

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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BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES AND MECHANICAL INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC

Victor M. Eskew

One distinct and very noticeable feature of the worship services of the churches of Christ is that the mechanical instrument of music is not present. After visiting one of the services of the church, individuals of other religious groups have often asked, "Why don't you have a piano or organ in the building?" In this study, we want to help our friends understand why we do use mechanical instruments of music in worship. There are several Biblical principles upon which our practice is based.

This lesson, though, is not just for our friends in denominations who question our practice. It is also addressed to members of the churches of Christ. In recent times, we have had individuals arise among us who have begun to question our practice of having no mechanical instruments of music in our worship services. Many supposed "gospel preachers" are loudly proclaiming that its use is just a matter of opinion. One is on record as saying that it is a "third order truth" which should in no wise effect fellowship. Many who once stood against instrumental music are now openly fellowshipping de-

nominal groups who do use them. Their positions and practices are heretical and schismatic. They are dividing the beautiful body of Christ right down the middle. They desire to take as many as they can down the roads of apostasy with them. Thus, we must remind both young and old of the precious truths of God's Word on this issue. Christians must be rooted and grounded in the faith lest they be subverted by the sweet sounding words of liberal false teachers. Thus, our lesson is intended for Christians and non-Christians alike.

ONLY THINGS AUTHORIZED ARE LAWFUL TO BE DONE

There are six Biblical principles one must understand in order to see that instrumental music is forbidden in the worship of God.


The first principle states that only the things which God has authorized are lawful to be done. Another way of stating this is, "Only those things which have been commanded are to be done." Jesus made this clear in the Great Commission. *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them*

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20). Jesus taught His disciples to teach others to observe "all" things which are "commanded." Anything which is not commanded is not to be observed.

The apostle Paul also taught the necessity of authorization. *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him"* (Col. 3:17). The phrase, *"do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,"* means to do all by the authority of Christ. Every word and every action must have the authorization of the Lord Jesus behind it.

The question which must be asked at this time is: "Where is the authorization for the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship?" As disciples, we must observe only those things which are commanded. Where is the command to use mechanical instru-

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Biblical Principles...



Non-Conformity And Fellowship

Charles A. Pledge

A cry has been raised that we must not expect conformity as one of the conditions of fellowship. The arguments go something like this (with variations):

- 1) We all have differences.
- 2) We all are sinners, therefore imperfect.
- 3) Because we are imperfect we have no reason to expect others to measure up to our standards.
- 4) Therefore, it is unreasonable and ungodly to demand conformity among those whom we fellowship.

Actually, none of the premises have anything to do with God's teaching concerning fellowship.

Certainly we all have differences. We have different opinions about a lot of things. We have different personalities. We have different social habits, etc. But **in matters of revelation we all had better have the same judgment and be of the same mind.** You see, fellowship with God and with the faithful of God's children depends upon our walking in the light of God's word. John stated in I John 1:7, *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."* Paul, referring to our judgment on matters of faith declared in I Cor. 1:10, *"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."* God's revela-

tion will provide the cushion for different personalities, social habits, and opinions. We will have the love to accept one another in these things, regardless of the vast differences. Think of the "slave" "master" relationship in the first century. The gospel enabled both to worship, work, and live alongside each other in fellowship.

The second statement (We are all sinners) is an irrational statement — a statement for which there is no evidence to support the conclusion. A sinner is one who practices sin, who walks in sin, who lives in sinful practices. A Christian is one who follows Christ. A Christian will sin occasionally but that is different from deliberately practicing sin or living in sinful practices. John declared in I John 1:8, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* But John does not end the subject just there. He says in verse 9: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* Christians are not recovering sinners. Christians are those who have been separated from the wilful practices of sin — from living in sinful practices. That is what the process of justification described by Paul in Romans 6 is all about. Death to sin is a separation from the sinful practices and from the penalty of such. The fact that in addition to forgiveness in that context, a new life is prescribed (vs. 5-8), indicates that the death to sin involves separation from the practices of sin. A sinner practices sinful acts — lives in

sinful acts. A Christian is a follower of Christ who, regardless of his past life, now walks in the light of God's word and is cleansed daily by the blood of Jesus.

