowship, the use of mechanical instruments is only one element in a much larger picture. It could just as well be the role of women in the church, the necessity or mode of baptism, observing the Lord’s supper on any day other than Sunday, etc. But, let us address whether or not it is Scriptural and acceptable with God to use mechanical instruments in worship. If it is acceptable to God, fellowship can be established. If it is not acceptable, fellowship cannot be established! That is the criteria for fellowship in any area of religious endeavor.

In EVERY PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE in the New Testament where reference is made to worshiping God musically in the church, it is presented as vocal and unaccompa-

nied by mechanical instruments! The words used to describe it are: “sing,” “sang,” “sung,” “speaking,” “the fruit of our lips,” etc. (See Matt. 26:30, Mark 14:26, Acts 16:25, Rom. 15:9, I Cor. 14:15, Eph. 5:19, Col. 3:16, Heb. 2:12, Heb. 13:15 and James 5:13). This is to be done as we make melody in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). The instrument enjoined is our heart! The method is sing! Nowhere in the New Testament is the word “play” used to imply instrumental use, or to admonish or command us *as Christians* and the assembled body of Christ (church) in its use as we worship God in song! This places using mechanical instruments in the area of cardinal doctrine, not opinion or incidental matters such as using a microphone, having a water fountain, etc.!

There are many excuses men give for using mechanical instruments in worship to God, but none of them are valid nor do they alter or rescind God’s expressed will in the matter. Attempting to justify their use because they were used by those under the Law of Moses fails because that law is fulfilled (Matt. 5:17; Acts 13:29; Gal. 4:4), taken away (Col. 2:14), abolished (Eph. 2:15) and nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14). A change has been made from the old Law to the New (Heb. 7:11; 8:8-9). Attempting to justify their use on the premise that they are used in heaven is faulty to say the least! A study of Revelation 5:8 and 14:2-3 will show the fallacy of such thinking. Study them closely and you will see John is using symbolic terms to describe what he heard, and what he heard was “SINGING” and “VOICES,” not the playing of mechanical instruments. He simply tried to describe what he heard in apocalyptic language and symbolic terms. But even if one could establish their use in heaven, that does not justify their use in the Lord’s church today.

In the science of music, there are only two ways to make music: orally and mechanically. They are so distinctively different, that even when blended together you can tell them apart! Since there are two, and God has specified only one of them (oral), that excludes and rules out playing. To play, we must go beyond His expressed will and add to His Word that which is not divinely author-

ized, and to do that is sin (See II John 9-10; Rev. 22:18-19) This being true, we cannot fellowship those who use mechanical instruments in worship to God lest we lose fellowship with God who rejects traditions geared to the doctrines of men and which make our worship vain (Matt. 15:7-9)!

No! We cannot extend fellowship to those who digress in any way from God's expressed divine will, be it the use of mechanical instruments, women preachers, sprinkling or pouring for baptism, denying the necessity of baptism in order to be saved, etc.! FELLOWSHIP IS THE ISSUE and it is more important to be in fellowship with God than man! Fellowshiping the error of men will

negate our fellowship with God. Fellowship them in their error here and we may fellowship them forever in a devil's hell (I Cor. 10:16-22). Far better to reprove them and attempt to bring them to the truth promoting hope for eternal life than join them in error and the horror of eternal damnation!

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[NOTE: We want to inform our readers that it was announced by Earl Edwards in the introduction of the discussion that FHU's position was that the use of mechanical instruments of music was a fellowship issue and that it's use involved disrespecting God's word.]

A NEW HYMNAL

A new song book is in the works and should be ready for distribution later this year. Brother Garland Elkins made the following comments regarding it: "A new hymnal for use in the churches of Christ has been needed for several years. There are some good books already in existence, but most are flawed in that either a variety of good scriptural songs is lacking, and what is far worse, there are some books containing unscriptural phraseology. We understand that songwriters exercise what is known as 'poetic license' i.e., sometimes figurative language is used. However, neither that nor anything else, justifies a songwriter teaching error in song. It is as unscriptural to sing error, as it is to preach error. Those who pervert the Gospel of Christ must give an account (Gal. 1:8-9)."

"W. D. Jeffcoat has, for many years, desired to edit a hymnal, one that can be used with confidence to the glory of God and for the benefit of men. Now, the Lord has blessed him with that great privilege. Brother Jeffcoat is, in my judgment, the best qualified man to edit a hymnal, and there are many reasons why I say this:

1. His father, brother H. D. Jeffcoat, was a great Gospel preacher, sound in the faith and respected by brethren throughout America.
2. W. D. Jeffcoat from a child has known the scriptures (II Tim. 2:15).
3. He became, and is, a sound Gospel preacher of many years.
4. W. D. Jeffcoat knows music, and he has taught many people how to sing.
5. He has known, been closely associated with, and has studied with many of the most capable teachers of music among our people, several of whom became legends even while they lived. His tutors include Austin Taylor, Will W. Slater, Tillit S. Teddlie, L. O. Sanderson, Wilkin Bacon and Paul Epps.
6. Brother Jeffcoat is a great and prolific songwriter (almost 500 songs), many of which are outstanding.
7. He is a safe songwriter and editor; his hymnal will be a classic."

