

Seek The Old Paths

"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."
(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 13, No. 10

October 2002

THE LORD'S SUPPER AND A COMMON MEAL

In the June 2002 issue of *Seek The Old Paths*, we published an article by Jack Simons reviewing the practice of a special Sunday communion service held at the Skyway Hills Church of Christ in Pearl, Mississippi. The church there observed a special communion service in which they partook the Lord's supper in the setting of a common meal. Printed below is a letter from the elders of Skyway Hills in which they defend their practice. Their letter is printed in its entirety. Please be sure you read brother Jack Simons' response to this letter beginning on the next page.

To the Editor,
August 14, 2002

Recently Jack Simons charged, and you published, allegations that Skyway Hills church of Christ "profaned the Lord's supper by making a common meal of it" and it was further stated that in doing so we "ate and drank damnation to (our)selves." Serious charges to be

sure. Charges that should not be considered lightly ... nor, we might add, thrown around hastily. While we write this response, with the brother in mind who made these charges, we really address all interested Christians who have either read or heard of the event, and the ensuing turmoil, and wondered how a church might commit so serious an offense — if indeed one has been committed. The brother who brought these charges quoted I Corinthians 11:17-34 as the basis for these accusations, so we think it only fitting that we examine this passage both in light of what occurred at Corinth, what actually occurred at Skyway Hills and exactly what the apostle Paul was condemning.

Upon examination of these verses we find Paul condemning the Corinthian church, and telling them "it is not the Lord's Supper you are having," for the following reasons:

- When they came together there were divisions among them
- They were not waiting for others before they began to eat
- Some were left with little or no food
- Some were getting drunk
- Because of their selfishness and gluttony they were humiliating the poor among them

Because of *these* offenses Paul says that they were partaking in an unworthy manner. Beyond these charges we can find no others, although some will claim a prohibition against eating in church buildings. Additionally, the brother that brought charges against Skyway Hills added his own prohibitions against partaking of the Lord's Supper twice on a Sunday — which is nowhere mentioned or prohibited in scripture. This brother surely knows this for he didn't even mention scripture when making this accusation. His strongest argument was: To repeat an event on Sunday somehow made the first occurrence inadequate. That being the case, might he next have us believe that Sunday evening services somehow speak to the inadequacy of the morning assembly? Additionally, he states that having the Lord's Supper in conjunction with a fellowship meal is prohibited in scripture, and condemned by Paul, but biblical scholars point out that this may have been the very practice in the early church. It was certainly the practice in Corinth and may very well have been what Jude referred to as a "love feast."

(Continued on page 78)

The Lord's Supper...



Guest Editorial

ATTITUDE, NOT MECHANICS?

A REPLY TO THE ELDERS OF THE SKYWAY HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST, PEARL, MISSISSIPPI

Jack Simons

It is blasphemy to relegate the worship of God to common practice or to mingle it with such! That is how the church became the apostate Roman church — through taking holy things and mingling them with pagan rites and common practices! And this came about through church leaders, especially elders if you will, fulfilling Paul's prophecy in Acts 20:28-31 — men who Paul described as being, "grievous wolves," who "speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

I am grateful to the elders of the Skyway Hills church of Christ — brothers, Steve Lavin, Lonnie Livingston and Glynn McMillen, for their response (personal letter to me dated 8-14-02 and their letter published in this issue dated 8-12-02) to the charges made against them in the article I wrote concerning their observing the Lord's supper in conjunction with a common meal published in S.T.O.P. Vol. 13, No. 6 — "SPECIAL SUNDAY COMMUNION," pgs. 41,43-44. The charge still stands and is reinforced by the sad words of their reply. They only further establish the truthfulness and validity of those charges. They

admit they did what they did and make a pitiful and vain attempt to justify it. We rejoice that they examined 1 Cor. 11:17-34 which was quoted as the basis for the charges laid against them, and we suggest they need to REexamine it in view of their attempt to use it to justify their actions.

