

# 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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## A REPROBATE MIND

Roderick L. Ross

***Every Christian needs to examine themselves to make sure they are standing in the faith. They need to take a good hard look at themselves. Because, unless Christ is in them, they are a reprobate — they are counterfeit.***

**W**hat is "a reprobate mind?" In Romans 1:28, when Paul is speaking about the sin of the Gentiles, he says: "God gave them over to a **reprobate mind**."

The Short Answer: It is the same as a bank which only accepts counterfeit money, and will not accept legal tender. A mind which does not accept that which is genuine, and is only satisfied with the counterfeit. It only uses counterfeit moral values, and rejects the true values of God's will. In short, a mind that calls evil, good.

The Long Answer: The word reprobate is from the compound Greek word *adokimos*, signifying "not standing the test, rejected" (*a*, negative, *dokimos*, "approved"). Thus, it is the opposite of the Greek word *dokimos*, "approved."

In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today; and, no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into moulds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money

changers were men of integrity who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honour who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called *dokimos* or "approved". Donald Barnhouse <sup>[1]</sup>

The "approved" were those who would only accept and circulate honest weights of money. Thus, the "reprobates" were those who were counterfeiters. They would accept, circulate and even manufacture dishonest weights of money. Since money was made of lead and silver or gold, it could easily be shaven to reduce its size and weight, much as the common practice of watering down drinks to make them go further.

Spiritually, there are those who deal in counterfeit revelation, counterfeit philosophy, counterfeit morals. Rather than dealing honestly with the revealed will of God (i.e., the Holy Bible), they will manufacture any other standard imaginable — even twisting the word of God to their own destruction. These are the people who accuse Paul of misogamy (a hatred of marriage) and accommodating to the standards of society rather than standing upon the principles of truth to transform society. They say his positions on marriage, homosexuality, fornication, the rela-

tions of men and women, are all a reflection of the times rather than a matter of revelation from God. However, they fail to take into consideration the society of Rome in the first century. Homosexuality, fornication and adultery were accepted norms in Roman society. Paul's words buck the society in which he wrote, not accommodate it.

Or, these are the people who say Paul didn't really say what he said about moral issues. The argument sort of goes like this: When the Bible says the cat is black, it really isn't black: it's really gray. But, the cat isn't just gray, it is a light gray. But, it really isn't light gray, it is off-white. But, it isn't off-white, it's really white. So when the Bible says the cat is black, it really means the cat is white. Thus, when Paul talks about homosexuality, he isn't really condemning it. Instead, he is allowing 'outs' for marriage other than fornication. He doesn't really expect anyone to remain virtuous before getting married. He just doesn't really mean what he says.

A young man studying for the ministry at a local denominational school voiced this when he told me, "You can't really expect teenagers to

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**A Reprobate Mind...**



Editorial...

## DENOMINATIONS ARE SINFUL #3

Garland M. Robinson

### DENOMINATIONALISM IS SINFUL BECAUSE OF ITS PARTY NAMES

Practically all denominational churches are named after a man, a form of government, a doctrine, a practice or a philosophy. All the terms in the Bible referring to the Lord's church give honor and glory to God and Christ. The name we wear religiously is important because salvation is in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12). People of the first century honored Christ by wearing the name Christian (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16). There were no hyphenated Christians in the first century. They were simply called "Christians."

As a man's wife honors him by wearing his name, we honor Christ when we wear his name. Paul used the analogy of a husband and wife to show the relationship of Christ and his church (Eph. 5:22-33). Christians are married to Christ and should honor him by wearing his name (Rom. 7:4). The things that keep people from wearing a Bible name are prejudice and loyalty to a denominational church. The wearing of party names caused division in the church at Corinth and continues to cause religious division today (I Cor. 1:10-15).

