

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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BATTLING BAPTIST BAPTISM

Gary McDade

Beneficial discussions about differences in religion today are often beset by the popular practice of political correctness. Political correctness ties into the prevailing position of pluralism in religion, where everyone is viewed as right even though opposite and conflicting points of principle are in place, which does not permit open discussion of differences.

Be that as it may, the value of the souls of lost men and women are crying out for help out of the morass of religious error.

In Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology* written in 1915, he tells of fictional characters residing in the silent halls of the local cemetery and imagines them to be speaking from their graves. One of them is J. Milton Miles. His true-to-life epitaph reads: "Whenever the Presbyterian bell was rung by itself, I knew it as the Presbyterian bell. But when its sound was mingled with the sound of the Methodist, the Christian, the Baptist and the Congregational, I could no longer distinguish it, nor any one from the others, or either of them. And, as many voices called to me in life marvel not that I could not tell the true from the false, nor even, at last, the voice that I should have known." Miles' dilemma, as imagined by Masters, exists in reality among the multiplied millions asleep in the silent city.

Many choose no longer to "earnestly contend for the faith

which was once delivered unto the saints," but among the faithful few this noble demand of Christianity is still taken as a sacred trust (Jude 3). Through reproof, rebuke, and exhortation, the minds of men are challenged to examine what they believe in light of the sacred standard of scripture (II Tim. 4:1-5).

"Battling Baptist Baptism" brings to light the basic error of the entire Baptist system of belief. In the "Baptist Faith and Message," as adopted June 14, 2000, by the 15 million member denomination, baptism is declared to be a "church ordinance" (Article VII), that is, baptism by the hands of one in the Baptist fellowship makes one a member of the Baptist Church. The "Baptist Faith and Message" says, "It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus" (emphasis mine, GM).

"Symbol" from the Greek *symbolon* is literally a "token of identity." The Baptists do not believe that in baptism the believer actually becomes dead to sin, the old life is buried, and the newness of life begins. They teach that baptism only symbolizes those things; those things are believed to have happened at the moment of belief. Evidence of this emerges in the Baptist confession made before baptism: "I believe that God for Christ's sake

has forgiven me of my sins." Baptist people like to speak of baptism being "an outward sign of an inward grace." Note the word "sign." Baptists are correctly represented as believing and teaching that baptism is not essential to salvation or "baptism does not save us."

The symbol of baptism, therefore, literally does only one thing for the candidate: it makes him or her a member of the Baptist Church (Article VII). Now, bear in mind what the New Testament says about baptism and see in corrupted contrast that which every Baptist must affirm in order to retain his position that "baptism does not save us."

First, Christ is not there in the water, but the Bible says, "*Buried with him by baptism*" (Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12). And, "*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*" (Gal. 3:27).

Second, baptism is not into the death of Christ. But the Bible says, "*Buried with him by baptism into death*" (Rom. 6:3).

Third, the cleansing power of the blood of Christ is not in the water. But the Bible says, "*But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water*" (John 19:33-34). And, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized*

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Battling Baptist Baptism...



Editorial...

SHOULD WE CARE WHAT PEOPLE WANT?

The following letter was received shortly after 9-11 and reveals what a tremendous battle the faithful face all around the world. Men have lost their respect for God and his Holy Word. They are more interested in self than God. They feel that if our fellowman is pleased, then God will be pleased. How little knowledge of the divine will is present today. Read this man's letter and weep.

To the Minister and Elders:

I live in Nashville and attend what your church would consider a "Liberal Church of Christ". Actually, most of our church doesn't consider our church to even be a "church of christ", but rather a family of christians. I just read your "seek the old paths" publication today. And I must say that I am rather embarrassed, but also feel a deep sense of sadness for your mentality. I grew up in a very conservative church of christ in FL, so grew up around this mentality. And I can't thank God enough for delivering me from this mindset. I have experienced a new life in him, one that is not held down by traditions, regulations, or some kind of laws that in turn have been regarded as "God's word".....That is Heresy!!!! I think it's a dangerous place to say that church of christ traditions are in fact the will of God.