They are correct in their assessment that in this passage Paul rebuked the Corinthians because: 1) When they came together there were divisions among them. 2) And that they were selfish, gluttonous and were humiliating the poor among them by their erroneous actions. However, they are incorrect

to say, "They were not waiting for others before they began to eat." We may assume they deduce this from the words of v.21, especially from the NIV, "For as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk." Faulty versions lead to faulty conclusions. A careful study of this passage, especially in light of the Greek, will help us better understand it. The Greek word for "goes ahead," (NIV) or "taketh before," (KJV) is *prolambanei*, which, according to Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich means, "To do something before the usual time, particularly in anticipation of something else." Thayer says it means, "To take beforehand." Both Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich and Vine associate it with forestalling or hindering others. Vine especially renders it, "Forestalling the less favored at a social meal." The taking "before other," (The word "other" is not in the original Greek) was not an impatient eating before others were ready, it was callous, thoughtless eating in the presence of others with no concern for those who had little, especially in view of the spiritual meal THAT WOULD FOLLOW AFTERWARDS in observing the Lord's supper!

L. W. Shepherd makes this comment in the Gospel Advocate commentary on this passage: "The eating of a feast with its attendant gluttony and drinking led many to attend. Each family brought its own portion and each partook of his own, the rich eating and drinking to satiety of their abundance. The poor were shamed by the scantiness of their food and went hungry. This was all wrong. It is thought by some that this feasting PRECEDED THE LORD'S SUPPER, (emphasis mine, JS) so that some were filled to satiety, while others were hungry when they partook of the emblems of the Lord's body and blood" (Vol. II, First Corinthians, p.171). This is in line with the meaning of the Greek — to take before time in anticipation of observing the Lord's supper, and to take in such a way as to hinder or

shame the poor as it was done!

We agree that because of these offenses, Paul charged them with partaking in an unworthy manner, but what was it they did to be guilty of such a serious charge? They ate and drank unworthily, “not discerning the Lord’s body!” It was both an attitude and an action (they did something — ate and drank) that incurred apostolic rebuke and the warning of damnation here!

As to my query on taking the Lord’s supper TWICE on one Sunday, I stated it thus: “It would seem the first was somehow inadequate!! If not why have it again?!” (STOP, Vol. 13, No. 6 — “SPECIAL SUNDAY COMMUNION” p.1) This was not so much a rebuke for doing so, as it was a question on why do so! Now please tell us, why take it twice? Was it because the first was somehow inadequate? If the first was accepted with God, why do it again in the same day? As they pointed out here, such a practice, “Is nowhere mentioned or prohibited in Scripture.” That, by the way, is why I gave no Scripture reference concerning it in my query! But let me give one now. If there is no example or authorization for such in Scripture, then there is a violation of Rev. 22:18 in “adding” it to our worship practice! It need not be specifically prohibited if it is no where taught! That in itself prohibits it (again Rev. 22:18-19). And, may I point out, this was NOT my “strongest argument” against them as they allege. My strongest argument was the force of 1 Cor. 11:17-22 — Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing by divine inspiration, condemning the exact practice they did — having a common meal in a way that it mingled with or at the very least hindered their worship assembly, especially in observing the Lord’s supper! This is what motivated Paul to charge the Corinthians, and them, inasmuch as they did the exact same thing, with: division, heresy and blasphemy in profaning the Lord’s supper!

Let us again address the issue of observing the Lord’s supper in conjunction with a common meal! The

“BIBLICAL SCHOLARS,” they ambiguously referred to, that point out that the early church “MAY HAVE” acceptably observed the Lord’s supper in conjunction with a common meal, have no sound Scriptural ground for their assumption! They certainly cannot use 1 Cor. 11 as an example, because that is the very thing Paul condemned! The Corinthians did not properly assemble to worship when they used that assembly in conjunction with the common meal (v.17)! Carefully note v.20, “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper.” Paul pointed out here that they were assembling for the wrong reason when they mingled common practice with worship, especially in observing the Lord’s supper (see also vs.20-22). He told them to keep their common meals separate from the act of worship involving observing the Lord’s supper — eat your common meal at home and observe the Lord’s supper in your worship assembly!

As to their reference to the “love feast” of Jude 12, hear the explanation of this passage by Guy N. Woods in the Gospel Advocate Commentary on Jude, pages 395,396: “The ‘Love feasts’ were meals common to the apostolic age at which the saints met from social, charitable, and humanitarian reasons. They appear to have had their origin in the practice of wealthier members of the congregation providing food for the poorer ones, and eating with them, in token of their brotherliness. These *feasts are not to be identified* in any way with the Lord’s supper (emphasis mine, JS), indeed, when this supper was corrupted into such a meal, it occasioned a sharp rebuke from Paul (1 Cor. 11:17-34). But that saints were accustomed to meet together for common meals follows from this reference to such by Jude, from a similar reference in 2 Pet. 2:13, and from numerous statements from ecclesiastical writers in the early centuries of the Christian era. They were suspended by the fourth century because men of the type of whom Jude wrote turned

them into ungodly revels!!”