A look at the yellow pages in any phone book shows numerous names of every sort and imagination. Names that are pleasing to men are found from "A" to "Z." We find the commonly known denominations such as: Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Church of God; and there are others not as well known such as Nazarene, Episcopal, Community and Evangelical. There's "Abundant Life" this and that, "Apostolic" here and there, "Calvary" whatever, "Christian Life" ???, "Believers" ???, "Fellowship" ???, "Emmanuel" ???, "Faith" ???, "Friendship" ???, "Full Gospel" ???, "Good Shepherd" ???, "Grace" ???, "Harvest"

???, "Light-house" ???, "Living Hope" ???, "New Beginning" ???, "New Covenant" ???, "Revival Fire" ???, "Trinity" ???, there's even a "Church on the Hill."

Some denominations are listed as being Inter-denominational while others are listed as Non-Denominational.

Why not be scriptural and wear only a name or designation found in the New Testament? When we do so, we know we are acting upon the authority of God. We can point to a book, chapter and verse and the whole world can read it for themselves. This shows we are not acting upon our own authority or the authority of a man or organization. We have a "thus saith the Lord" for what we're doing just as Colossians 3:17 demands. All that we "say" and "do" is to be in the name of the Lord; that is, by his authority.

Since the Lord's church was established in Acts chapter two, we should start there and see by what name(s) the church was called or how the church was referred to throughout the New Testament.

Listed below is every appearance of the word *church* when it's used in regards to the Lord's body, the saved. Everyone can see for themselves how God speaks of the church, the Lord's blood-bought body.

**Church** — The church of the first century was not any "kind" of church. It was simply the *church* and this is the word that is used most frequently. It is used to refer to the church in general or at a specific location such as the church at Jerusalem, Antioch, etc. No other description is given than simply the word *church*. This use of the word *church* is found in: Acts 2:47; 5:11; 8:1,3; 9:31; 11:22,26; 12:1,5; 13:1; 14:23,27; 15:3,4,22,41; 16:5; 18:22; 20:17; Rom. 16:1,4,5; 16:23; I Cor. 4:17; 6:4; 7:17; 11:18; 12:28; 14:4,5,12,19,23,28,33,34,35; 16:1,19; II Cor. 8:1,18,19,23,24; 11:8,28; 12:13;

Gal. 1:2,22; Eph. 1:22; 3:10,21; 5:23,24,25,27,29,32; Phil. 3:6; 4:15; Col. 1:18,24; 4:15,16; I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1; I Tim. 5:16; Philemon 1:2; Heb. 2:12; James 5:14; I Peter 5:13; III John 1:6,9,10; Rev. 1:4,11,20; 2:1,7,8,11,12,17,18,23,29; 3:1,6,7,13,14,22,16; 22:16.

**Church of God** — The next most frequent designation is "church of God." These passages are found in: Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:16,22; 15:9; II Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:13; I Thess. 2:14, II Thess. 1:4 and I Tim. 3:5. It is spoken of as the **Church of the living God** in 1 Timothy 3:15.

**Church of the firstborn** — Heb. 12:23. Those who are "born anew" or "born again" through the waters of baptism and the teaching of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-5), become members of the church of the firstborn.

**Church of Christ** — Local congregations, wherever they exist, are spoken of collectively as *churches of Christ* in Romans 16:16.

I have heard some claim that the name or designation "church of Christ" is not found in the New Testament and sometimes a reward is offered to anyone who can find it. The name "church of Christ" is not found in the singular, but it is found in the plural in Romans 16:16. Someone please tell us how it is possible to have "churches of Christ" (plural) without having individual churches of Christ (singular)? If I have a bag full of marbles and I reach in and take one out, what do I have in my hand? I don't have an apple in my hand. What do I have? I have a marble! A single marble. It's impossible to have marbles (plural) unless we first have individual marbles (singular). Each one is a single marble. Likewise, it's impossible to have churches of Christ (plural) unless you first have individual churches of Christ (singular). Each one is a single church. It is the "church of Christ." It's not the church of some man. It is the Lord's church, the church of Christ.