Do you think for one second, that after the events last week, people who don't know christ care about musical instruments in worship, or whether to move the lord's supper to the beginning of service, or whether it's wrong to allow women to teach classes. That is nonsense!!! People right now are hungry for answers, for comfort, to understand God. People need Jesus, and need love, not traditions that aren't even valid in this life. Life is too short, and the Gospel is too powerful, to sit around pointing fingers at petty little issues that have

no real meaning in what it means to know God.

I pray that your church will realize that christianity is being attacked, and we must come together as believers and spread the truths of God, not traditions of a denomination.

COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE LETTER

I have read and understood your letter. I appreciate your concern. However, if you will, please help me learn how I can "get around" or "avoid" the following passages. If I ignore these, I will be liberal too. But, I'll also be lost!

1. How can I get around **being a friend to Jesus** when it demands my obedience to his Word, not man's whims? Jesus plainly said, "*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*" (John 15:14). A friend of Jesus, a true friend, OBEYS HIS WORD. One who says he is a friend and does not obey him is a hypocrite. There are many so-called friends of Jesus today, but he does not know them as friends. I can't be a friend if I don't obey.

2. How can I get around **loving Jesus** when it demands obedience to his Word? Jesus plainly said, "*If ye love me, keep my commandments*" (John 14:15). The American Standard says, "*If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.*" If I ignore or fail to keep the Lord's commandments, then I'll not be counted as his friend. If I dismiss his Word and say that the only thing that counts is to meet what needs people think they have, then I've missed the whole point of Jesus coming into the world to save sinners. He only saves those who OBEY HIM (Heb. 5:8-9).

3. How can I get around **knowing Jesus** when it involves and is based on obeying his word? "*And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He*

that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 John 2:3-5). To really KNOW the Lord is to keep his commandments. One's a liar that says he knows the Lord but don't keep his commandments. How much plainer could it be? Many have said we need a "relationship" with Jesus and we can really get to "know" him, yet they ignore the only way to know him — obedience to his commands.

4. How can I get around **abiding in Jesus** when it is directly linked to living as he lived? "*He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked*" (1 John 2:6). Jesus diligently followed the commandments of the Father in heaven (John 8:29) and if we desire to be like him, then so must we. Wanting a relationship with the Lord and claiming we abide near his side demands we live as he lived. He always obeyed (John 4:34; 6:38). He pleased not himself (Rom. 15:3; John 5:30). We must also follow the rules he followed.

5. How can I get around **loving the children of God** when it is tied to keeping God's commandments? "*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments*" (1 John 5:2). We must love the brotherhood (1 Peter 2:17). This is a genuine care that seeks their best interest. But this is only done when we obey the Lord's commandments. We're not concerned with what people want or what they feel or what they think they need, we're concerned with what the Father wants and how the Father feels. God knows what's best for us.

6. How do I get around **having the love of God** when the only way I can do that is to keep his commandments? "*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous*" (1 John 5:3). The Holy Spirit caused these words to be recorded for every generation. They are just as applicable today as they were when originally written nearly 2000 years ago. Do you have the love of God? If so, the way it is proven is by keeping his commandments.

I am embarrassed too when those who claim to "know Jesus" do

not love him and desire to be his friend as the verses above clearly show. Our mutual concern should not be what people are hungry for and searching for, our concern should be what God desires and what God commands us to do.

We can't be concerned about what people are searching for. They often search for the wrong thing. They often look in the wrong place. They may not care about mechanical instruments of music or women teaching over men or any other commandment of God. But that does not change God's word and his will for them. What they need is God and Jesus in their lives, not the traditions of men that says God's will is not important and can be dismissed at will. If we are true friends of Jesus, we will do what he says and give people what God wants them to have, not what they want and care about.

Are you willing to break away from the traditions and commandments of men and become a friend of Jesus?

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Battling Baptist Baptism...

(Continued from page 57)

into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Rom. 6:3-5). Further, *“This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth”* (I John 5:6).

Fourth, the old man of sin is not crucified. But the Bible says, *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him”* (Rom. 6:6).