The third premise (because we all are imperfect we have no right to expect others to live up to our standards) is totally irrelevant to fellowship. Man does not draw the lines of fellowship. Man does not formulate the terms and conditions of fellowship with God and the redeemed of God. God does that in his word. Men who are acceptable to God, are those men who recognize and practice what God reveals. God makes clear that the doctrine of Christ serves as the boundaries of fellowship (II John 9-11). God emphasizes that fellowship with him and his redeemed can be enjoyed only by those who walk in the light of his revelation. To be in fellowship with God is to walk with God. But walking with one necessitates agreement with one. How can man walk with God until man agrees with God? This is the question God posed long ago, and stated in Amos 3:3: *"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"*

Since none of their premises are relevant to the biblical matter of fellowship, their conclusion is an irrational conclusion unworthy of serious consideration. In fact, the statement itself is an irrational statement. The conclusion that it is ungodly and unreasonable to demand conformity among those in fellowship with each other assumes pluralism. Pluralism is the philosophy that ultimate reality has more than one true explanation. In other words, even though we both hold to different, contradictory principles, we both are right. This assumption (some call it philosophy) demands then, acceptance of all persons in religion because we all are right. If truth has more than one true explanation (i.e., two plus two equals 4, but

two plus two also equals 200, or any figure one wishes to assign it), then no one has the right to tell anyone they are wrong.

This philosophy, even when modified, as it certainly has been done by some among us, demands that we not make doctrine a matter of fellowship. Why? Because of the belief that there are at least two true explanations for every reality, and, therefore, even contradictions stated in opposition to each other can each be true at the same time. If this is correct, then there is no falsehood; everything becomes true. We just have to work to see the ultimate truth of the matter in order to accept that, we are told.

We are being told that one who is sprinkled is serving God in truth and is accepted with God just as the one who is immersed. The specific acts become irrelevant because all acts are true if the heart is true, so those who have found the "ultimate truth" tell us. In the same way, specific propositions, though contradictory to each other, are also true if the heart that accepts them is true. The Neo-Orthodox philosophy declares that we do not have the very word of God, just the Bible. But when we accept in our heart the Bible as the very word of God, then the Bible becomes the very word of God to us. Now we don't — now we do! So, we all must learn **ultimate truth** in order to be in fellowship with all others.

Fellowship (the biblical kind prescribed by God and practiced with his approval) is restricted to fellowship between the children of God whom God has not rejected. If any can prove the boundaries of God-authorized fellowship extends further than that, then that one proves there are no boundaries on fellowship. If I can, with God's approval, extend fellowship to one whom God rejects, I can, with God's approval extend fellowship to all whom God rejects.

One who refuses to walk in the light (I John 1:7) deliberately practices sin and has no fellowship with God. (God rejects that one, or refuses to fellowship that one.) For one to extend fellowship to one who does not walk in the light is to deny the validity of the light itself. To extend fellowship to one who denies the necessity of baptism to salvation, is to himself deny the necessity of baptism to salvation. To extend fellowship to one who denies the exclusive nature of the gospel and the church, is to also deny the exclusive nature of the gospel and the church. In short, we participate in the works and beliefs of the one to whom we extend fellowship. Fellowship is a participation with; the giving of aid, sympathy, and encouragement.

Those who affirm that we are obligated to extend fellowship to each person God received as a son, regardless of their present doctrine and practice, undermines the validity of the gospel itself which denies such a premise. To accept the false premise demands that one look for ways to deny the gospel which denies the false premise. It is because of this principle that we now harbor a large number of atheists among us; men who accept the premise of **Pluralism** as true and, therefore, must deny as true the specifics of the Bible which condemn as false such an irrational conclusion.