We read of the "church" at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, etc. Whose church is it? Is it the church of Satan? No. Is it the church of Caesar? No. Whose is it? It is the church of Christ. It is His church. He bought and paid for it with His own blood. It belongs to Him.

To speak of the Lord's church is the same as speaking of the "church of Christ" or the "church of God" or the "church of the firstborn." To say one, is the say the other. There is no difference or distinction between them. However, one may find a church today wearing one of these names, but that does not mean it meets with the Lord's approval. The name is essential, but there's more involved in pleasing the Lord than simply wearing His name. A church must comply with ALL the Lord requires. A church must obey the Lord's Will (Matt. 7:21-23).

### DENOMINATIONALISM IS SINFUL BECAUSE OF ITS LACK OF BIBLE AUTHORITY

Colossians 3:17 demands that we have authority (sanction) from the Bible for everything we SAY and DO. Bible authority is important because the religious world cannot unite until we can all come to accept the same authority (the same standard). Does it not seem strange that we can agree on weights and measures, but cannot agree religiously?

Denominational churches claim to believe the Bible, yet they have creeds, catechisms, manuals and disciplines to govern what they believe, teach and practice. Members of denominational churches, in many cases, are not aware they have to subscribe to a certain creed. Some years ago I was talking with a lady that denied that the denomination she was a member of had a creed book. After calling her "pastor," she was told they had a creed book but did not use it. What would be the purpose of having a creed book if they didn't use it?

Members of denominational churches are often more offended if you criticize their creed than they would be if you criticized their Bible. Does this not show where their allegiance is? God is the ultimate source of authority in religion and has given all authority to Christ (Matt. 28:18). God speaks to us today through His Son, Jesus the Christ (Heb. 1:1-2; John 12:48-50). If we fail to hear and respond to Jesus, we will be destroyed (Matt. 17:1-5; Acts 3:22-23).

The Bible teaches that we are going to be judged by the words of

Christ (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12). The attitude we manifest toward the word is the attitude we manifest toward Christ because they are inseparably joined. We show our respect for the authority of Christ only when we respect and obey His

word.

It doesn't make sense to be a member of something religiously that does not demand scriptural authority for everything we do religiously.

Part 3 of 4

## THE CREDIT CRISIS

Don Blackwell

"You'll have a hard time topping him!" This was the comment made by a well-intentioned Christian lady to the next speaker on the lectureship. He responded to this sister, "I don't want to top him. We're on the same side." Though I'm sure this sweet Christian lady meant nothing negative, it reminds me of the old saying, "There is no competition among lighthouses." Of that sentiment we would do well to remind ourselves on a regular basis.

There seems to be an infatuation with some members of the church that they "get credit" for their work. Some preachers have even warned, "If you use my material, be sure to give me credit." In the secular world this is surely understandable, but in the Lord's church the obsession with getting credit seems a bit out of place. My goal as a Gospel preacher is not about "getting credit." My "credit" is not on this earth. My goal is to save souls, and if I produce something that will help others more effectively accomplish this goal, then please use it.

The Pharisees were very concerned with getting credit and with being seen of men. When they gave alms, they wanted credit among men. When they prayed, they wanted credit among men. But the Lord said, "Verily I say unto you, They have their reward" (Matt. 5:2). May our righteousness exceed that of the Pharisees!

One is also reminded of Herod in Acts 12 who evidently had given a very eloquent verbal presentation. Though the praise of the people was certainly excessive, Herod enjoyed it nonetheless. The text however says that "an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God." Without a doubt this is where all credit should be directed. Though we may have been blessed with great ability, it must be remembered that it was given to us by God.

In the business world, employees who work for the same company all labor together to produce a product that will benefit the business. And ultimately, the credit goes to the company, not the individual. In fact, under the U.S. copyright law's work-made-for-hire doctrine, the owner of an intellectual creation is not the employee who originated the idea, but rather the company for whom he works.