Fifth, the body of sin is destroyed prior to baptism. But the Bible says, *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin”* (Rom. 6:6).

Sixth, the person is not raised with Christ. But the Bible says, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him”* (Col. 2:12).

Seventh, the person is not “raised to walk in newness of life.” But the Bible says, *“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”* (Rom. 6:4).

Eighth, no “faith in the operation of God” is required in baptism. But the Bible says, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God”* (Col. 2:12).

Ninth, sins are not forgiven in baptism. But the Bible says, *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* (Mark 16:16). And, *“Then Peter said unto them, 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). And further, *“And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, call-*

ing on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

Tenth, “baptism does not save us.” But the Bible says, *“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). And, *“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses”* (Col. 2:12-13).

Eleventh, candidates are made Baptists by a vote of the members and baptism by the hands of one in fellowship with the Baptist Church. The “Baptist Faith and Message” states, “Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes” (Article VI). But, the Bible says, *“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved”* (Acts 2:47).

Twelfth, sins are forgiven at the point of belief before baptism, “the form of doctrine,” is obeyed. But the Bible says, *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness”* (Rom. 6:17-18).

“Battling Baptist Baptism” may bring those who believe the Bible to the point where they understand baptism and become willing to follow the Bible which is written by God instead of following the “Baptist Faith and Message” which is written by men. One thing is for sure, if those who know the truth about Bible baptism refuse to engage the battle against Baptist baptism, then millions upon millions of precious souls will one day enter the cemetery saddened by their eternal separation from the loving Savior Jesus Christ.

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QUIT YOU LIKE MEN

Jerry C. Brewer

If it does not stir you as a member of the church to an earnest contention for the faith, your love for the truth has waxed cold.

One can almost hear the muffled roll of drums, the grimly measured tread of marching boots, the “thump” of distant cannon belching fire, and what General Douglas MacArthur called the “mournful mutter of the battlefield,” when Paul says, “*Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*” (1 Cor. 16:13).

“Here is the imagery of battle. The associations of war and the issues of battle vibrate in every word of this exhortation. It is an appeal to the heart as stirring as the call of a commander to comrades in a critical period of battle.” (Foy E. Wallace, Jr., “The Faith Once Delivered Demands Conflict,” In *Word And Doctrine*, Vol. 3, No. 4, May-July, 1996, Joseph D. Meador, Ed.).

Christ calls men to battle and that task requires courage. When Paul said, “Quit you like men,” he meant for us to perform our front line duties with courage worthy of the title, “Soldier of the Cross.” It isn’t enough to know the truth and preach it. One must have the courage to stand for truth (Jude 3). One who won’t earnestly contend for the faith certainly does not love the truth.

The young prophet who came out of Judah and cried against Jereboam’s altar at Bethel manifested courage. Contrasted with his boldness was the evident lack of it in the old prophet who invited him to his house. Saying an angel had commanded him to summon the young prophet to his house, the old prophet lied to him. Believing that lie led to the young man’s death (1 Kings 13). That narrative has been used, and rightly so, to teach the danger of believing a lie. But it also reveals a trait in the old prophet that afflicts men today — cowardice. He greatly admired the young man for his courage to speak out against Jereboam’s sin, but there’s no record that the old prophet ever raised his voice against the king’s iniquitous acts. Holy Writ calls him a prophet. He

knew what God had commanded regarding worship, but he refused to speak out. He was a coward.

Many years ago, I sat on a murder trial jury in Cleveland County, Oklahoma. Seeking the death penalty, the prosecution asked each prospective juror if he believed in capital punishment. Each of those chosen for the jury answered in the affirmative. Yet, when it came time to assess the punishment for the murder, of which the defendant was found guilty, about one-third of the jury refused to vote for the death penalty. There’s a vast difference in believing something is right and doing what is right. The devils also believe and tremble. Those jurors didn’t have the courage of their convictions and that is the curse of the church today. Multitudes of Gospel preachers believe the truth, preach it at every opportunity, and would not preach error. But when they are tried in conflict’s crucible, they seek comfort and safety in silence while jackbooted enemies of Christ decimate the church. They may know and preach the truth, but they love neither it nor the Lord who revealed it.