We are commanded in Ephesians 5:11: "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*" We are commanded in Romans 16:17: "*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*" We read in II Thess. 3:6: "*Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition*

which he received of us." There are other commands, but these illustrate the necessity of putting to the test that we might discern truth from error; darkness from light; good from evil; righteousness from wrong. If that be true, and it is, then the pluralistic concept of everybody is ok as espoused by many among us must be false to the core. Their gospel is another kind of gospel than the gospel of Christ. Their salvation is a humanistic salvation, not the salvation of God. Their doctrine is the doctrine of Satan, not the doctrine of Christ. Let us mark and avoid them; and all those who continue to fellowship and support them.

Non-Conformity in fellowship is irrational, ungodly, and unworthy of serious consideration. God reveals the specifics of conformity, not man. It is God who draws the lines, not man. It is God with whom we all must agree, not man. It is Christ to whom we must conform, not man. It is the gospel that is to guide us, not man. Let no man make spoil of your faith with smooth words, fair and cunning speech, and manipulative efforts.

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Biblical Principles...

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ments of music in worship of God?

THE NEW TESTAMENT IS OUR SOLE AUTHORITY IN RELIGIOUS MATTERS

At this point, many individuals will point us to the Old Testament, and especially to the Psalms, in answer to our question. This, however, leads us to our second Biblical principle to be discussed. The principle states that the New Testament is our sole authority in religious matters today. The Old Testament is no longer binding upon mankind.

This lesson was made manifest during the transfiguration of Jesus Christ. As Jesus was transfigured, *"behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only"* (Matt. 17:2-8). The words of Jesus are the words to be heard today. They are our sole authority in religious matters. Moses and the prophets are no longer our rule of faith and practice.

Other passages of scripture could also be brought forth on this point. Romans 7:4,6 are two of the most simple verses to understand. *"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God...But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead*

wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." We are dead to the law. The law itself is dead. We are delivered from the law. We are now married to another, Jesus Christ. One could not have written in more simple terms. One would have to desire to reject truth to misunderstand Paul's words in these verses.

Having now grasped this second principle, another question is in order: "Where is the authority in the New Testament for the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship?" This is the heart of the issue. There is not one passage which authorizes its use. Therefore, one cannot use instrumental music in worship and carry out the Lord's instruction to do only what is commanded.

THE LAW OF EXCLUSION

Some might be thinking at this time that nowhere does the New Testament specifically forbid the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship. In other words, there is not one statement in the New Testament which says, "Thou shalt not use mechanical instruments of music in worship." To this, we agree wholeheartedly. But, let us introduce a third Biblical principle into our discussion. This principle has often been referred to as the "Law of Exclusion." This principle states that whatever is not authorized by God to be done is to be excluded.

Many examples of this principle could be set forth from Holy Writ. We will only briefly mention a few to illustrate our point. In Genesis 6:14, God commanded Noah, saying, *"Make thee an ark of gopher wood."* When God specifically commanded the use of gopher wood, every other kind of wood was excluded in the building of the ark. If Noah would have used oak, or pine, or cedar, he would have violated God's will. God did not specifically forbid these woods, but He did specifically command gopher wood.

Another example of the "law of

exclusion" is found in Leviticus 10:1-2. *"And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censor, and put fire therein, and incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."* The fire which Nadab and Abihu offered had not been commanded. From reading the Old Law, the first fire they used was not specifically forbidden. However, when God told them which fire to use, every other fire was excluded.

The Hebrew penman also understood the "law of exclusion." In Hebrews 7:14, he wrote: *"For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."* When one reads the Old Covenant, he finds that not one word is spoken relative to Judah and priesthood. They are not specifically authorized to be priests. They are not specifically forbidden from being priests. Moses spake absolutely nothing concerning Judah and priesthood.

Notice now Hebrews 8:4. *"For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law."* If Moses did not specifically forbid those of the tribe of Judah from being priests, how could the Hebrew writer state that Jesus could not be a priest on earth? He knew this because he understood the "law of exclusion." The only tribe which had been authorized to be priests was Levi (Num. 18:1-7). When Levi was selected from among his brethren to fill this position, all the other tribes were excluded. Each tribe did not have to be specifically forbidden from being priests. The author of Hebrews understood this. Therefore, he plainly pointed out that Jesus, who was of the tribe of Judah, could not be a priest.