In the Lord's church, we all work for the same "company" if you will. Though the Lord's church is not a company, it's a team of people all working together to accomplish the same goal — save souls and to give God the glory. Let's let the credit remain with the owner of the church.

This "credit seeking" attitude is particularly unattractive when seen amongst faithful brotherhood works. Due to the difficulty in raising money, sometimes evangelistic works of the church put a premium on getting credit. While it's certainly not wrong to point to the effectiveness of a particular effort, we need to be careful not to let pride enter the picture, nor to begrudge another good work in any way. There is no competition among lighthouses. We're all on the same side.

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## A Reprobate Mind...

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remain virgins! That's unrealistic."

The correct standard for thinking, the right standard for morals, the righteous standard of God's Word is set aside as either out of date, impractical or just plain wrong. Thus, the definition of the Greek word for *reprobate* is: *adokimos*, signifying "not standing the test, rejected."<sup>[2]</sup>

Let us look at its use in the New Testament.

**Hebrews 6:7,8**, "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet (useful) for them by whom it is dressed (cultivated), receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] **rejected**, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned."

The word *rejected* is the word for *reprobate*. When the ground does not bear good crops it is rejected. It is not producing what it ought to. It is producing a counterfeit crop. The crop is useless. You can't eat thorns and briers.

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they [do it] to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring [it] into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a **castaway**." The word "castaway" is the word *adokimos*.

Athletes condition themselves to run a race. They discipline themselves to exercise, practice and watch their diet. They watch what they do to obtain a corruptible (perishable) crown, a temporary prize. We discipline ourselves to win an eternal prize. Thus, we do not run the race of our faith facetiously, but soberly. We do not fight the good fight of faith striking out at nothing, but realizing that there is an enemy who would do us harm. Realizing the solemnity of the situation, we practice the same type of discipline as an Olympic ath-

lete in our spiritual lives, lest we fail to finish the race and lose the fight, and are rejected by God, because rather than being a real Christian, we are but a counterfeit.

**2 Corinthians 13:5-10**, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be **reprobates**? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not **reprobates**. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as **reprobates**. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong; and this also we wish, [even] your perfection. Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction."

Every Christian needs to examine themselves to make sure they are standing in the faith. They need to take a good hard look at themselves. Because, unless Christ is in them, they are a *reprobate* — they are counterfeit.

One of the problems facing the world today is counterfeit Christians. There are many who claim to be a Christian who are not. This is just another way of saying they are hypocrites. One must believe who Jesus is to be a Christian; but, one must also follow what He teaches. As Jesus himself said, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6:46)? "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, [then] are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). Christians will believe and obey the great commission (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16).

Through Paul, the Lord said **2 Timothy 3:1-9**, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more

than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, **reprobate** concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all [men], as theirs also was."

Everyone knows that a departure from the faith would occur within the Present (Christian) Dispensation. From the first century to the twenty-first century there have been those who have turned their backs on the truth of the Gospel and returned to the weak and evil ways of the world; basically, returning to the ways they wish to follow rather than following the ways of God. We are to beware of such people and stay away from them. Do not follow them!

These false teachers who lead men into evil and wicked ways, lead gullible men and women who are more concerned with themselves than with the truth. They feign a love for the truth, but they are never able to grasp it. They rebel against the authority of God as Jannes and Jambres rebelled against the authority of Moses. They, because of their acceptance of a counterfeit standard, accept counterfeit morals and a counterfeit faith. But, their sins will be revealed and they will suffer the punishment of God.

If we wish to escape the same punishment, we must make sure we do not follow their example. Paul writes to Titus (**Titus 1:5-16**) and says, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober; just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to

exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, [even] a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians [are] always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things [are] pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving [is] nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny [him], being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work **reprobate**."

