

# **LIVING ISSUES**

by

**W. W. OTEY**

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W. W. Otey

W. W. Otey  
Born: March 14, 1867  
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## DEDICATION

To the man who first deeply influenced my course of life; to a man who has devotedly loved God and his word as any man whom I have ever known; to the man who held himself to the strictest observances of his conviction of duty; to the man who was the most uncompromising with error; to the man who believed with all his heart that the church of the Lord as set forth in the New Testament was revealed by God for all nations and for all time; to the man who the author is fully persuaded would, if living, approve without hesitation this book; to the man whose memory the author has cherished for many years; to the memory of J. T. Showalter, this book is dedicated.

## INTRODUCTION

Few men now living have had the experience of the venerable W. W. Otey in seeing first hand the develop meet, progress, and tragic denouncement of the "missionary society" movement. Few are as well qualified as is he to speak with authority—the authority that can come only from experience—as to the seemingly innocuous yet dangerous and devious steps by which simple "cooperation" becomes full-fledged and undeniable apostasy. In those dark and trying days of half a century ago it was a very small band of courageous and uncompromising fighters who stopped the march of digression and saved the day for truth. By no means least among those valiant warriors was the man who has written this book. Indeed, many students of the Restoration Movement are inclined to date the real beginning of the "counterattack" against the society advocates from the famous Otey-Briney debate in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1908. The mighty work of Lipscomb in Tennessee and of McGarvey and others in Texas had brought to a slow grinding halt the cyclone of destruction that had swept through the churches. With the publication of the Otey-Briney debate it became apparent to all that the destructive advance of the innovators was being contained; the counterattack got under way, an faithful Christians everywhere took new heart and new courage.

Now in his eighty-fifth year, Brother Otey's mind is as clear and quick as in days of old; his memory for details is astonishing; and his powers of logical analysis, and clear, succinct statement of issues are as precise and sharp as ever. In this book he deals with *facts*, basing his arguments, inferences, and conclusions squarely on *documentary evidence*. He makes no guesses, gives credence to no rumors, and indulges in no wild charges and

complaints. But with the calm restraint and dignity that should always characterize controversy between brethren, he points out what is happening, and pleads for the return to a course that is safe, scriptural, and above question. His words of warning and caution are due the very greatest consideration possible. In these pages is not only the calm, deliberate judgment of great age and experience; here also is the voice of wisdom and of learning. Brother Otey has not lived through nearly a century of history without learning some lessons from it. He has not been through the thick of a bitter and prolonged battle without becoming "battle wise." He knows where the danger lies, and what the signs of it are.

In this troubled day, when many men of piety and sincerity are so intent on "getting the job done" that they are inclined to ignore the principles involved, it is highly important that such a book as Brother Otey has written be carefully studied. Too many people are going along with the assumption, though unstated, that "the end justifies the means" without realizing how inevitable it is that "the means will determine the end!" In seeking to establish undenominational Christianity in foreign lands there is very real danger that the means being used may make a denomination of the Lord's church in every land.

This is a book for study and meditation. Its material is taken from the contemporary scene, to be sure; but its principles are timeless. They will have an application in any age and in any nation where men seek after God.

—Fanning Yater Tant

## PREFACE

The title to this book may appear to some, rather unusual. But it is the only title that even suggested itself to my mind as suitable. From the beginning of God's revelations to man, the question has been whether man would, conform his life to the plain teaching of God's law and institution or whether he would add to, change and modify God's revealed plan. That has been the fundamental issue from the beginning, and will so continue to be the issue so long as man tampers with God's revealed plan to save man.

The specific questions raised in this book are of the most vital importance to the church today and for the years in the future. The peace and unity of the church depend, upon how a few fundamental questions are determined. Exactly the same principles were involved more than half a century ago. We know the fearful results. Many just now are trying to brush these questions off as of little importance, and either believe or try to believe, that the present disturbance is just a mere breeze that will soon die down and all will be calm and serene. Believe me, dear brother, I would pray God with all my heart that if it be possible that the matters disturbing the peace and threatening the unity of the church of the Lord might cease to be stressed, pressed and urged. I do not desire to intrude my personal feelings upon the reader, but many are the sleepless hours I have spent in the silent night, meditating on these matters, and struggling with the thought whether I should record the contents of this book for the serious consideration of the present and future members of the church of the Lord.

1. Is there developing centralized agencies that will lead to institutionalism?

2. Can the church from the Lord's treasury support

schools to teach some Bible and the various sciences, including athletics of various kinds?