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WHO WAS PHILETUS?

It is amazing, yet true, that if the Holy Spirit had consulted with some of our brethren today and had followed their advice and wishes, we would have no idea as to whom Philetus was or that he ever lived.

Philetus was a member of the Lord's church in the first century who, along with another brother by the name of Hymenaeus, was propagating the error that the resurrection had already taken place, and, by this error, was overthrowing the faith of some (II Tim. 2:17,18). Would you think that subverting or overturning a brother or sister's faith would constitute a serious matter? In this same connection, Paul says that the words of these two men were "eating like a canker." One translation says "their word as a gangrene will have pasture." If that figure does not accurately express the harm caused and need to expose, what would?

If the Holy Spirit through Paul had used the "don't call names" approach that we often hear suggested, how many other unsuspecting brethren would have had their faith overthrown and been lost because of this error? What if the Holy Spirit had said, "There's some false doctrine that is being taught about the resurrection, and some brethren are experiencing the overthrow of their faith because of it, but we will just leave it at that because calling names would be just too personal and controversial."

Where do those who contend for such get the idea? When brethren are being influenced by those who are intent on subtracting from the truth (I John 1:6-10) or in adding to the truth (Gal. 1:6-9; 5:7), such perverted gospels and the promoters thereof must be exposed. When error and its proponents are publicly named, we are simply doing what the Scriptures instruct us to do by command (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:9-11) and by example (I Tim. 1:19,20; II Tim. 2:17,18; III John 9-11). No apology for doing so is needed.

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NONE SO BLIND AS THOSE WHO WILL NOT SEE

Marvin L. Weir

Many today profess to believe in the Bible as God's authoritative Word, but continue to stubbornly uphold to the doctrines and creeds of men. When such a one is confronted with verses of Scripture that contradicts his erroneous doctrine, he closes his eyes to the truth and says, "I just do not see it that way."

Physical blindness is a handicap that no right thinking person would wish upon himself. It is indeed a tragedy when a person cannot see the beauty of God's creation. An even greater tragedy, however, is one who **can** see, but chooses **not** to see.

The Jews of Jesus' day were eagerly awaiting the coming of the Messiah, but then refused to accept Him when He came. Such an attitude of the people prompted Jesus to say, *"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them"* (Matt. 13:14-15).

There is no greater tragedy than that of one who chooses to be willfully ignorant of God's Word. The Jews of Christ's day **saw** His miracles and **heard** His preaching and concluded that He was no different from any other man. Likewise, there are many today who hear the Gospel message in its purity and yet refuse to accept what they have heard.

Many today profess to believe in the Bible as God's authoritative Word, but continue to stubbornly uphold to the doctrines and creeds of men. When such a one is confronted with verses of Scripture that contradicts his erroneous doctrine, he closes his eyes to the truth and says, "I just do not see it that way." The truth of the matter is that he is refusing to see at all — he is willingly blind to the truth.

It is a challenge to keep oneself from becoming spiritually blind.

Such must be done, however, if heaven is to become a reality and the soul is to be saved. Let us now note some areas where many who claim to believe the Bible have become spiritually blind.

"I just don't believe that baptism is necessary for one to be saved." The apostle Peter had the privilege of preaching the Gospel on Pentecost in Jerusalem, 33 A.D., and said to those who inquired what they must do to be saved, *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"* (Acts 2:38). Peter also spoke of the ark, *"wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water"* (I Peter 3:20), and said *"the like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"* (I Peter 3:21). Jesus said, *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:16). Only the spiritually blind will reject water baptism as a prerequisite to salvation.

"I believe that there is but one Christ, but I just don't believe that there is only one church." Only tradition and prejudice can so blind one to the truth. First, Christ promised to "build" His church (Matt. 16:18). His church was "purchased" with His blood (Acts 20:28). The apostle Paul affirms that God *"hath put all things under his (Christ's) feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (Eph. 1:22-23). Christ has promised to save only His body (Eph. 5:23), of which there is but one (Eph. 4:4).

In view of such Scriptures, how

can one profess to love and honor Christ while believing that **His** church (body) is unimportant? One cannot have the head without the body, or the body without the head! Christ and His church cannot be separated because of man's whims and wishes.