About six years ago, Joe Beam was engaged by the apostate Weatherford, Oklahoma, church to preach a meeting. Marking Beam as a false teacher, another preacher and I wrote and mailed a letter to area churches, including the entire membership of the Weatherford church. Prior to mailing the letter, we presented it to western Oklahoma preachers at an area-wide study and offered them the opportunity to sign their names to it and help with postage costs. Only one located preacher was willing to affix his name to the letter. Another signed it, but called the next morning and asked that his name be removed because members where he preached “had children in the Weatherford church.” Another gave money for postage, but didn’t want his name on the letter, saying, “You’ll need some-

one to defend you when this comes out.” He was willing to “defend” me — which I didn’t need — but refused to defend the faith. Like the old prophet at Bethel, they admired what we were doing, but feared to jeopardize their pay checks in defense of the truth. That kind of hireling cowardice is high treason to Christ’s cause (Matt. 12:30).

“Error is couched in countless forms concealed. Christ calls for vigilance — ‘watch ye.’ But when error has been flushed out of the hiding and forms into advanced columns against the church, Christ calls for courage — ‘stand fast in the faith.’ Then, when the lines are drawn tight, surging issues of truth and error are locked in the grim struggle for mastery — Christ calls for valor — ‘quit you like men.’ Perform like a soldier of Christ worthy of the name... The imagery thrills me. If it does not stir you as a member of the church to an earnest contention for the faith, your love for the truth has waxed cold” (Wallace).

Many years ago, an old preacher whose name has long been forgotten said, “The walls of hell will be papered with the hides of Baptists.” If he were alive today, he might amend that to say, “The walls of hell will be papered with the hides of Baptists, glued there with paste from the jellied backbones of hirelings in churches of Christ.”

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IN THE NEWS...

We find more and more who are pitching in with the denominations. Many brethren think they are a denomination. They do not love the truth and consequently do not know the truth. They will by no means live the truth. The following is an example of compromising programs that are going on all around us. Here is

another example of “read it and weep.”

The Men’s Seminar 2002 on April 20th

“21st Century - The Battle for Your Mind” was a tremendous blessing from our Lord.

On Saturday, April 20th almost 1400 men from across the city of San Antonio and representing 23 churches attend Oak Hills for this first-of-a-kind conference for men. Twelve dynamic speakers from the San Antonio Christian community addressed six of the most difficult and controversial subjects now facing men in the twenty-first century; how to cope with stress, overcoming anger, dealing with sexual temptation in a sexual society, overcoming fear, dealing with difficult people, and how to receive God’s acceptance.

SPEAKERS

Max Lucado....Oak Hills Church of Christ
John Hagee.....Cornerstone Church
David McNitzky ...Alamo Heights United
Methodist Church
David WalkerAlamo City Christian
Fellowship
Robert Emmitt Community Bible Church
Rander DraperMaranatha Baptist
Church
Peter Spencer.....Harvest Fellowship
Community Church
Robert PenaChurch of Acts
Steve TroxelWayside Chapel
Randy ShapiroCongregational Leader
of Congregation Beth Simcha
Buckner Fanning.....Buckner Fanning
Ministries, former pastor of
Trinity Baptist Church
Rod PruittHead of Through the
Storm Ministries

Pictures of the event include those of: - Pastors and Prayer - The Men - Worship and Teaching - The Altar Call

Don’t forget this last statement on the page:

“Through the leading of the Holy Spirit and for the Glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, this seminar was presented by the Men’s Ministry of Oak Hills Church of Christ.”