3. Is it possible for those who manage and control what are commonly called Bible colleges from becoming corrupt in teaching, and so lead to another apostasy?

4. Does any Christian have a scriptural right to teach, stress and press his opinions on anyone else, or the church?

5. Can the local congregation settle any question, even seemingly small by the majority vote without legislating in the kingdom of Christ?

6. Shall the church embark on a program, as *the church*, of establishing and maintaining social institutions such as community centers, athletic fields, nursing and sewing schools ?

7. In brief shall the church continue to build strictly according to the New Testament model or embark on the same character of social program that has been practiced by denominations for years past? What will our answer be?

Belle Plaine, Kansas.

W. W. OTEY

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## Chapter 1

### SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

Many think there is absolute contradiction between what is called science and the historical statements in the Bible. As a result, some are prejudiced against anything called science. For the same reason some are prejudiced against the Bible. A clear understanding of the matter is greatly needed. Let it here be stated with emphasis that believers in the history of the Bible make no war on science in general.

Science is defined as "systematized knowledge of any department of mind or matter."

The Greeks divided what they called science into three divisions. In more recent times, elaborate classifications have been made. Herbert Spencer, Bacon, Comte, and Wundt, have divided and sub-divided what is called science into perhaps more than one hundred classifications. The word science is applied to every mental concept, to every mechanical department, to every mere theory advanced by man. To say then that science in its broad meaning contradicts the historical statements of the Bible is equivalent to saying such exact sciences as mathematics and the historical statements of the Bible contradict each other. Social science, medical science, science of agriculture, and perhaps more than one hundred other sciences are in perfect agreement with every historical statement in the Bible. Those who would defend the Bible against attacks on its credibility will do well to guard with care their words.

The science of geology treats of the origin, age, and changes of the earth. Some seem to believe that geology

and the Bible are in sharp disagreement. Geology is no more than a theory—that is, the phase of geology that deals with the origin of the earth. The Bible does not state the method that God employed in forming the earth as we now know it. Various theories have been advanced in an effort to explain just how and when the earth was formed.

Between the teaching of that branch of science that treats of the origin and development of life, there is the plainest possible contradiction. If the theory of evolution be true, the historical statements of man's creation are false. Many attempts have been made to harmonize the Bible and evolution, but failure has been written large over such efforts. Only by emphatically denying the literal statements in Genesis can evolution be accepted. Perhaps it will enable the reader to understand the matter better by quoting from the book, *The Origin and Destiny of Man*, written some years ago. I quote from pages 126 to 132 inclusively:

"An hypothesis is a theory formulated to explain known facts. To be credible, it must explain at least all the major facts to which it is applied. If the theory not only fails to explain the facts, but is directly contradictory to many of the known facts, the hypothesis must be recognized as untrue. For example, take the Laplacian hypothesis of the formation of the earth. Rollin T. Chamberlain says: 'Throughout the nineteenth century the nebular hypothesis, launched by the French mathematician, Laplace, held almost universal sway and was confidently believed to be the true story of the development of the solar system,— therefore it was a wonderful hypothesis and must perforce be true. Geology was confidently based upon it. For a hundred years it was not seriously questioned, but more recently many difficulties of a very grave nature have

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been brought to light. Let us look into some of these in order to understand why this time-honored theory, which has played such an important part in the development of the earth sciences, has finally had to be abandoned." (Quotations from Chamberlain in *The Nature of the World and of Man*, pages 41-42).

Here is an example of an hypothesis confidently believed a hundred years. Very largely, earth sciences were based on it. It was the starting point from which many scientific lines were run. But it was found to be untrue, and the theory of geology had to be started all over again. The Laplacian hypothesis was thought to be about as firmly established as a starting point from which to survey other sciences as the magnetic needle served the geographer in running his lines on plain and mountain. And in what difficulty would the map maker find himself should he discover that his compass had been pointing in another direction than toward the magnetic pole ? His surveys would have to be all run over, and new maps made. And this is just what Chamberlain says happened in some sciences when it was discovered that the universally accepted Laplacian hypothesis of the formation of the solar system was not true. And who would afterwards trust surveyors using compasses made in the same factory ? And this is just one reason why creationists are just a little slow to follow every trail surveyed with compasses bearing the trade mark of atheism. They are so often found not pointing true to the magnetic pole of truth. Chamberlain says entirely new surveys must be made, and plates for entirely new maps for earth sciences by reason of the fact that the Laplacian compass was found to be pointing way off from the magnetic pole of fact. It was found that many facts were contrary to the entire

theory. Osborne says, as already noted, "That the entire survey of the causes of evolution made during one hundred and fifty years would have to be discarded and a new start made, using as compass his energy concept, for new and untried paths of exploration that may be followed during the present century." Other instances can be cited of hypotheses that were confidently accepted for many years only at last to be discarded because they were proven to be contrary to known facts. Creationists rejoice in every discovered fact, but are a little skeptical about some of the theories offered.