"I just believe that it is more meaningful to partake of the Lord's Supper only once a month." How can one profess to love the Lord and then think that what he believes is more important than what God says? An approved example, which is as binding as a command, is found in the book of Acts. Luke records, *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight"* (Acts 20:7). Ask the same denominational preachers and leaders if it is also "more meaningful" to give only once a month! Most will affirm, and rightly so, that the *"first day of the week"* in 1 Corinthians 16:2 means just that — the first day of every week. It is indeed inconsistent, is it not, that many believe *"the first day of the week"* in Acts 20:7 can mean monthly, quarterly, or even annually.

"I just believe that instrumental music sounds better." Notice that the Scriptures command us to SING — NOT PLAY (Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26; Rom. 15:9; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 2:12; Jam. 5:13; Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3). There is Bible authority to sing, but no Bible authority to "make music" any way one pleases.

It will be sad in the Day of Judgment for those who have chosen to be spiritually blind to God's glorious truth!

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THE LORD'S SUPPER

John D. Cotham

Besides the fact that we are commanded to partake of this blessed event, we should have the greatest respect for it because Christ Himself instituted this very element of worship. While in the upper room, having His last supper before His death, Jesus took the time to introduce an event that is perpetuated until His return, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:26-28).

The Lord's supper is often called the Communion because we are in communion with the suffering and death of Christ when we partake. Paul tells us, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ" (I Cor. 10:16)? We are also in communion with Christ Himself because He is partaking with us, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29).

The Lord's supper must draw our memory to His death, "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:24; cf. Luke 22:19). Therefore, by God's design, we are to be transported in our mind back to the cross on that day. It is as if we are standing at the base of the cross as personal witnesses of His death for us. It is to be a constant reminder of the tremendous price paid for our own personal sins.

The Lord's supper must always be observed in a worthy manner. To do otherwise is to disgrace our Lord and His death. To do otherwise is to bring guilt upon ourselves. The Corinthian brethren had made a mockery of the Lord's supper by turning it into a feast. Paul

reminded them, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (I Cor. 11:27). It is a time to examine whether we are partaking the supper in the proper manner, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (I Cor. 11:28).

The Lord's supper has a divinely appointed day. We find the first century church meeting on a particular day to "break bread" of this communion, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7). This element of worship began with the Christians at Pentecost, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). The first century church continued this practice every first day of the week, as is evidenced from Acts 20:7. We are warned NOT to miss this assembling together, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

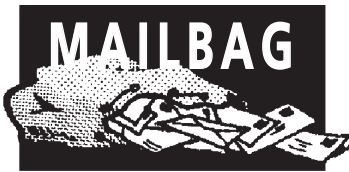
The Lord's supper also serves the purpose of preaching according to Paul, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26, ASV). Each first day of the week as Christians assemble to partake of the Lord's supper, they proclaim the Lord's death to the world.

The Lord's supper deserves the Christian's greatest respect. It was designed specifically by our Lord. Its purpose is twofold: to draw our minds back to the cross, and to proclaim His death to the world on a regular basis.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

desire we send *STOP* to them. We're happy to comply. Sometimes, however, those who receive it don't want it and desire to be taken off. We always take them off the mailing list.] "Dear brother, I am always looking for informative articles to put in our newsletter. May I have your permission to share these great faith building messages with the brethren through that medium? Also, can I reproduce them to handout during my daily door-knocking routine? I appreciate you and the great magazine *STOP*. I just wish those with liberal tendencies would take the time to apply some reasoning and take note of the "Old Paths" you proclaim"