**Romans 1:18-32** says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed [it] unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eter-

nal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified [him] not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in [their] knowledge, God gave them over to a **reprobate** mind, to do those things which are not conven-

ient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

#### ENDNOTES:

[1] James: *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order*. Electronic ed., Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship. 1996, S. G1384

[2] Bridges, Ronald F.; Weigle, Luther A.: *King James Bible Word Book*. Electronic ed., Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994, S. 289

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## DO WE LOVE THE LORD MORE?

Wendell Winkler, deceased

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” (John 21:15).

*Do We Love the Lord More Than Our Kinsmen?* If we do, we will not let them keep us from obeying the Gospel. We will be willing to leave the religion they have accepted if it is proven wrong. We will not let them keep us from attending the services of the Lord's church. Remember, Jesus said, “He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (Matt. 10:37).

*Do We Love the Lord More Than Money?* If we do, we will not make the heaping of riches the chief object of our living. We will give liberally of our means to the Lord (II Cor. 8:1-5). Remember, the Lord said, “For the

love of money is the root of all evil” (I Tim. 6:10).

*Do We Love the Lord More Than Pleasure?* If we do, we will not engage in that which is forbidden, that which will hurt our influence for Christ. Remember, the Lord, in speaking of perilous times, said men shall be “lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God” (II Tim. 3:1-4).

*Do We Love the Lord More Than Praise of Men?* If we do, we will be willing to stand for the Lord and the right, though we must stand alone (II Tim. 4:16,17). The chief rulers “did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42,43).

The Lord should be the supreme object of our affection (Matt. 22:37). May we learn to sing, and mean it, “More love to thee, O Christ, more love to Thee!”

# WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN?

Roger D. Campbell

**Y**ou remember the words that Jesus spoke about this, right? Sure you do. Here is what He said: *“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul”* (Mark 8:36,37)?

The word “soul” is sometimes translated as “life.” In this setting, the Master was definitely talking about losing true spiritual life, which would be the loss of the soul. A soul is not lost in the sense that it can be misplaced or cannot be found, nor does a soul being lost mean that it goes out of existence. To “lose” one’s soul means the loss of spiritual well-being — separated from God by sin in this life, and ultimately separated from Him eternally in the life to come (II Thess. 1:8,9).

A quick look at the context in which Jesus was teaching about gaining the world and losing one’s soul shows that Jesus’ message challenged people to make choices. In Mark 8:34 we read that our Lord calls on all people to follow Him. Will we? He calls on each person to deny himself and take up His cross (8:34). Will we? He appeals to us to lose our life for His sake and the gospel’s in order to save it (8:35). That simply means that He wants us to give up our devotion to ourselves and our own desires and count Him and His will as being most important. Will we do that? He further makes it clear that He does not want us to be ashamed of Him and His words (8:38). Will we?

All of the teaching in this context at the very end of Mark 8 shows us that we have to make decisions — important decisions, tough decisions, eternal-destiny-determining decisions. They are, indeed, “big stuff.” And, right there smack dab in the middle of these instructions is the Christ’s question about what does it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul. Well, what is the answer? In the big picture of things, what would it profit him? Jesus’ inquiry causes us to think soberly about what really mat-

ters most in life. In our heart of hearts, just what is it that ranks right up there in the top position on our list of “most important stuff?”

I am reminded of another occasion when Jesus told some covetous Pharisees, *“...but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God”* (Luke 16:14,15).

The ads thrown at us on the radio and TV make winning a lottery sound like a piece of cake that brings ultimate bliss. But if gambling will cost a person his soul, what does it profit to win a bunch of money? Being a lottery winner brings fame and fortune. But, like the Master said so clearly, “that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”

If a woman could become the richest woman in history, but in the process rebel against Jehovah and lose her soul, what profit would there be for her to have heaps of gold and the notoriety of being Miss Money Bags?

If a Christian couple can amass mountains of money, but when it comes to contributing to the Lord’s work, they give like paupers, what shall it profit them to have gigantic sums of wealth if they only give God their leftover crumbs and ultimately lose their souls?