The theory of creation must now be rigidly tested. The theory that best explains the facts that are observed and known to exist in the plant and animal kingdoms certainly is the more worthy of belief. Will the theory of creation explain the known facts that are observed in the order of life now on the earth? If it fails in a single important point, its credibility will be impaired.

"The earth is peopled with plants, animals and men. These all had a beginning on the earth and had their origin by some process, and now have well known attributes and are subject to definite natural laws. Creation and evolution-miracle and natural laws are the two processes seriously proposed to explain the origin and present state of life on the earth. Creationists believe that life began by a supernatural process, by miracle, for two chief reasons. If the same processes or forces were now in operation that originated the first life, most assuredly life would still be originated as at the beginning. Second, no natural law now originates life, and it is inconceivable how natural law could ever have produced life from dead matter. At any rate, no natural law is now operating that can produce life. Most assuredly, then, the power

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which originated the first life on the earth is no longer present. That being true, whatever power or force which originated the first life on the earth, was supernatural when compared with any power or force now operating. Therefore creationists accept the view that God by a supernatural process-miracle originated the first life to appear on the earth, and endowed it with the power to transmit life to offspring. And this theory must now be tried by the same rigid rule of critical analysis as that which has been applied to the theory of evolution.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: And God said, Let the waters swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth. And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind" (Gen. 1st chapter). Here is a brief historical statement of the beginning of the present order of plant and animal life now on earth. It is not stated whether a male and female of each kind of animal was formed from which all others are descended, or whether the command, "Let the earth bring forth," caused the first generation of plants and animals suddenly to appear largely over the earth's surface. On these ideas each may "interpret" for himself. The fundamental thought is that the first forms came by a miracle, at the command of God, in contravention of natural law, and that all now on the earth have been "brought forth" after the original kind. It is an historical statement of an affirmed fact, and can only be believed or disbelieved. It is as clear and specific as it is possible to make it. The fundamental statement is that God specifically created families or major groups of

plants and animals distinct from each other, and commended them to "bring forth" after their kind and must either be accepted as true or rejected as false. The whole issue turns on this vital point. Creationists are willing to rest the whole issue on which will best stand the crucial test.

The countless numbers of plants and insects and animals that swarm the oceans, rivers, air and on the earth, bear irrefutable witness to the miracle of the divine command, "Let them bring forth after their kind." From the tiniest microscopical plant to the giant oak; from the invisible disease germ to the leviathan of the deep and the mighty beast of the jungle, all are from parentage of "their kind." Evolutionist W. C. Allee tells us, "There are some 600,000 classified species of invertebrates and 36,000 known species of vertebrates." (*The Nature of the World and of Man*, page 261).

What a cloud of witnesses! There are fully 636,000 families of witnesses and the number of individuals making up these families is innumerable. The gaps separating these species are never crossed. The command, "Let them bring forth after their kind," is as immutable as the eternal verities. There are variations in plenty, but all are within the limits of each major group. There has been no observed instance of the appearance of a single new specie, no two plants or animals are exactly alike, but the offspring are "after the kind" of their parents. We have beef and dairy types of cattle. By crossing, selecting and rejecting within the species, these can be greatly modified, but they are all cattle, with the split hoof and other fundamental characteristics. So with all plants and animals. But these variations never produce new species. The existence of 636,000 distinct species with separating

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gaps that are never crossed, bear witness that within the knowledge of man, the command to "bring forth after their kind" has never been violated.

Evolutionists teach that natural law acting on plants and animals will eliminate the inferior and preserve the superior, and thus improve both plants and animals. We know that grasses, grains, fruits and animals are far superior to serve man's needs today than they were one hundred years ago. How has this great improvement come about? By leaving nature to work alone? Most assumedly not! It has come wholly by the toil of man rejecting the inferior and preserving the superior, that this great improvement has been made. Let man cease his mental and physical toil and leave nature to work unguided and the gain of a hundred years will quickly be lost. If left alone to nature, the best plants and animals not only do not improve, but rapidly deteriorate. Some three hundred years ago the Spanish turned loose some well-bred horses on the plains of the Southwest. The small worthless range ponies are the result of the deterioration when left alone to nature. The worthless wild hogs of the southern states are direct descendants of at least fairly well-bred domesticated swine. Doubtless in both cases of ponies, and swine, by long hard toil in feeding, breeding, rejecting and preserving, the descendants of both could be made useful for man's needs. Improvements in the products of nature are paid for in serious thought and patient physical toil. Cease to toil, and all gain is quickly lost.