NOTE. That makes two (2) highly respected Bible Scholars in our brotherhood we have cited that declare the common meal preceded observing the Lord’s supper — L. W. Shepherd and Guy N. Woods!

It is blasphemy to relegate the worship of God to common practice or to mingle it with such! That is how the church became the apostate Roman church — through taking holy things and mingling them with pagan rites and common practices! And this came about through church leaders, especially elders if you will, fulfilling Paul’s prophecy in Acts 20:28-31 — men who Paul described as being, “grievous wolves,” who “speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Their similar actions condemn them of being guilty of this charge! I weep as I pen these words!! I weep for these men who as elders advocate such error, for the church there, and for the blasphemy and heresy they spawn. God help us if men like these continue to shepherd His flock!

How can they write and say, “After looking at the activity that Skyway Hill church of Christ engaged in, we find none that violated scripture.” They say they did this out of concern for others, (there was certainly no concern for Christ and His Word) “*so as not to alienate* (emphasis mine, JS), exclude or offend anyone who would chose not to participate in the communion service to follow the morning assembly.” Their very explanation condemns them for promoting a divided membership! It acknowledges the possibility of alienating some, and therefore offering them an “out” while others go ahead and partake. This is exactly the division Paul condemned which is spawned by the very practice they initiated! They offered TWO ways of observing the Lord’s supper — one for those of a more liberal nature who are less structured with what they would call the traditional custom normally used in our conservative assemblies, and another for those more rigid in what they would call their tradition-

al practices. Yes, they did promote division, and knew they would possibly “alienate” others by their actions, so they made it convenient for them not to participate! That is division! It suggests some are made stronger for embracing their erroneous practice while others are weaker for not embracing it! Let them deny it if they can!?

They seemed to have neglected addressing the surcharge of \$5.00 for the catered Bar-B-Q meal held in conjunction with observing the Lord’s supper in their afternoon activity that was requested of those planning to participate in it! What of those who may not have had the \$5.00 per person? Is it possible they may have felt shamed by not being able to pay the fee and therefore be left out of the activity? I quote again their bulletin announcement, “We are thinking the meal will cost around \$5.00 per person.” With a family of four, that would amount to \$20! I have six children. That would cost me \$5 x 8 (my wife and I included) which equals \$40.00 to partake of this meal! Most of my children are now grown and have children of their own (I have 9 grandchildren), but I have seen many a time when my children were small that I didn’t have that to spend for a catered meal, or anything else that was optional for that matter! If my whole family — me, my wife, our six children and their mates and their children had attended, that would have cost our entire family 19 x \$5 = \$95! They indeed could have humiliated the less fortunate of their congregation with this fee for this activity! Let them deny that if they can! 40 bucks, if nothing else, would have alienated me if I still had my six children at home. It is beyond me that they would charge for an activity that supposedly involves worship in the first place. How can they say, “All members and visitors alike were invited to participate.” If they had the money for the meal they could have!

They claim that, “Upon careful and unbiased examination of the passage in I Corinthians one can

clearly see it was the manner in which some of the Corinthians conducted themselves that Paul is addressing, not the setting of the Lord’s supper.” They further charge that my claim that if it involved, “A setting issue, then one must conclude that Paul is prohibiting ‘eating in the building’ for he clearly states that ‘if anyone is hungry, he should eat at home.’” They continue that if such be true, then, “Paul is teaching that division, gluttony and total disregard for our brothers and sisters welfare are acceptable as long as we display such behavior in the privacy of our own ‘homes’ and carefully put on our ‘church faces’ before communing with those we profess to love. Does anyone reading this really believe that we could come together for the purpose of taking the Lord’s supper (in the manner in *which every traditional church of Christ has for the past 100 years*) (emphasis mine, JS) having an auditorium full of rich gluttons, with the other half comprised of the starving poor, and this would somehow qualify as communing in ‘a worthy manner’ because we didn’t eat in front of each other, or the fellowship meal was separated from communion thereby hiding this selfishness?”