The Scriptures do not have to specifically forbid the use of mechanical instruments of music for their use to be forbidden. The New Testament authorizes singing

(Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; I Cor. 14:15). Thus, when God told us specifically what to do, everything else was excluded. To bring in mechanical instruments of music is to do something not commanded. They are an addition to God's word.

ADDITIONS TO GOD'S WORD

This thought naturally leads into the fourth Biblical principle of our discussion, additions to God's word. From beginning to end, the Bible condemns anyone who would add to what is written. In Deuteronomy 4:2, a prohibition is found. *"Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord our God which I command you."* In the middle of Holy Writ another warning is set forth. *"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar"* (Prov. 30:5-6). Again, in the closing chapter of the divine message, God warns about adding to His word. *"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophesy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book"* (Rev. 22:18).

The mechanical instrument of music is an addition to God's word. No where is its use authorized in the New Testament. Those who use mechanical instruments of music are under a curse of God. God does not take tampering with His word lightly.

OBEDIENCE

The fifth Biblical principle which is involved in our study is obedience. Obedience is defined as "doing what God says to do." This is what God expects out of His creatures. If man obeys God, God has promised great rewards. The obedient truly know God (I John 2:3-5). The obedient have Jesus Christ as their Saviour (Heb. 5:8-9). The obedient have a place awaiting them in heaven (Matt. 7:21; Rev. 22:14).

The issue of mechanical instruments of music in worship involves obedience. When one obeys God, he does what God says to do. God has said "to sing." The obedient will sing. They will not play an instrument. They will not sing and play. They will not hum. They will not whistle. They will not clap. They will obey God by singing only.

DISOBEDIENCE

Many individuals, however, will continue to use the instrument of music. Some who will read this article will attend services this week where the instrument is used. This brings us to our last biblical principle, disobedience. In the eyes of God, it is a heinous crime to stubbornly rebel against His will. In Genesis 4, two men came to worship God. One brought his offering from the flock. The other brought his offering from the fruit of the ground. One offering God accepted. One He refused. Abel had offered his offering by faith which comes from hearing God's word (Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17). *"And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering"* (Gen. 4:4). Cain disobeyed, *"and to his offering he had not respect"* (Gen. 4:5). God had set a certain standard for worship. Cain did not abide by that standard, and his offering was unacceptable to God. God will not tolerate disobedience.

These words will cause some individuals to get upset and angry. This is not surprising. Cain also *"was very wroth, and his countenance fell"* (Gen. 4:5). To these individuals, we let the Lord himself respond. *"Why art thou wroth? and why is thou countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted"* (Gen. 4:6-7)?

CONCLUSION

Six Biblical principles are at the heart of the exclusion of instrumental music from our worship services. None of these principles requires one to be extremely well-educated to understand it. This has been the contention of some liberal brethren on this mat-

ter. Because something takes some explanation for one to understand it, the issue is to be denounced as some second or third order truth which is of little importance. My friends, there is much which has to be explained in order to be understood. Just ask the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:30-31). This by no means indicates that the thing to be understood is not that important. If it is a matter of obedience or disobedience to God's standard for worship, it is a "first order truth."

Of all the principles we have discussed, there are only three which have not been grasped in their fullness by the denominational world. They have not come to grips with the necessity of authorization. They have not fully understood the fact that the Law of Moses is no longer a binding covenant. And, they have not fully come to terms with the Law of Exclusion in matters of a religious nature. With regard to this third principle, the denominations do understand it in some ways. They admit that had Noah built the ark out of anything but gopher wood the ark would have sunk. They realize that Jesus could not be a priest on earth because only the Levites were authorized to fill that position. Yet, they are unable for some reason to make the application of the principle to the use of instrumental music in worship. God said sing, that excluded every thing else. The Hebrew penman would have put it in these words, *"If Jesus were on earth, he would not use instrumental music, seeing that God commanded us to sing."*

We encourage everyone who reads this article to study these principles more. Do as the noble Bereans did. *"Search the scriptures daily whether these things are so"* (Acts 17:11). If they are, we plead with you to practice them. If they are not revealed in the truth, please inform us of wherein we have erred. We desire to lead no one astray.