What do these facts, plainly read and known by all men, prove? The theory of evolution? Nay, verily, but creation. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very good." "Behold I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of the earth, and

every tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food" (Gen. 1st chapter). The declaration that the vegetable products of the earth were "very good," and given to man for food, was made while man was yet sinless.

But man sinned. What change took place? "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,' (Gen. 3rd chapter). While man remained obedient, he was promised food without the penalty of toil attached. When he transgressed, the earth was cursed and its products degraded. Henceforth "the sweat of thy face" was to be the price of his bread. This price must still be paid. It is well known that it is with great toil that man gains his food. Governments spend millions of dollars combating insects and diseases that prey upon food plants and animals to the end that man may eat bread. Scientists are often speculating as to which will most likely win—man or his tiny insect enemies. Scientists of the highest rank are constantly engaged in study and toil, trying to improve the products of the ground for man's welfare. Every nook and corner of the earth is being searched. From the interior of China and the plains of Persia have been brought a few bugs and wasps, each costing many times its weight in gold, to combat injurious insects, to the end that man may eat more and better fruit. Man throughout the habitable earth is engaged in a titanic struggle with harmful insects, fungus diseases of plants and noxious weeds, in fulfillment of the declaration as recorded in Genesis, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." The curse placed upon the ground because of man's sin, has so filled it with

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enemies to man's ease, that by far the greater part of his arduous toil is to gain bread. And yet, perhaps, half of the world goes to bed hungry.

Every unquestioned fact here stated is proof incontestable of the truth of the creation and fall of man as recorded in Genesis. Because of man's transgression, all the products of the ground were degraded, and the earth was filled with harmful plants and insects that were to be the enemies of man's ease. The duty of toil became the price of bread. By great toil of brain and muscle, man can bring the products of the ground part way up to where they were when pronounced "very good," and given to man for food. Cease to pay the penalty, cease to toil, and they quickly sink to their degraded level. The knowledge of these facts is almost universal. Their testimony is felt in every weary muscle, scintillates from every sweat drop, and confronts man at every meal. It is an agreed axiom, that they who eat honest bread shall have toiled for it in fields, factories, or some other worthy labor. These evidences of the truth of the history of Genesis, are not buried deep in rock, about the age and interpretation of which scarcely no two agree, but are present, seen and experienced universally. All know and admit the facts. Creation explains these facts.

It is admitted that plants and animals as found in a state of nature do not well serve man's needs.

It is admitted that by extreme toil man can improve plants and animals that they may better serve his purpose.

It is well known that as soon as man ceases to toil, plants and animals quickly return to their degraded state.

It must also be admitted that the history of the creation and fall of man as recorded in Genesis perfectly explains the facts that all men know to exist. But not a single fact

here cited is explained by the theory of evolution. The theory of evolution and the universally known facts are in opposition at every point.

Was Moses inspired to write what actually took place in the beginning as recorded in Genesis? Or did he, unaided by inspiration, formulate a theory that perfectly explains the facts that now exist nearly four thousand years after he wrote the theory? Which of the two conclusions is the more reasonable? Evolution fails to explain the facts that now exist. The history in Genesis agrees with every fact thus far discovered or demonstrated. Evolution offers no explanation why plants and animals can be so rapidly improved by toil, and why all gain is so quickly lost when toil ceases. It teaches that plants and animals "bring forth" contrary to "their kind" to the extent that fish "bring forth" reptiles, reptiles "bring forth" birds, and that some "ape-like form" brought forth HAN.

## Chapter II

### THE CHURCH AND ITS MISSION

Jesus said, "On this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

From whatever view the church is considered it transcends in value all other institutions or creations to both man and God. God planned it in the eternity that was before the foundation of the world. Daniel interpreted the "little stone" of the king's vision, that "breaketh in pieces" all other governments and became a great mountain and filled the whole earth, as the kingdom that God would set up, as the church of the Lord. It should never be destroyed, but would stand forever—till time shall be no more. Its greatness in power, perfection and glory was far beyond the imagination of man. Saints and prophets stood in awe, even when considering it in prophecy. With how much more reverence and humility should we mortals regard it, since it is established! Should not then the hand of man be stayed from attempts to change or alter in the least its form, and its solemn services of worship? Can man be so presumptuous as to think of improving that glorious institution, the church, in its organization, or its heaven-inspired simple form of worship? Such attempts have been made down through the ages. Don't flatter yourself, dear reader, that "it can't happen to us." Complacency is always a dangerous atmosphere in which to live. Human nature never changes except as changed by unwavering faith in the Lord, and New Testament order of things.