...From Down Under, New Zealand. [NOTE: Yes, you have our permission to use what you can to the glory of God.] "I receive *STOP* by mail and I enjoy it very much. Continue exposing the error in the church today" **...Florence, AL.** "I have just gotten my first *STOP*. Can't wait to get the next one. I will be sending a check soon for you to kept up the good work. Is there any way that I might be able to get any back issues? I was feeding the livestock today when the mail ran and went to the mail box and my first paper was in the box. I looked it over as I was walking back to the house to put the mail up and I couldn't put it down. Read the whole paper right then and fixing to start over from front to back again. Please kept up the good work. Thank you" **...Jeff Caldwell, Obion, TN.** "I would greatly appreciate receiving the publication" **...Bobby Stafford, Neosho, MO.** "I would like to receive the *Seek The Old Paths* newsletter" **...Carolyn Kendrick, Searcy, AR.** "I love receiving your paper. Keep up the good work. Please send a copy to a friend of mine" **...Hollis Browne.** "I have read your booklet and was very impressed. I would appreciate it if you would add me to your mailing list" **...Larry Watson, Goodspring, TN.** "I was able to get copies of your fine publication when I was living in Columbus, OH, and attending at the Alkire Road congregation but married in 2003 and moved to Texas. I have missed the wonderful articles and the sound doctrine you all had in the booklet and hope to receive it again. I have several friends that I will refer to you, especially if it is online as I know they will enjoy reading your articles, too. God bless you. In Him" **...Carol Short, Garland, TX.** [NOTE: back issues of the paper can be found "online" at www.seektheoldpaths.com. There are also many other Bible study helps to be found there.] "I received your publication when I was living in West Virginia. Please send it to me at my new address. I have missed receiving your paper since I've moved. I always read it cover to cover. Thank you" **...Jennie Burgess, Loveland, CO.** "I have always enjoyed reading *Seek The Old Paths*, but since I started school at Freed-Hardeman last fall, I haven't been able to read it as much as I'd like to. Could you please begin sending it to me here at school. I was reading the February 2005 issue (I know it has already been sent out, but I'd like to have a copy of it) in the library tonight, and I just wish every student on this campus could have read that article by brother Wayne Coats. It was fantastic. A lot of the students were expecting Connelly to let Morrison have it, but of course that didn't happen. It was simply a sounding board for a false teacher. To me, the real kicker is that in chapel after the discussion, brother Smith gave a lesson on why the restoration plea is still valid. It's great that he says that, but we need to practice it. I appreciate your work" **...Donnie Vick, Henderson, TN.** Please take me off your mailing list for *STOP*" **...The Hirsch Family, Covington, IN.** "Please take us off your mailing list! To keep repeating why we're right on doctrine and everyone else is wrong doesn't help much in bringing a lost world to Christ!" **...John Morris, Brighton, MI.** [EDITOR'S NOTE: The Truth is what saves (I Peter 1:22), not false doctrine. Unless one is right, unless one embraces the Truth, one will not be saved (John 8:32). How can we deny the Truth, embrace false doctrine, and expect to be saved? The whole point of the Gospel is to proclaim the Truth (God's Word). This, of necessity, exposes, condemns and tears down error. God told Jeremiah, "I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to **root out**, and to **pull down**, and to **destroy**, and to **throw down**, to **build**, and to **plant**" (Jer. 1:10). You can't teach the Truth without exposing error (Eph. 5:11). If the Truth is the Truth, it naturally refutes that which is contrary to it. I'm sorry, but mere humans did not write the Bible, God did. Mere humans

"Enclosed is my meager contribution to help you continue the good work that you are doing" **...Ken Gray, Cotton Valley, LA.** "Please take me off your mailing list. We do not want to receive your newsletter. I am not sure who gave you my name" **...Scott Bolton, St. Louis, MO.** [NOTE: Good brethren often send the names of family and friends and

have no right to 'sugar coat' the Gospel and make it more appealing than God makes it. Read and study again these passages: II Tim. 4:2-5, Titus 1:9-13, Titus 2:1, Eph. 5:11, Jude 3, II Peter 1:12.] "Would you please send me your paper. What a wonderful study! Good sound doctrine is such a blessing to receive. I received the Sept/04 paper from a friend. Thank you!" **...Roxie Paschal, Osceola, AR.** "I look forward to receiving your paper each month. I appreciate all your endeavors and may your good work continue for many years. Thanks" **...Florice Cardwell, Oxford, MS.** "Thank you" **...Lafayette, IN.** "Appreciate your publication" **...Carl Yount, Moberly, MO.** "I was given a copy of *STOP* by a member of the Lord's church, having recently left a congregation whose eldership have adopted a liberal agenda. It is encouraging to see the work of the East End Church of Christ. Stand firm. You have my support both monetarily and morally. Thank you" **...Anthony Russo, Saint Clair Shores, MI.** "It is an excellent source of sound material and you are to be commended for that. Thank you very much" **...Derrick Coble, Sparta, TN.** "What a fine article on women in the church (March 2005). You exposed the blatant hypocrisy of Mr. Cope. Good for you! In Christ" **...Al Sowin, Clearlake, CA.** "We don't want to see this paper dwindle" **...Bill & Martha Kimbrough, Corinth, MS.** "Thank you so much" **...Lola Wheeler, Columbia, TN.** "I so enjoy reading *Seek The Old Paths*, then I pass it on to others. You do a great job keeping faithful Christians on their toes. It's a shame that others have left the Lord's church because they cannot think for themselves, but allow the liberals to think for them and lead them to destruction. Myself, as well as others, can only pray they will return to God's word (the Bible) before it is everlastingly too late. I am enclosing a contribution for the cause. I which to remain anonymous. Thank you" **...Grand Blanc, MI.** "Thank you for supplying us with copies of *Seek The Old Paths* each month. We have enclosed a check to help cover cost of printing and mailing. Thank you and we pray that you will keep up the good work" **...Garry Stanton, for the elders, Cadiz church of Christ, Cadiz, KY.**

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

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