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Is The Church Better Off Without Elders?

Earl Case

Elders COLUMN

We often hear the comment "The church is better off without elders." This may be true of some local congregations that don't have qualified elders. But it is a false statement if you are referring to the Lord's church. Paul saw the need to have elders and left Titus in Crete to ordain elders in every city and set in order the things that were wanting. Some today get in a hurry to appoint elders and fail to appoint qualified men to serve. Many accept the office out a necessity and not because they desire the office — "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim 3:1). Many are appointed failing to meet one or more of the qualifications. We see some serving that never give any thought to the example they set. When the hot weather arrives, they strip off in scanty clothes just like the world and never give the Lord's church a thought. We see men serving that have more than one living wife. What does this give to the world as an example? No wonder so many of our young people wonder what example they should accept. Why would a man desire the office of elder if he is going to continue to be an influence for the devil and refuse to repent? No wonder it is so hard to get sinners to repent. This is the reason some of our weak brethren say the church is better off without elders. The unqualified elders are bringing shame upon themselves and the congregation where they serve. They must repent or the congregation where they serve should withdraw from each one of them.

Since we learn from Timothy that things are not in order until bishops are appointed (Titus 1:5), we should have elders serving that will see that all things are in order. There are many elders I have met that are doing such a good work. They are men that love one another — "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in LOVE" (Eph 4:2). Elders should love God — "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). They love the church the way Christ does — "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). These are elders that will guard the flock (Acts 20:28).

Elders must be assured the truth will be taught by sound preachers and teachers. The elders at East Corinth have been criticized for sending questionnaires to preachers that are coming into our midst to preach. We do this because we love the church and obey the command not to have fellowship with false teachers (2 John 9-11).

We must continue to spread the Gospel throughout the world. God has blessed us with many tools to spread the word. We are overseeing brother Charles Pledge in preaching and teaching in the Rocky Mountain Region (in seven states). This work is moving ahead with TV, Radio, correspondence work, and the Rocky Mountain school of Biblical Studies. More sound brethren have joined the work and congregations are being strengthened. When brother Pledge first went to the area the church was very weak and many in the area were determined to turn the Lord's church into a denomination. If things don't change in the so-called Bible belt, we will have to devote more time to restoring the church in the tri-state area and Corinth, MS. We are continually faced with false teaching and teachers.

Good modes of communication are other tools to work with at East Corinth. Tools such as Radio and TV, the publications of **Seek The Old Paths** and **Light For Living**, assisting students in training to preach, preaching in foreign countries, gospel meetings for dealing with first principles and the **Seek The Old Paths** Lectureship for edification of all that will hear are great works. If we fail, it won't be because the Lord failed to bless us, but it will be because we fail to keep his commands. The church at

East Corinth is united in a great cause, the cause of Christ.

Elders are not bosses but overseers and examples to the flock. We must lead the flock in the right direction. When elders fail to lead in the right direction we will lose our reward — "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought but that we receive a full reward" (2 John 8). We must continue to mark all that are out of step with the truth (2 Thess. 3:6,7,14). We must obey the charge to stop the mouths of false teachers (Titus 1:11). This cannot be done by giving them audience (2 John 9,10,11). Some of the false teachers cry this violates the autonomy of each congregation of the Lord's church. If it does, then Paul taught error in Titus 1:11 and John was wrong in teaching us not to fellowship them (2 John 9,10,11).

There are elders that are afraid to make a decision because they are afraid they will offend the devil. Please, please, elders stand up for the truth and earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3). If you have a preacher that will not stand with you and repent of every false way, then withdraw from him (Rom. 16:17). You will not only save yourself but many others that may be saved by your decision. We are not preaching and teaching to be approved of men but we must please God.