The church was set up in Jerusalem on Pentecost. In

about forty years, with no organization except the local assembly and the work of individuals it spread throughout the Roman Empire. No other teaching and influence has ever compared in any measure with the great work done with no other appeal than the simple gospel, and no other means and method than the simple plan of the Lord. No other power than the gospel and the simple plan the Lord inaugurated, has ever or can ever, turn sinful men to Christ, build them up and fit them for heaven. True, human means, methods and organizations sometimes make a show of success as it appears in the eyes of the world.

Let it be stated here with emphasis that the gospel was given for all nations and races and for all time. The simplest form of worship of the local assembly was sufficient in Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, and in every other place where Christ was preached. No change in the least measure was ever made to adapt the gospel and church to suit the customs and manners of the people. The gospel was never intended to deal with customs, manners or anything else except such things as were wrong and hurtful to the people. The gospel and church was given to change sinful habits of people, and make them worthy of final redemption. Sin, rebellion, and human nature has been the same since Cain slew Abel. Sin is the same whether in China, Japan, Africa, or in the city or hamlet in America. The disease, sin, has been and will remain, the same till time is no more. Had religious leaders heeded this truth, the gospel and church would never have been mutilated and rendered inefficient for the salvation of the lost. One could as well try to improve and substitute something else than water for thirst, food for hunger, air to breathe. To violate God's law in nature is to reap the penalty. Nature never forgives a sin against it. Shall we conclude

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then that God's law of the "spirit of life in Christ Jesus" can be changed to suit the worldly minded and be pleasing to God ?

The church survived the greatest effort of the mightiest atheistic empire to destroy it. Under persecution it grew greater and practically swept paganism from the world.

In spite of the development of the "man of sin," the long period of the dark ages, in spite of partial reform that was checked by creed makers, in spite of the flood of denominational teaching and practices introduced by the first great apostasy, the church still lives. Its earth phase will end only with the final redemption and glorification as the bride of the returning Lord.

It had its origin in the unknowable fulness of God's love, was planned by his infinite wisdom, and established by his power. He enlisted patriarchs, Moses, prophets, and apostles to mature it for the redemption of man. His purpose was, and is, to reconcile, redeem and glorify a sinful and rebellious world. The earth and countless numbers of stars, thousands of light years distant—all pale in value in comparison with God's scheme of redemption as embodied in the church of the Lord. The material universe is material, temporal, and will finally be dissolved. The church is God's only institution through which to rescue from the thralldom of sin, the spirit of man made in the image of God to cleanse, justify and fit him at last to dwell in the presence of God through eternity.

All institutions are great or weak according to the strength or imperfections of those who form them. Yet it is hard for fallible man to accept the church from the Lord without attempting to improve it in some respects. God himself can not improve his work. Only if man would properly consider the infinite greatness of him

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who gave the church, then he would be deterred from his vanity.

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men (John 1:1-4). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of all creation, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist, and he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:15-18). That which the Holy Spirit here ascribes to Jesus Christ, is far beyond the loftiest mind more than faintly to comprehend. Yet the highest place ascribed to him is that of the head of the church. One can only bow in awe, reverence, praise, and adoration. It is beyond our power to understand that he would descend from such exalted station of such power and glory to become the head of the church, its members weak and erring creatures. How vain and presumptuous for man to change the form, means, or method of so glorious an institution, the church of the Lord!

He "emptied himself" of the glories of heaven, and descended to the lowest state of humility. He took upon himself the body of man. He suffered every indignity that Satan could devise, even to the most shameful death on the Roman cross. To have any conception of what he gave up in leaving his heavenly habitation in order to establish the church, one would need to know the in

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describable glories that surround the throne of God in heaven. We have not seen nor observed anything comparable to that glory. Words inspired by the Holy Spirit can only convey to our earth-bound finite minds more than a faint conception of what the great sacrifice meant to the Lord. I am persuaded that leaving his glory was far greater than what he suffered on the earth. He so loved the church that he "gave himself up for it."