It is obvious from these words that they didn’t use as much care as they should have and used a lot more bias than they are willing to admit in examining 1 Cor. 11. Did Paul instruct the Corinthians to eat their common meals in their own homes and observe the Lord’s supper in their worship assemblies rather than combine them together — lest they partake unworthily? He certainly did in 1 Cor. 11:20-22! However, he was not condemning eating in the “church building” or “auditorium.” For the most part, *they didn’t have* “church buildings” or “auditoriums.” In fact, many conducted worship IN THEIR HOMES (See Col 4:15). What Paul was condemning was combining a common practice with an act of worship. It had nothing to do with “church buildings” or “auditoriums,” it had to do with the worship assembly verses a

common setting — whether it was done in the same building or not, or in a brush arbor for that matter. It was a “setting issue,” and an erroneous act that Paul condemned as well as improper manner and attitudes.

Note further their bias as they attempt to denounce what they refer to as our 100 years of tradition, as hypocritical — professed with “church faces,” displayed only in our worship assemblies and shed off in our fellowship activities apart from them. How loving and superior they deem themselves, and how unloving and uncaring they charge us of being — because they claim to have a love that transcends a concern for Scriptural and doctrinal precept which we manifest in what we practice with a more important concern and care for appeasing the cultural whims and personal felt-needs of men that they display!

They relegate “Taking the Lord’s Supper (in the manner in which every traditional Church of Christ has for the past 100 years),” to an opinionated tradition. We wonder where they get justification for their numerical statistic! We also observe that they spelled “Church,” with a capital “C” here. We assume they wished to indict what they call, “the traditional Church,” as being denominational because of its traditional practices! (No bias?!) They say what Skyway Hills did, “Had to do with mechanics, while the apostle Paul dealt with the Corinthians attitudes of the heart. Could we have done the mechanics better at Skyway Hills on that Sunday? Possibly.” (*More than possibly, JS*) “But to focus on and be condemned because of those mechanics completely misses the point that Paul was making to the Corinthian church. Paul wanted their hearts made right with each other and with God. Paul wasn’t condemning a meal in conjunction with the Lord’s supper. What he was teaching them is to love one another.” Balderdash! I did not miss the point, I hit the nail on the head! Let us carefully note that if one’s attitude is wrong, it will

lead to wrong mechanics and vice-versa. Yes, Paul condemned them for wrong attitudes (v.28), but he also condemned them for wrong mechanics — erroneous practice (vs.17-22). What they did was wrong because their hearts were not right, and their hearts were not right because what they did was wrong! Paul condemned both.

Let us address their reference to Matt. 9:13, Matt. 5:23-24 and Matt. 22:37-40, and our Lord's teaching on mercy, forgiveness and love. When our Lord said in Matt. 9:12-13, "they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," He was not teaching that God's mercy does not demand or necessitate careful adherence to His Will. Nor was He advocating that we can do as we please religiously in lieu of God's mercy condoning every whim or ignoring any departure from His declared inspired Word! What Jesus was doing here was condemning the hypocritical self righteousness of the Pharisees who rebuked and rejected Him for having association with sinners. He in turn rejected them citing to them Hosea 6:6 pointing out that without God's mercy, sinners have no hope! He was not condemning obedience! Much the contrary, He was reenforcing the need for obedience (See 1 Sam. 15:22). In the text of Matt. 9:13, Jesus made it clear He was come to call "sinners to repentance." This demanded careful and absolute adherence to God's law! Sacrifice without mercy is vain. The reason this is so is because, when the Jews offered their sacrifices and burnt offerings, God rejected them and extended them no mercy because they had polluted His law and profaned His commands on worship (See the context of Hosea 6). Now, let the elders as Skyway Hills go and learn what that means!

When our Lord taught us in Matt. 5:23-24 to reconcile ourselves with a brother who has something

against us before we leave our gift at the altar, He was teaching us that our worship can be hindered if we are fussing and fighting with each other. The problem was personal issues between brothers, not doctrinal issues that concern Scriptural worship. This is applicable to the error of 1 Cor. 11 however, because it further condemns the crass treatment of the affluent towards the poor and the hard feelings such might gender in the poor toward the affluent! However, it nowhere advocates love over mechanics or method as it seems they are attempting to imply!