Very little is heard from elders today. Do you wonder why? Could it be they are cowards? Could it be they do not know enough scripture to convince the gainsayer (Titus 1:9)? Could it be they are ashamed of the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16)? Could it be they don't know the duties and responsibilities of elders (Acts 20:28)? Could it be they are afraid of Diotrephes and won't face him with the truth (3 John 9)?

Speak up in defense of the Gospel and contend for the orderly manner the Lord expects the church to be overseen. It is truly a blessing to meet and know elders that are serving the Lord in such a truthful and qualified way.

Elder,
East Corinth Church of Christ

11th Annual SEEK THE OLD PATHS LECTURESHIP

July 28-Aug. 1, 1996 (Always the 4th Sunday in July)

Theme:

The Seven Churches of Asia - Revelation chapters 2 & 3

SUNDAY, JULY 28

- 9:45 The Historical Background of the Seven Churches*Windell Fikes*
- 10:35 Where Satan's Seat Is - Descriptions of Satan (2:9,13; 3:9) ...*Jim Blankenship*
- 7:00 I have Not Found Thy Works Perfect Before God (3:2)*Garland Robinson*
- 8:00 The Church Today Is Seen In The 7 Churches of Asia*Ed Casteel*

MONDAY, JULY 29

- 9:00 He That Hath Ears To Hear, Let Him Hear (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22)*Nat Evans*
- 10:00 The Doctrine of Balaam (2:14)*Wayne Smith*
- 11:00 He...Who Walketh in the Midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks (2:1).....*Ken Burleson*
- 1:30 Them Which are Evil...Thou Hast Tried Them (2:2).....*Ronnie Whittemore*
- 2:30 I Know Thy Works - Jesus Knows (2:2,9,13,19; 3:1,8,15)*Wayne Cox*
- 3:30 That Woman Jezebel And Her Influence (2:20)*Alan Adams*
- 7:00 Fear None of those Things Thou Shalt Suffer (2:10).....*Gilbert Gough*
- 8:00 When Jesus says... "Thou Art" (2:5,9; 3:1,15,16,17)*James Boyd*

TUESDAY, JULY 30

- 9:00 The Spirit Sayeth: Inspiration (2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22)*Richard Carlson*
- 10:00 To Be Like God We Must Love & Hate (3:9,19; 2:6,15).....*Virgil Hale*
- 11:00 Digestion Update '96*Wayne Coats*
- 1:30 I Will Fight Against Them With The Sword of My Mouth (2:16)*Terry Joe Kee*
- 2:30 Strengthen The Things Which Remain (3:2)*Jerry Joseph*
- 3:30 As Many As I Love I Rebuke & Chasten (3:19).....*Toney Smith*

- 7:00 Thou Hast Left Thy First Love (2:4)*Eddy Craft*
- 8:00 Remember From Where Thou Art Fallen (2:5; 3:3)*Wayne Coats*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

- 9:00 Thou Hast A Name that Thou Livest And Art Dead (3:1).....*Jimmy Bates*
- 10:00 I Have Set Before Thee An Open Door (3:8)*Dean Fugett*
- 11:00 I Will Give Unto Everyone Of You According To Your Works (2:23)*David Morton*
- 1:30 Repent or Else (2:5,16)*Terry Cole*
- 2:30 Difficult Expressions: The Angel of the Church (2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14), Tribulation 10 Days (2:10), Deeds & Doctrine of the Nicolaitanes (2:6,15), Come Quickly (2:5,16; 3:11), New Name (2:7; 3:12), Great Tribulation (2:22).....*Richard Guill*
- 3:30 Thou Shalt Not Know What Hour I Will Come Upon Thee (3:3)*Phil Jenkins*
- 7:00 I Counsel Thee (3:18) (When Jesus Counsels We Better Listen)*Sidney White*
- 8:00 I Stand At The Door & Knock (3:20).....*Charles Blair*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