Too often we, the church, seem to think that Jesus finished his work on earth, ascended to his throne, and left us alone without actual concern. Yet he is our mediator in the presence of God, pleading in the interests of his scriptural body. Not only so, but the Holy Spirit assures us: "Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one that hath been tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need" (Heb. 4:14-16).

When one needs counsel to plead his cause in the civil court how important it is to have a wise attorney. We, the church, must soon appear before the bar of the heavenly court. Should we receive justice untempered with mercy, the verdict would be against us. But Jesus is not only our mediator, but is also our great high priest, interceding in our behalf. Through his word, he urges us to "come boldly to the throne of grace," and assures us that we will find grace to help us in every time of need. No other institution than the church, no other individuals except faithful members of his body, the church, are given such encouraging assurance of present aid. Only

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by living close to him in spirit will we "rejoice with joy unspeakable." Blessings, praise, honor be unto his holy name because of what he has done for us and what he is anxious to do to aid us—only if we fully trust him.

One of the finest essays exalting the Christ and the church, that I have ever read, appeared in Gospel Proclaimer, March, 1951, written by Brother G. H. P. Showalter, title,

## ABIDING IN CHRIST AND WALKING IN THE LIGHT

I give the article in full, as follows:

Paul quotes from the Psalmist, "The way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of: God before their eyes (Rom. 3:17, 18). To know as here used, means to accept, approve, recognize, uphold, support, depend on, rely on and advocate. It describes a state in which men have lost confidence in, and reliance upon the simple beautiful truths and requirements of the doctrine of Christ as set forth in the New Testament, and resort to hazardous experiments of substituting for the truth of heaven, the complex schemes and devices of human wisdom in those things that pertain to the eternal welfare of the soul.

Above all institutions, the church of the Lord Jesus should be esteemed and magnified. Every true, loyal Christian's heart should echo the sweet sentiment, "I love thy kingdom, Lord, the house of shine abode."

Yet men have tampered and trifled with this holy temple of God, and perverted and corrupted the work and worship. They have brought in things not taught in nor prescribed by the law of God, and that they could not and did not learn of Christ. They have "not so learned Christ"—have not been so taught of him.

The law of Christ plainly authorizes singing. No one

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questions that. It is clearly taught and required. To this is added abundant approved precedent. The example of our Lord and his disciples is of impelling interest and significance—"they sang a hymn." They did not play a tune. We are commanded to sing, but nowhere commanded to play on a mechanical instrument in worship to God. This is sufficient for all who love the light and are determined to walk in it. To go beyond this is to transgress the divine law.

If claimed that this is a simple matter—so much more easily then can it be observed, and so much more inexcusable are those persons who do not observe it. Those who will not confine themselves to these simple, plain limitations of truth are transgressing the law of God, adopting in its stead—schemes and devices, doctrines and commandments of men, and love darkness rather than light.

Of the same class are those who organize societies and institutions either competitive, supplemental, substitutional, with, to, or for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is designed to do such work as they claim to do as missionary. They are not satisfied with what is taught in the doctrine of Christ. This is clear from the fact that they adopt something wholly untaught, thus entirely unauthorized in the doctrine of Christ.

Not only are such religious societies unauthorized in the New Testament—they are excluded, and thus forbidden. Paul to the Ephesians says, "Unto him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever. Amen" (Eph. 5 :21). Glory that is to be ascribed to God, and so justly due by all intelligences of earth and heaven—all his glory—is to be in

Christ, and his holy church. Glory, then will never reach the  
divine and majestic Creator who sits on the throne of heaven,

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except it be ascribed through Jesus Christ in the church of his love. He can not be glorified in any institution or society.

Whoever finds any other institution for religious service of any sort does not glorify God, honor Christ, or exalt the church. He is walking in darkness, not in the light—for he is walking in a way where the light of truth has never shone."

I sincerely wish the reader to consider with great care Brother Showalter's true and strong statements in the foregoing from the Gospel Proclaimer, March 1951, issue. Weigh them carefully, and decide if they may be applied to some institutions so highly praised and exploited by members of the church of Christ today. It is human nature to see the mote in the other person's eye.

## CHURCH ORGANIZATION

We live in an age of organization. From the federal government down to the smallest rural school district, everything is organized. Every phase of business or school activity is organized. Almost nothing is done except through an organization. The denominations in all their religious activities, have copied the world in organization. The spirit of organization permeates the consciousness of people in general. We speak and write much about "organizing the church," and speak of the church as an organization. There is grave danger, and much evidence that we are coming to think of the church as something like human organizations.