“SIN TAXES”

Steven. E. Yeatts

The recent Tennessee state budget debate and debacle has caused the word “taxes” to receive overuse lately. Taxes of many varieties have been discussed from income tax, to gasoline tax, to sales tax, to wheel tax. However, as I watched the state legislature in action one evening I was struck by the irony of a proposal that included the raising of the so-called “sin tax.” As the television news reporter spoke the words “sin tax” a graphic appeared on the television screen listing the words in bold font — SIN TAX. I imagine most of us know what this phrase “sin tax” means, but do we really grasp the true sense of its impact? The people of the world use this jargon in reference to the taxes levied on tobacco and alcohol. In other words, one who wants to use tobacco (whether inhaled or just a pinch between your cheek and gum), or one who chooses to drink alcoholic beverages of any variety, pays an exorbitant and disproportionate tax (“sin tax”) in order to feed their addiction and choice.

Is this phraseology lost on anyone but me? Certainly not! Even the world in its spiritually unwise state of mind assigns a nickname to the taxes on tobacco products and alcohol that calls usage of such products to be what it is — SIN! The thing that further provoked my interest in the phrase “sin tax,” is my wondering how many of my brethren (sisters included!) are paying this tax because of their inability to exercise Biblical self-control (Gal. 5:23; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 1:6)?

So many flimsy defenses are paraded out when one tries to justify their usage (“recreational” or otherwise) of cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, and alcoholic beverages. Some argue that the “social use” of alcohol is acceptable. After all, the Bible only condemns drunkenness, right? Any argument to defend a Christian’s use of physically and spiritually harmful substances falls in light of 1 Thessalonians 5:17, “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” Others state, “Where does the Bible say I cannot

drink alcoholic beverages or smoke cigarettes or chew tobacco or dip snuff?” I am glad you asked! Here are some passages that very clearly denounce the usage of products that are harmful to our physical health, but much more profoundly harmful to our spiritual health.

The Bible is consistent in its denunciation of Christians harming themselves by paying such a “sin tax.” Paul told the Romans, “*Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof*” (Rom. 6:12). One who uses alcohol or tobacco (the nicotine found in tobacco products is a highly addictive drug) has yielded control of himself to an external substance and thus is allowing sin to reign supreme in his physical body. Paul told the Galatians in 5:24, “*And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof*” (ASV). When we become a new creature in Christ our efforts against the “old man of sin” are to be heightened and we are to “put away” our old habits and act like the new creature that we are (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-10). One who was a smoker (or chewer or dipper) or a drinker before they obeyed the Gospel should have targeted that behavior as one of the first things to rid himself of because of his obedience to the Gospel. One who developed his addiction to tobacco products or alcohol after obedience to the Gospel has fallen far from his calling and needs to seriously re-evaluate his conversion (Rom. 6:1-2; Col. 3:1-5).

Some argue that ceasing their tobacco or alcohol usage cannot be done, that one can be so powerfully addicted that stopping is impossible. That attitude is contrary to the words of Christ and contrary to our calling. Jesus said, “*The things which are impossible with men are possible with God*” (Luke 18:27). [In this passage from Luke, Jesus acknowledged the extreme difficulty of one who was

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“SIN TAXES”...

FELLOWSHIP OF THE IMMORAL

Steve Miller

God's Word instructs us that we have fellowship with one another in the body of Christ. Paul wrote, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). In this fellowship, false teachers, those who walk "disorderly" and those who are immoral are not tolerated by God. They should likewise not be tolerated by brethren. God's motives are pure and so ours should be. We should follow the Scriptures in how to deal with those who choose to live immoral lives, teach false doctrine, or reject the plain teaching of God's Word in their lives. The goal should be to restore them back to the body of Christ. We must not drive our erring brother or sister away, but allow them to repent and make their lives right with God. We must not forget to use love, mercy, and kindness in dealing with situations where souls are at stake.

The fifth chapter of First Corinthians gives us insight into how God wanted situations of immorality handled within the church.

RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEM

"It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." Paul makes it known that the problem of fornication among the Corinthians was common knowledge. This reminds us of what Paul said in chapter 1, "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor. 1:11)

The apostle was not only aware of the sinful situation, he had also heard of their reaction to the problem of fornication. "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you" (5:2). Instead of the Corinthians being sorrowful for the problem at hand, they were "puffed up," proud, or high minded. Paul rebukes them for not having the responsibility to remove

the fornicator from among them. Their sorrow and loving action were missing in this case of sinful conduct.