When our Lord commended the scribe for His sincere astuteness in agreeing with Him concerning His

***The fact is, our
attitude is wrong
and there is no love
for God when His
commandments are
not kept or are
altered in any way.***

teaching on the two great commandments, He was not giving the highest praise He ever gave to man (see Matt. 8:10; 11:11), but He was commending him for ascertaining the truth! What did Jesus teach here? He taught that the first and greatest of all the commandments is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." How do we manifest this love for God? By Keeping His commandments (John 14:15; 1 John 5:2-3). Jesus then declared the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." How do we do this? "Treat him right, forgive him when he offends us, teach him the Gospel, set a good

example before him, lead him to repentance if he strays, etc. Nowhere can we find emphasis on "love" over "obedience" or "attitude" over "mechanics" or "method!" In fact, we find reenforcement of the need of love manifested in obedience coupled with reverence for God's commands manifested in adhering to sound doctrine and method! Consider Heb. 12:28-29, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire." Now please note: We are to "SERVE GOD," (not man) "ACCEPTABLY," according to His will, with "REVERENCE AND GODLY FEAR," manifesting a respect for His commandments and obeying them lest we incur His wrath.

They say, "Love — attitude — is more important than ceremony — ritual," and right they are, but love is not more important than keeping God's commandments which has nothing to do with ceremony or ritual! Ceremony and ritual are after the traditions of man (Matt. 15:9). Adherence to Scriptural soundness in how we worship is according to God's will (John 4:23-24). The fact is, our attitude is wrong and there is no love for God when His commandments are not kept or are altered in any way. Paul condemned WHAT the Corinthians did, and charged them of having an improper attitude when doing it.

They claim that to them, "The teachings of Christ are everything." Hear Jesus in John 14:15, "*If ye love me, **keep my commandments.***" John 15:14, "*Ye are my friends if ye **do whatsoever I command you.***" Matt. 15:8-9, "*This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" Matt. 7:21, "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **doeth the will** of my Father which is in heaven.*" Matt.

28:20, *“Teaching them to **observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**”* Where in any of these words of Jesus do we find justification for claiming “love” is more important than “mechanics?” We are to do all that we do or say in exact compliance with the will of God (Col. 3:17). Which of these or any of our Lord’s commandments can we ignore for any reason and still say we love Him or one another?

The letter they sent personally to me was almost the same as the one they sent S.T.O.P. except for the last paragraph. It read as follows: “If you are looking for an imperfect congregation to pick on...well, you found one. And without condemning your congregation we suspect the same could be said of yours. If however, you are interested in spiritual growth and unity...if you can acknowledge that while we may have moved beyond your comfort zone the possibility exists that we remained within the Lord’s...if you understand that we might not agree with each other on every issue but that disagreement doesn’t necessitate that we attack each other or that either of us be eternally condemned then we would welcome your comments. If not, we gratefully acknowledge the autonomy that God granted each of His churches.”

This is not a personal matter addressed by a nit picking fault finder, it is a doctrinal issue that affects the Lord’s church everywhere! I was not looking for, am not looking for, and never shall look for an imperfect congregation “TO PICK ON,” nor was I picking on them. I challenged them because of the error they were practicing there and the evil effects it can have on other congregations. As to the congregation of which I’m a member being perfect, when we consider the human element of the Lord’s church, no congregation on earth is perfect, that is why we need God’s grace, mercy and His Word to guide us and help us correct our imperfections! However, we dare not attempt

to justify our imperfections! Rather, we should admit and confess them and try to correct them! (see I John 1:7-10)

It was not my “COMFORT ZONE” they threatened, it was sound doctrine they undermined! A “comfort zone” is an area of opinion, custom or tradition one feels comfortable with that is not mandated upon all by direct command from God’s Word. There is room for this in the kingdom of God! Whether or not we have the Lord’s supper before or after the preaching falls into this category. I have seen it done both ways and it matters not one whit to me which way is practiced. However, whether or not we observe the Lord’s supper in conjunction with a common meal does not fall in this category, it is a violation of Biblical precept — as already discussed in view of 1 Cor. 11! Accepting this definition of a comfort zone, how in this world can these men, who claim to be elders in our Lord’s church, suggest that our Lord Jesus Christ has “comfort zones”?! They said: “While we may have moved beyond your comfort zone the possibility exists that we remained within the Lords.” They clearly implied that the Lord has “comfort zones!” We deny it. Our Lord never had an opinion in His life! Every word He spoke was the Gospel, the Word of God, the Words of life, Cannon, etc. (see esp. John 12:44-50). He was, is and ever shall be, “The Word” (John 1:1-4). The words He spoke are “spirit and life” to us (John 6:63). Everything He said is THE WORD OF GOD, and you will find no “comfort zones” in them. They are absolute and are not to be trifled with (John 17:17; Rev. 22:18-19). How dare they suggest Jesus has “comfort zones!” It only reveals more emphatically their despoite and disrespect for the Holy Bible — God’s divinely inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17) and nullifies their claim that the teachings of Christ are everything to them.