God has left man free to work out his welfare in earthly matters. In human fields of endeavor organizations work well to accomplish his aim. God has not legislated in the

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field of temporal matters. But in spiritual matters his plans and methods were for all races and for all time.

The denominational religious world has ignored the pattern so plainly set forth in the New Testament, and patterned closely the methods of organizations that originated in the business world. Their plea is that the New Testament method is out of date not suited for our age of human progress. This deceptive philosophy has been exposed and steadfastly rejected by churches of Christ for more than half a century. It is the same subtle plea made by digressives that rent asunder the blood-bought body of the Lord, and developed into the last apostasy.

When men who have made commendable success in business matters, and are pious, devout, and have a thorough knowledge of the New Testament, and believe that we must follow closely the pattern revealed in the gospel—when men of such experience and character are appointed as overseers of the church of the Lord, may, and often do, make fine scriptural success as elders. They have learned how to direct the efforts of other people, and know how to work with associates, which far too many without such background and experience, have never learned. All honor is due such worthy servants in the kingdom of the Lord.

But it is unfortunately true that some men of sound morals, who have made a fine success in business, but who have not enjoyed sufficient leisure from their strenuous business activities to study the word of the Lord with that diligence required to become rooted and grounded in the unalterable truth of the simple gospel methods authorized by the Lord, are appointed to the oversight of the church.

When men of this sort of background and lack of scriptural qualifications, are appointed as overseers in the church of the Lord, the simple gospel methods do not

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satisfy their ambition to do "big things"—big when judged by men. The old methods are outmoded—not suited to carry on work on a grand scale. They devise and launch enterprises far greater than can be supported by one congregation. Herein lies the greatest danger to the corruption of the simple church of the Lord, and setting in motion a movement that will mature, as always in the past, into apostasy.

In brief, just what constitutes a church of the Lord? The church is made up of those who have been "called out of the world," to serve the Lord. In apostolic days, and so now, when the gospel is preached and obeyed, the disciples associated themselves together in local assemblies. They taught the word of the Lord, carried on the work and worship commanded by the Lord. Such assemblies constituted the church in that locality and were the spiritual body of the Lord, even before any one had been formerly appointed to have the oversight. Was such a voluntary assembly an organization? We think not. Yet it constituted the church in that locality.

When men matured the character qualifications needed, some were appointed to take the oversight of the congregation. In Acts 14 :23, "And when tines had appointed them elders in every city in every church " In Titus 1:5 we read, "For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou mightest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city. "

If it be lawful to call the church an organization, it is beyond doubt the simplest and least complex organization known to man. Yet it embodies the wisdom of God, and in so far as carried out is a perfect plan for the salvation of man. For this purpose it is as perfectly adapted as light for the eye, and the eye to light, as food for hungry, and

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hunger for food, as water for the thirsty. God's provisions for man's physical needs, and his revelation for man's spiritual needs can not be improved, we may reverently say, by God himself.

Why then, has mankind from the first changed, rejected, and substituted in the field of God's revelation? The answer is so simple and apparent that it is surprising that it should ever be asked.

God made no provisions in the gospel and church to satisfy man's ambition to have the pre-eminence of exalted POSITION over others, nor to satisfy his desire for amusement and entertainment. The duty of elders does not permit them to "lord" it over the church. Their scriptural work is as leaders, having the oversight, directing the membership in carrying on the work and worship of the local congregation. As overseers, their work does not go beyond the local congregation. Their work receives no material reward, but meager praise and often harsh criticism. The deacons are only servants.

Every unscriptural organization from the Catholic church down to the last and least denomination, was begun and still exists in order to make provisions for ambitious man to have the rule over others. The Lord said, "He that will be great among you let him be servant of all." The only POSITION of greatness in the church of the Lord is that of humble service. If the desire to serve rather than to be served prevailed in the hearts of all denominational dignitaries, all unscriptural institutions would be dissolved.

The worship set in the church by the Lord is the simplest observance, perhaps, ever practiced by man. They met in assemblies to teach the word of the Lord, to unite in prayer, in the fellowship, in singing praise, and to remember the Lord in breaking of the bread. There is not a single act

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enjoined by the Lord, and devoutly observed by the New Testament church, that makes the least appeal to the fleshly desire for entertainment and amusement. But it is all sufficient to satisfy the heart and soul of the devout, humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. The truly spiritually minded neither need nor desire more. Not so with the carnally minded members. Such demand to be amused and entertained, else they will not attend the place set apart for worship, here is found the answer as to why worldly observances first came into the church, and why many who should lead the flock in spiritual matters are wondering how we are going to hold the worldly minded of both old and young to the church. The Lord said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me" (John 11:32). Vain, indeed, is resort made to "draw" people by any other power than the person and teaching of the Lord. The church, with all its appointments, was given to build up and prepare the saved so that they will be worthy of the association with the heavenly host.