MAKE RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed" (1 Cor. 5:3).

As a fellow Christian in the one body of Christ, Paul has already thought about the situation and made a judgment. Paul was absent, but present in Christ. He knew what Jesus taught concerning those caught up in sinful activities and therefore made a judgment. This is God's way because Jesus stated, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

THE ACTION AND PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE

After Paul let the Corinthians know he is aware of the situation and that he has made a judgment concerning their handling of it, he tells them what they must do by the authority of Christ. "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 5:4). The congregation should be united in this effort to induce the party in error to repent and come back to righteous living. Paul revealed this action was from Christ who has all authority and power (cf. Matt. 29:18). Everything we believe and practice must have Christ's approval. "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).

Why should this action be taken? "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5). Hopefully, the one that is put out from the church, will throw off the influences of Satan, come back to the Lord and be saved in the end. This should be the motive behind church discipline.

The church must work together to accomplish this goal.

PURGE OUT THE OLD LEAVEN

"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6)? The Corinthians attitude concerning this situation was not right. "Glorying" or being prideful or arrogant only made the problem worse. Paul reminds them just as a little leaven spreads through all the dough, sin spreads through the whole church. There is danger of this sin spreading through the members if it is not stopped when diagnosed.

The apostle gives them the command to "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7). Remove the fornicator from among you so his influence will not spread through the church. The "old leaven" refers to the impure portion (fornicator) in the lump (church). Purging needed to be done to make a new lump. The reference to Christ involves an analogy with the Jews' practice of removing all leaven from their houses before Passover (Exodus 12:15,20; 13:7). As the passover lamb was sacrificed, Jesus has been sacrificed and we must not have the impurity of leaven among us.

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8). Paul tells them to "keep the feast," which is still following the analogy, to live pure and holy lives in Jesus Christ. The "old leaven" which is sin, should not remain, neither should "malice and wickedness." Bill Jackson discussed the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth by writing, "It is the bread of sincerity (purity, genuineness) and truth. Paul thus makes the point that God's children have Christ offered for them as their 'passover,' and their living for Him is a keeping of the 'feast,' and as the unleavened bread characterized the literal passover of ancient days, so the lives

of the saints must be with ‘unleavened bread’ of genuine loyalty to the truth of God” (*A Commentary On First Corinthians*, p.44)!

Brother Jackson brings Paul’s analogy home to the Corinthians, “Obviously the point in mind is to cause the Corinthians to examine themselves, and to see that the presence of the fornicator in their midst, combined with their lack of sorrow for his sinfulness, has them feasting on impurity!” (p.44)

NO FELLOWSHIP WITH FORNICATORS

“I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators” (1 Cor. 5:9). There is to be no fellowship with those who practice the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19). David Lipscomb’s notes on First Corinthians, edited by J. W. Shepherd, says, “To have company with is to treat one as worthy of companionship and association. The Christian is not to treat the guilty person as such. The object, no doubt, is to make the fornicator feel the disgrace and shame of his course and bring him to repentance” (p.78).

The New Testament teaches on this matter to “...have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).

PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE

“Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world” (1 Cor. 5:10). The apostle lets them know that the command to have no fellowship with the fornicator is an eternal principle, which should be practiced on all who are guilty of persisting in the sinful works of the flesh.

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such an one no not to eat” (1 Cor. 5:11).

Christians, who are guilty of being fornicators, drunkards, or promoters of the works of Satan, are to be dealt with by withdrawing fellowship. Notice that Paul says in this passage, “with such an one no not to eat.” This refers to a common meal. Eating a meal together is an act of fellowship where people enjoy the

company of one another and share their lives together. Eating with those who are guilty, such as the fornicator at Corinth, would be to endorse their condition and damage one’s influence.

PUT AWAY THE WICKED

“For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within” (1 Cor. 5:12)? Paul reminds them that God judges those in the world. He stresses that they should be dealing with these sins that are in the church. This is their duty; to make righteous judgments using the authority of Christ. He makes his case plain by stating, “But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person” (1 Cor. 5:13).