If two Christian men who are brothers in the flesh run a business that has been in their family for four generations, and they take that business to a financial level that brings them both millions of dollars in annual profits, but they make a bunch of their profit by dishonesty and other immoral practices, not to mention the fact that they only attend 25% of the services of the church (because a fellow has to make a little living, you know) — what, what, what does all of their money profit them, if in the end they lose their souls?!

If over the weekend a married man sleeps with the head-turning harlot that works with him down at the office, and as a result he gets nods of approval and slaps on the

back from his male co-workers on Monday morning, what shall it profit him if it causes him to lose his soul.

If a teenage girl wears skimpy clothing that reveals her cleavage and thighs for all the young men to gawk at and is known as “the hottest” girl in school, what shall it profit her if she loses her soul in the process?

If a young man downs some beers, smokes a joint of marijuana, and uses profanity to prove to his buddies that he is a mature man (???), but he loses his soul because of his ungodliness and lack of self-control, what has his so-called show of manliness gained him?

Brothers and sisters, if we want to be popular in the eyes of other humans, the devil has an unlimited number of ways to help us pursue popularity. If you and I count making money and acquiring material goods as our biggest goal in life, do not worry. Satan’s got us covered on that one, too. He has every kind of ploy that one could imagine to assist us in getting our hands on material things. We may never make Forbes’ list of the most wealthy people in the world, but covetous people have a way of getting their hands on stuff. For a heart filled with covetousness, though, there is never a feeling of being satisfied with what one has. There is always the longing for more, more, more. I recall that someone asked, “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Are we listening?

My soul is my most valuable possession. But here is the question that each of us must face: Do I really count my soul and its eternal safety as being most important? I know that God does, but do I? God knows if I do or not, and when you see my choices in life, you will know, too.

“What shall it profit...?”

120 Will Lewis Dr. SE  
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# WHICH CHURCH DID JESUS LOVE?

Marlin Kilpatrick

In the scriptures we learn of the great love Jesus had for his church. His love was so great that he died for it (Eph. 5:25). He still has that same love for her today. But for which church has Jesus shown his love? Has he shown his love for others than his own? To find the answer to this question, several points need to be considered.

## IDENTITY

The church Jesus loved is the one he promised to build. Jesus said, "...upon this rock I will build my church..." (Matt. 16:18). The church belongs to Christ and he is the head over it (Eph. 1:22,23). The church was (and is) purchased by the blood of Christ. The apostle Paul reminded the Ephesian elders of the price paid to purchase the church when he said, "Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God (or Lord, MK) which he hath **purchased with his own blood**" (Acts 20:28). It is to this church that the "...Lord added daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47). When we identify the church Jesus loved, we will realize that it is not a denomination. No man-made denomination can truthfully claim the marks of identification.

## PLACE AND TIME OF ORIGIN

The church Jesus loved began precisely WHEN and WHERE he intended. The prophet Isaiah foretold the time and the place the Lord's house (kingdom, church) would begin (Isa. 2:1-4). The apostle Paul identified the Lord's house as being "...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15). Isaiah said the Lord's house (the Lord's church) would be established "...in the last days..." and the word of the Lord would go forth "...from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:2,3). The fulfillment of the prophecy is set out in Acts 2:1-47. No church which began before or after Pentecost (Acts 2) or in any place

other than Jerusalem, can possibly be the church Jesus loved.

Friend, the church to which you belong, when and where did it begin?

## TERMS OF ENTRANCE

When men and women desired to be saved and after having been convinced that Jesus, whom they crucified, is the Christ the Son of God, they were told, "...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). On Pentecost (Acts 2), there was no vote on prospective church membership. Neither was there a delay until a future date for them to be baptized. The scripture says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there was added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). Any church that teaches salvation before baptism and a vote on prospective members, cannot be the church Jesus loved.