We do understand we might not agree with each other on some issues and still not be eternally condemned, but we also understand

there are certain issues we must agree on or we certainly shall be eternally condemned! We also believe in the autonomy of every congregation and am grateful for the wisdom of God in structuring His church that way. We shudder to think what would happen if men like these had control over the entire church of God! Roman Catholicism stands in testimony of the apostasy and devastation such can bring. However, autonomy is not a shield for error, protecting a congregation from being challenged, or even condemned if warranted, nor is it a license for any congregation to do as they please, ignore God’s will on any issue and promote and practice error! Every congregation is autonomous, and therefore free to obey or reject God’s will if they choose. But, they are not free from the consequences of choosing error, being admonished to repent, challenged to do what is right, and exposed if they refuse to do this, not to mention facing the wrath of God for rejecting His will. They did it and they continue to defend it, so they shouldn’t “cry baby” when they are admonished, rebuked and exposed for doing and defending it. Their attempt to try to hide under the cloak of autonomy won’t work, because God did not intend for autonomy to be so used. He intended it to be used to keep the church pure from wicked leaven such as they are espousing.

Again, I am grateful they chose to reply to the charges leveled against them. I write this reply to: “*contend for the faith*” (Jude 3), “*be set for a defense of the gospel*” (Phil. 1:7,17) and “*reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*” (2 Tim. 4:2). I do not do so to pick on or antagonize them or anybody. I do it to lead them and any who are of like mind with them to repentance and to expose their error so it will not infect other congregations! I weep for them. I beg them to repent.

“For Jesus’ sake,” 2 Cor. 4:11

*Jack Simons
804 Tower Dr.
Laurel, MS 39440*

The Lord’s Supper...

(Continued from page 73)

After looking at the activity that Skyway Hills church of Christ engaged in, we find none that violated scripture. All members and visitors alike were invited to participate. No one ran ahead of anyone else for the purpose of eating the finest foods or with any intent of selfishness. No one was left with little or no food. Alcohol has never been a part of this or any activity associated with Skyway Hills church of Christ. And we certainly never humiliated the less fortunate of our assembly. In fact, it was our very concern for others that prompted us to have communion first in the custom to which we, in the Churches of Christ are familiar, so as not to alienate, exclude or offend anyone who would not choose to participate in the communion service to follow the morning assembly.

Upon careful and unbiased examination of the passage in I Corinthians one can clearly see it was the manner in which some of the Corinthians conducted themselves that Paul is addressing, not the setting of the Lord’s supper. If, as this brother claims, it is a setting issue, then one must conclude that Paul is prohibiting “eating in the building” for he clearly states that “if anyone is hungry, he should eat at home.” Further, if that is the case then one must conclude that Paul is teaching that division, gluttony and total disregard for our brothers and sisters welfare are acceptable as long as we display such behavior in the privacy of our own “homes” and carefully put on our “church faces” before communing with those we profess to love. Does anyone reading this really believe that we could come together for the purpose of taking the Lord’s Supper (in the manner in which every traditional Church of Christ has for the past 100 years) having an auditorium half full of rich gluttons, with the other half comprised of the starving poor, and this would somehow qual-

ify as communing in “a worthy manner” because we didn’t eat in front of each other, or the fellowship meal was separated from communion thereby hiding this selfishness?

The objections that were raised concerning Skyway Hills had to do with mechanics while the apostle Paul dealt with the Corinthians on attitudes of the heart. Could we have done the mechanics better at Skyway Hills on that Sunday? Possibly. But to focus on and be condemned because of those mechanics completely misses the point that Paul was making to the Corinthian church. Paul wanted their hearts made right with each other and with God. Paul wasn’t condemning a meal in conjunction with the Lord’s supper. What he was teaching them is to love one another.

Paul doesn’t contradict Christ. His writings complement the teachings of Jesus. Jesus was very clear when he said, “*I desire mercy, not sacrifice.*” (Mt. 9:13) Have we taken the time to “*go and learn what this means?*” Do we understand that Jesus is teaching religious ritual means less to God than love? “*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*” (Mt. 5:23,24) Do we quickly pass over the significance of the highest praise our Lord ever gave a man? One man in scripture was commended by Jesus himself as “*not (being) far from the kingdom of God.*” (Mk. 12:28-34) Do you know what that man said that earned him such high praise from our Savior? Here, I let you read it for yourself, “*To love (God) with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.*” Love — attitude — is more important than ceremony — ritual. That is what Christ taught and it is that same lesson Paul was teaching to the Corinthians. And it is the same lesson that

we are striving to learn at Skyway Hills church of Christ because to us the teachings of Christ are everything!