The Bible teaches that there is to be no fellowship with the immoral. Association in such a way as to endorse or condone sinful actions or situations must not be practiced. To gain a brother or sister from the hands of the devil will not be accomplished by overlooking their sinful lives. We must be loving and kind in dealing with those who have fallen. We must also be Scriptural and abide in the truth in dealing with matters that face New Testament Christians.

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“SIN TAXES”...

(Continued from page 61)

rich entering the kingdom. Surely it will be very difficult for one to abandon an addiction to a harmful substance, but it is definitely possible, and for a Christian it is absolutely NECESSARY]. If one does not develop the strong spiritual attitude from reading the Word of God and through prayer about such a matter, then of course, in his own power he cannot defeat this physical addiction.

Paul wrote, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Phil. 4:13). For a Christian to say that he or she cannot stop smoking or using tobacco products or that he or she cannot stop drinking is contrary to Holy Scriptures which says we can do ALL things through Christ. One who says he cannot is

really saying he chooses not to cease that behavior which violates his Christian calling most blatantly and publicly.

What about a Christian who would be foolish enough to say, “Well, it is my body and I will do what I want with it. After all, I am only hurting myself?” Paul asked, “*Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ*” (1 Cor. 6:15a)? He continued to write in that same chapter, “*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s*” (1 Cor. 6:19-20). There’s the answer for Christians who claim self-ownership over their bodies. They have forgotten who bought them and who owns them and for Christians to harm their bodies by using the products that require “sin taxes” is an assault on the owner of our bodies, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Even the world’s vernacular (“sin taxes”) indicates their knowledge that usage of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages is sinful. Sadly, some in the Lord’s church continue to pay “sin tax” while ignoring the obvious results of their behavior. Indeed, sin truly does tax all people. “*For the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23). For a Christian to use tobacco and/or alcohol, sin taxes their spiritual growth, their example to family, co-workers, friends, neighbors, and ultimately could jeopardize their eternal destiny if they are obeying the lusts of their addiction and not actively trying to cease their addiction (remember, “**I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME**”).

There are some taxes that all citizens, Christians or not, have to pay in order to fulfill the law. In such legal matters we have no choice but to comply. However, paying “sin tax” is a willful act that is contrary to the example that a Christian should set and is detrimental to one’s body and one’s soul. What a great day it would be if only the sinners paid the “sin tax,” while those who claim Christianity refused to participate in the ingestion of that which led to such a tax in the first place.

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SEEK THE OLD PATHS

tour of the British Isles. He will be joined by Paul Blowers of Emmanuel School of Religion and Newell Williams of Christian Theological Seminary. The three men are editing the Stone-Campbell Encyclopedia due to be published in 2004. (World Christian, Second Quarter, 2002, p.3) (Mr. Foster continues to demonstrate that he does not consider the church as the distinctive body of Christ. The Disciples have been in negotiations with several of the most liberal denominations to join as one ecumenical body. For Mr. Foster to believe that we are just a segment of the body of Christ with the Disciples would indicate that he also believes that all denominations are part of the body of Christ. For Abilene to continue to allow him to be on staff would indicate that the Administration is supportive of his efforts. Those who have kept up with Abilene are not surprised by this. But some folks still do not know how far Abilene has gone”

...**Mark McWhorter, Pell City, AL.** “Thank you, thank you for advertising in your paper Bob Spurlin’s books”

...**Lynn Grove, KY.** “Just to let you know that I love the website and the Sunday morning program”

...**Bradley Childs.** “We appreciate the good work you do with *Seek the Old Paths*. We also appreciate the bundle that you send us each month. Our members for the most part enjoy good biblical literature to read. The elders wanted to send a little bit to help with the cost of putting out the paper. Again we thank you. Be sure to convey our appreciation to your elders for us”

...**Cadiz Church of Christ, Garry Stanton, Cadiz, KY.** “Greetings in the Almighty Name of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. First, I send this letter with prayer that the Lord always looks over everything that you do in His service. Now you all have blessed me with your monthly publication and I really find it to be a true blessing while behind these walls. And since I found the Lord and He added me to His church I have really enjoyed the church of Christ because it teaches by the Word of God only! Keep *STOP* coming!”