## NAMES

The church Jesus loved is his bride (Rom. 7:1-4). His bride wore the divinely given name. Members of the church were called Christians (Acts 11:26). This name came from God, not from the heathen (cf. Isa. 62:2). Congregations of the Lord's church were called "...churches of Christ..." (Rom. 16:16). In that day no one ever heard someone say, "Well, I am a \_\_\_ Christian." Today, it takes obedience to the same Gospel to make one a Christian. Obedience to any other requirements can only make one a member of a denomination.

## MESSAGE

The church Jesus loved has but one message, the Gospel of Christ. The primary purpose for its existence is to reach the lost with God's saving message. The apostle Paul declared that the Gospel is God's power unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). God has always required that his word be pro-

claimed without addition, subtraction or modification (Deut. 4:2, Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18,19).

## CONCLUSION

Dear reader, you have just read about the church Jesus loved, the one for which he died. The church of Christ is the only church on earth that can truthfully claim it is heaven-sent, Spirit filled, and blood bought. It alone is commissioned to preach the Gospel, the good news of salvation (Mark 16:15,16). Jesus loved his church and his alone. He has not shared his affections with any other church.

Are you a member of this divine institution, the church Jesus loved? If not, why not obey the Gospel today and be added by the Lord to the church he loves? You'll never regret obeying the truth, for it alone can purify our souls and make us free from our sins (I Peter 1:22,23; John 8:32). Think about it.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

Robert Horton.....	\$10
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requested the paper and do not read it" ...**Richard Logan, Lynchburg, TN.** "I would like for you to add some names to your monthly publication. I really enjoy reading this publication. May God bless you with your printing work. Thank you so much" ...**Bobbi Wheeler, Baxter, TN.** "For some time now I have been getting STOP which I enjoy very much. However, I am mailed two copies, one of which is wrong. Please delete it. It has caused the neighbor who gets it distress and someone else should receive it who wants the publication. Keep up the good work that you do" ...**Judith Horvath, Flint, MI.** "At this time, I am receiving more literature than I can read. Therefore, I ask that you remove my name from your mailing list. I appreciate the issues I have received through the years" ...**Helen Hash, Lubbock, TX.** "Would you please start sending a monthly publication to a friend? It's so good to hear the Truth of God's word. I pray for all who see the truth of God's word and not man's" ...**Steve Rucquoy, Beggs, OK.** "I would like very much for you to put me on your mailing list. I was given a copy and loved what I read. Keep up the good work. I have included a check to help with your expenses" ...**Robert Parker, Jr., Locust Grove, OK.** "I would like very much to be added to your mailing list" ...**L. D. Anderson, Imboden, AR.** "Please add me to your mailing list. Thank you so much" ...**Mrs. Paul McCormick, Willow Springs, MO.** "You do a great work. I pray you will keep it up" ...**James R. Smith, Hornbeak, TN.** "Thank you" ...**Myrtle Troute, Washington Court House, OH.** "Thank you" ...**David Lanius, Lawrenceburg, KY.** "Please remove Tim E. Davis from your mailing list. He no longer lives here and I do not wish to receive your publication" ...**Vickie Davis, Paducah, KY.**

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## Update On Our New Printing Work

I continue to be so thankful for each one of you — for your prayers as well as your contributions. Your thoughtfulness and encouragement in this new emphasis of my work has been overwhelming. I'm humbled by your interest and support.

Raising financial support is always difficult, especially in a time of economic downturn. However, many analysts say they see signs of a turn around; and, by year's end things will be looking much better. I hope so. In the mean time, I'm continuing to make contacts and humbly asking for financial contributions for me personally. I believe I can do a lot of good and lasting work in writing and printing. With your prayers and help, the Gospel seed will continue to be spread. When it finds lodging in honest and good hearts, fruit is borne.

Are you able to help me in this work? You can contact me or the elders at: 102 Edison St., McMinnville, TN 37110. Make your check to the East End Church of Christ and put "Garland" or "printing work" in the memo field. Thank you so much.