- 9:00 Be Watchful (3:2).....*Everett Spencer*
- 10:00 Thou Hast Kept The Word Of My Patience (3:10)*Don Tate*
- 11:00 Thou Art Lukewarm (3:16).....*O. B. Porterfield*
- 1:30 Be Zealous Therefore (3:19).....*Calvin Pugh*
- 2:30 The Hour of Temptation (3:10).....*David Lemmons*
- 3:30 A Few...Which Have Not Defiled Their Garments (3:4)*Daniel Wolfram*
- 7:00 Faithful Unto Death - Hold Fast (2:10,25; 3:3,11)*Ken Burleson*
- 8:00 He That Overcometh - Rewards of the Righteous (2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21)*Charles Leonard*

Lectureship Speakers:

Windell Fikes, Jim Blankenship, Garland Robinson, Ed Casteel, Nat Evans, Wayne Smith, Ken Burleson, Ronnie Whittemore, Wayne Cox, Alan Adams, Gilbert Gough, James Boyd, Richard Carlson, Virgil Hale, Wayne Coats, Terry Joe Kee, Jerry Joseph, Toney Smith, Eddy Craft, Jimmy Bates, Dean Fugett, David Morton, Terry Cole, Richard Guill, Phil Jenkins, Sidney White, Charles Blair, Everett Spencer, Don Tate, O. B. Porterfield, Calvin Pugh, David Lemmons, Daniel Wolfram, Charles Leonard

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FEAR OF THE PRINTED PAGE

Bill Jackson, deceased

It is indeed one of the marks of our day — a day of departure from truth — when men will state that they are afraid of expressing themselves, afraid of “being written up in brotherhood papers.” Speaking personally, over the years I have been cited on a number of occasions; Southwest’s bulletin goes into many homes and onto many desks, and articles I have written are frequently copied and they further make an appearance. And, you know, I **HAVE NEVER OBJECTED!** I don’t believe any of us would object should someone state, “Southwest stands for Truth!” Or, if someone states, “The Southwest church holds the line, and points out error!” Or, if someone writes about our elders, stating that “the Southwest elders want the Truth, insist on the Truth, and support the Truth!” Yea, **WHY** should we object if we are thus “written up?”

Ah, but here’s the rub! Those so concerned about being “written up” are those who have willingly taken the work of instructing others in righteousness, but whose teaching cannot stand the light of New Testament investigation! When one makes some oral blunders, in his sympathy for false teaching, he can always plead, “You misunderstood me” or “I didn’t mean exactly what I said,” or some other such statement wherein the querist is made to wonder if the fault is the hearer’s. But when the statement is there in cold and clear print, and when one’s deviation is laid out for the examination of all, it is surely a thing to make the teacher squirm. Naturally he’s opposed to being “written up.” Satan, we certainly know, didn’t appreciate being “written up” in the Bible!

This is surely in the vain of “*men loving darkness because their deeds are evil*” (John 3:19). If it were possible, we’d like every teacher/preacher’s expression to be shouted from the rooftops. For every expression, however minute, we would that there was a repeating of it so strong as to reach the ears of every single person on earth, and stating, “Here is what this man stands for!” And, by the way, who would object to such? Does the teacher of Truth object to his words being heard, repeated, copied, advertised? Is this man, a servant of God, presenting some “secret” message? Is the Gospel he proclaims not that which God says is to be proclaimed to the whole world, to every creature (Mark 16:15-16)? Then, what is this “fear” in our time?

If someone has legitimate concern in this area, then let him insure that he **SPEAKS THE TRUTH!** He has no reason to fear, if he presents the “*thus saith the Lord,*” but he indeed has reason to be up-

set if he’s getting his theology from the works of men! If he is drinking from sectarian fountains, then he wishes to be bold in moving **AGAINST THE NEW TESTAMENT’S** teaching, but wants to be protected in that no one can speak about his position. Nice work, if you can get it! The trouble is, and I hope will continue to be, **YOU CAN’T GET IT** from God’s people!

No, brethren, the teacher of Truth has no fear of the printed page, nor of tape recorders, nor of reporters, nor of general discussion of any lesson he presents! And, should there ever be a legitimate misunderstanding or other such problem, he can set things right in three minutes time! Quite old now, but still valuable, is N. B. Hardeman’s statement: “I can write my position on any Bible matter in the space on a post card, and still have room enough to ask about the folks.”

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