...**Mickey Reid, Woodville, TX.** “I’m schooling in West Coast School of Preaching. I’m in first year student and I thank God for this *Seek the Old Paths*. I got it from a brother if you have old one send me it is very good”

...**Noah Eduam, Ghana, West Africa.** “I would appreciate your paper *Seek the Old Paths*. May God blessing be on your work”

...**Bernice Amberson, Benson, AZ.** “I am privileged to receive a copy of your *STOP* publication Vol.4, No. 12 of December 2000 through the Southern California School of Evangelism. I have read it and I found it so helpful to my Bible study. Please add me to your mailing list for your publication, *Seek the Old Paths*. Thank you for your courage in spreading the truth. May God continue to bless you in all your undertakings”

...**S.A. Ilesanmi, Nigeria, Africa.** “Your *Seek the Old Paths* is the most wonderful Christian paper that ever came to my mail box. My first knowledge of your paper was one Sunday I attended worship at the church of Christ West in Plymouth, MI, and I picked up a copy on a table there. The very next week I wrote to you and asked to receive it. It lets everyone know about all this mess, and we Christians need to know. Preachers rarely mention this in their sermons, because they are afraid they will step on toes, and they want to keep their jobs. Thanks for the article on the Madison church. I used to live in the area, and I can’t say I was shocked. I do believe back in the 50’s before I moved away that the church was a scriptural church of Christ. God bless you in your good work”

...**Bobbi Williams, Westland, MI.** “I would like to be added to the mailing list for *STOP*, a great publication. I like what I see. Thank you for this great work”

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...**Cleo Gibbons, Williamsport, PA.** “I and my mom have enjoyed your publication all the time that we have received it. However, I have so many issues that we feel that we need to bring to end our free subscription. It has helped in our spiritual maturity and for that we will always be grateful”

...**Kenneth Dion, Chicopee, MA.** “Thanks for sending *STOP*. Keep up the good work!”

...**Robert & Cheryl Lambert, New Johnsonville, TN.** “Earlier this year I received your copy of *Seek the Old Paths* from a brother in U.S.A., James D. Cox. Two copies of June 2001 and August 2001. I found it interesting and full of edification. Therefore, I ask you kindly whether you can include me on your mailing list. I appreciate in

“The World Convention of Churches of Christ is a very liberal organization that has as its main goal the unifying of the church of Christ, the Disciples of Christ and the Christian church. It is having a World Convention in 2004 in England. Douglas Foster, history professor at Abilene Christian University, is joining two others in leading a religious heritage

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...**Frank Chesser, Montgomery, AL.** “We receive *Seek the Old Paths* and enjoy it very much. We have a son who preaches at Gipson church of Christ in Gainesboro, TN. He lives in Cookeville and would like to receive *Seek the Old Paths*. Thank you very much and may God continue to bless you in your good work”

...**M/M Blaine Pinkston, Swartz Creek, MI.** “Thanks for all the work you guys do in trying to share God’s truth”

...**Donnie Henderson, Tucson, AZ.** “I want to write you and let you know how much I appreciate your good works. The church will always be under attack by our adversary, the devil. I am thankful that *STOP* is published and that there are still “7,000” who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Keep up the good fight of faith”

...**Name Withheld, Trenton, TN.** “In searching the “*Seek the Old Paths*” website www.eastcorinth.org/stop.htm, it stated that I could receive the *Seek the Old Paths* newsletter free just by asking to be put on the mailing list. Please add me to the mailing list, if this is indeed true; if not, please advise me how to go about receiving the newsletter if it is still in publication. In being a member of the Forest Park Church of Christ in Forest Park, Georgia, I am always eager to learn more and to do my best to stay alert in being certain to keep things as the Lord would have them be in my life. I feel that this newsletter could also be beneficial in my own personal Bible studies. Thank you for the opportunity to receive the newsletter, I look forward to hearing from you soon. May God bless you and keep you always”

...**Kimberly Mauldin, Morrow, GA.**

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

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