We are the elders of Skyway Hills church of Christ. These are the things we believe. These are the lessons that our Lord came to teach.

From: Steve Lavin, Lonnie Livingston, Glynn McMillen
 Skyway Hills Church of Christ
 3800 Hwy. 80 East, PO Box 5600
 Pearl, Mississippi 39288

CONTRIBUTIONS

Church of Christ, Dubberly, LA.....	\$25
Martin Bedford.....	\$200
John H. Brown.....	\$25
Frankfort Road church of Christ, Tuscumbia, AL.....	\$300
Bob & Betty Lacy.....	\$50
Frankie Lou Bailey.....	\$40
Ronald H. Allen.....	\$30
Floyd Roe.....	\$10
Highway 101 Church of Christ, Dallas, GA.....	\$68
Victor M. Eskew.....	\$100
Jim & Laurel Parsley.....	\$50
Saks church of Christ, Anniston, AL.....	\$50
Chuck & Nancy Verkist.....	\$25
Herb & Nancy Marlin.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	\$100
Anonymous.....	60
Anonymous.....	\$60
Anonymous.....	\$160
Anonymous.....	\$250
Robert Price (booklet maker)....	\$200
Anonymous (booklet maker)....	\$100
Beginning Balance.....	\$5,861.10
Credits	
Contributions.....	703.00
Booklet Maker.....	300.00
Debits	
Postage.....	1,301.48
Booklet Maker.....	300.00
Supplies, paper, ink.....	965.93
Ending Balance.....	\$5,296.69
Booklet Maker.....	\$13,500.00
Contributed.....	9,045.00
Remaining.....	\$ 4,455.00



SEEK THE OLD PATHS

stand for the truth! I purchased the videos for last year's lectureships. They are wonderful!" ...**Bea Stelmach, St. Clairsville, OH.** "I have received *STOP* for several years now and truly enjoy every page. With so many within the church falling away from the TRUTH it is very uplifting to read a sound and scriptural paper. God bless always" ...**Barbara J. Johnson, Apopka, FL.** "Please mail me three copies of the June *Seek the Old Paths*. I receive this, but passed my copy on to a friend. God bless you for making this available. Thank you" ...**Bobbi Williams, Westland, MI.** "I enjoy reading. Thank you" ...**Don Stingle, Clearwater, FL.** "A brother has died. Everett E. Wittig passed from this life early on June 10. He was a lover of Truth and a recent correspondent to your publication expressing his appreciation of your work. Please accept this contribution in his memory. Use it as best fits your needs. Keep up the great work. I, too, appreciate your great publication" ...**Claud G. Estep, Carlsbad, NM.** "Your publication of *Seek the Old Paths* is very informative and sound in the gospel. We thank you very much for those men who still stand for the truth, they get fewer each day" ...**Harold Nichols, church of Christ, Drumright, OK.** "I appreciate the *STOP* publications. They are very informative and truthful. They make one aware of what is going on in the brotherhood, which we wouldn't know if we didn't get the *STOP*. Keep up the good work" ...**John J. Glover, Jr., Cincinnati, OH.** "Keep up the good work. We want to come to the lectureship in July and hope health matters will allow it" ...**Jim & Frankie Bailey, Middleton, TN.** "May God bless you for upholding the truth of God's word" ...**Church of Christ, Crossville, TN.** "We appreciate your stand for the truth. You are an encouragement to us" ...**Tom & Marilyn Cope, Sierra Vista, AZ.** "Let's give thanks to God for giving us chance to work in his vineyard. By his grace I'm doing well, hope you are doing well, too. Thank you for adding my name into *Seek the Old Paths*. I'm very happy about them and hope you will continue to send them to me. I want to appeal to you if you can help me to get Eternal Kingdom which talks about church history. It will help me to become fiery preacher and continue to seek the old path. Hope my request will be granted in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hope to hear from you. My greetings to all the *Seek the Old Paths* team. May God bless you" ...**Noah Eduam, Ghana, West Africa.** "Please remove our name from your list. Thank you" ...**Charles McCoy, Tyler, TX.** "Brother Robinson, Thank you and the elders at the East Corinth church of Christ for your love of God's Word and the devotion you have shown in keeping it pure. May God continue to bless you in your work" ...**Richard Sample, Tulsa, OK.** "We appreciate and look forward to each issue of *STOP*. It is always timely and biblically sound. May God bless you as you walk in the light. In Christ" ...**Barry N. Clay.** "I have been receiving *STOP* and it has been great. Thank you" ...**Nathan Irwin, Searcy, AR.** "I like what is on the internet and am glad you folks are doing His work! Thank you and may God continue to bless you and your ministry" ...**Stephen Merritt, Nashville, TN.** (www.seektheoldpaths.com) "I have been receiving your publication for two months now. Thank God there are still people that stand for the truth. Please keep up the good work and pray for the turn around of our churches that have gone wrong" ...**Jennie Burgess, Hamlin, WV.** "I have found your articles insightful and full of wisdom. May God continue blessing you and your ministries" ...**M. Caggins, Phenix City, AL.** "Thank you for your excellent publication" ...**Joel Harris, Newbern, TN.** "I enjoy receiving & reading *STOP* each month. This work is to be commended. The congregation that I am preaching at would like to receive a bundle each month so we may distribute sound material to each family" ...**Brian McCrery, Smyrna, TN.** "Dear Brother, Thank you for adding us to your mailing list. We're in a unique situation. The church here has for years had a reputation of being more liberal, and even though I've only been with the church a short time, I, too have been more liberal in the past. However, we're growing and changing together. We all still prefer many of the newer worship songs and probably will continue to use them and to project them onto an overhead with Power Point, as long as their words are scriptural. However, we're seeking to better follow the old paths doctrinally and we know that God

"We appreciate so much you sending us *STOP*" ...**Sue Cannon, Fayette, AL.** "Please remove me from your mailing list" ...**Thomas McCuis-ton, Hillsdale, MI.** "Thank you and your staff for the good work you do for the *Seek the Old Paths* paper. I look forward to receiving it each month and immediately read it from front to back! God bless you for your

will bless this kind of change. May God bless your work. In His Service" ...**Name withheld.** "I enjoy *STOP* very much, thanks for the work that you do to help the cause of Christ" ...**Danny.** "I have been receiving and enjoying *STOP* for a while and have shared it with a very close friend and brother in Christ who would like to receive the 'letter' also. Keep up the wonderful work" ...**Robert Batchelder, Houston, TX.** "I thoroughly enjoy your publication. I read it each month and make copies and mail to all my children and quite a few friends that are not members of the Lord's church. I appreciate the good work you are doing for the Lord. Keep it up" ...**Ken Gray, Cotton Valley, LA.** "Thank you and may God bless you" ...**Mike Sullivan.** "We love *STOP*. Please keep it coming. We appreciate so much the work you are doing for the cause of our Lord, may he continue to bless you in your good work" ...**Bennie Vickers, Green Cove Spring, FL.** "I enjoy *Seek The Old Paths* so very much. Thank you for all your good work" ...**Marvine Rogers, Fulton, MO.** "Thanks for your paper, it is a great teaching tool, keep up the good work" ...**Wesley Snyder, Mexico, MO.** "Please send me *Seek the Old Paths*. It's so good to find out I'm not going crazy. I found myself thinking maybe I'm really not a Christian because of the way I believe and the way I was brought up to believe — as my mother would say "the Old Church of Christ" and it's hard to find them now. I've gone to several and then started going to other religions and THEY ARE ALL THE SAME. I THINK I have found one in Northern Kentucky and will go back to it. I was really starting to get depressed and really questioning and then I 'accidentally' found your web site! Thanks!" ...**Name withheld.** "I want to first say thank you for your publication. I enjoy getting them and sharing them. Please keep up the excellent work. I would like to continue to receive your publication" ...**Mark Johnson, Whitesboro, TX.** "Please subscribe my wife and I to your excellent publication. Thank you very much and may the Lord bless your work!" ...**Rich & Kim Rogers, Worthington, IN.** "Thank you for providing good, sound wisdom in your paper" ...**Rachel Doolittle, Longmont, CO.**

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

Editor: **Garland M. Robinson** / Associate Editor: **Jimmy Bates**

<http://www.seektheoldpaths.org>

EAST CORINTH CHURCH OF CHRIST
1801 CRUISE ST.
CORINTH, MS 38834-5108

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 253
Corinth, MS