Sometimes men who have made a brilliant success in big business for years, suddenly conclude that they can become leaders of the church in general. Two striking examples come to mind. A number of years ago Clinton Davidson went from Kentucky to the vicinity of New York City, and made his mark in the insurance business, which is an honorable business. But he had, seemingly, been out of close association with the church of Christ for a number of years. He seemed to think that our religious papers were anything else than what they should be. He mailed out a large number of questionnaires, asking the recipients to state what kind of paper they preferred. As a result of his information he stated that 85% wanted a paper of milder, sweeter spirit. Being unable to purchase a well

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established paper of large circulation, he took over the Christian Leader from Brother Rowe, whose health was fast failing. He formed a Board of Managers, and Brother E. W. McMillan was selected as editor-in-chief. Ostensibly, to prevent any criticism of its contents, each issue was copyrighted, something unheard of before, so far as my knowledge goes. Davidson was the financial backer. What seems to be reliable reports, showed that he lost \$10,000.00 in the two years that he had it in his control.

More recently Brother D. F. Anguish, Dresden, Ohio, who seems to have been quite a business success in matters of the world, took over the Christian Leader as publisher and owner. He travels in his own plane, and is often in distant places in Tennessee, Arkansas, Michigan, Indiana, and Chicago. He meets with numbers of preachers, and holds conferences relating to his enterprises. So far his business success, and traveling so much in his own plane, indicates his importance in a business field. But since becoming publisher of the Christian Leader, he seems all at once to be in the front ranks in pressing his centralized human institutions. But it appears that churches in the Northeast are not responding with moral and financial support as he would like. Not long ago, he wrote: "I wonder if the Lord is not more concerned about our motive than about our method." That sort of expression is not New Testament language, nor is it New Testament principles. Reporting a recent such meeting Detroit, he has this to say: "Too often the human inclination is to better oneself at the expense of another, or for a clique to try the same plan of action, is evidenced even in the field of religion. It is the sort of technique employed so successfully by both the Nazis and the Communists. It is to divide and conquer."

"Thinking Christians, when they hear this approach be-

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ing used, can come to only one conclusion. Somewhere along the line the spirit of Christ, at least in completeness, has been lost."

"The greatest burden which any organized effort has to carry, is the retarding weight of those who constantly engage themselves in tearing down, in the hope that in rebuilding they will personally be in a stronger POSITION."

The church of the Lord, as it is able to lift itself above the pettiness of people, progresses and becomes a vital influence for spreading the gospel. But it can not rise above these inhibitions, and it can not serve successfully unless the spirit of Christ-element that helps us transcend our personal prejudices, is truly the motivating factor" (Christian Leader, May 15, 1951).

What has provoked this outburst from Brother Anguish? Have some of the brethren in the North been exploiting some sort of institution not known in the New Testament? Or is it because some faithful brethren are not joining his burning zeal to establish an institution not known to the word of the Lord? He seems to be certain that some brethren have formed a "clique," in order to better themselves at the expense of somebody else. He sadly laments that "somewhere along the line the spirit of Christ, at least in its completeness, has been lost." Was it the "spirit of Christ" at least in completeness, that moved him to make the charge that "It is the sort of technique employed so successfully by both the Nazis and Communists." What "organized effort" are brethren "retarding"? What are these brethren "tearing" down that so deeply moves Brother Anguish to employ such language against members of the body of the Lord? Is it something that the Lord built, If so, speak out and tell your readers just what it is. In years gone by I heard and read many outbursts from

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digressives against those who opposed missionary societies through which to preach the gospel. But I am sure that I have never before heard nor read of one who accused his brethren of employing the "technique" of both Nazis and the Communists. Please tell us plainly what these brethren are "retarding" and "tearing down." Show plainly that your "organized effort" is authorized in the New Testament.

### Explanation

I planned to write this book and deal with general principles. But it is for immediate circulation, and deals with issues that are vital today. We can't separate teaching and practice, from the teacher. Besides, when one boldly sets forth his POSITION in a religious paper, it becomes of vital concern to the whole brotherhood. The questions treated in this volume are seriously disturbing the peace of the church and threatening its unity, yes its unity. The issues are fundamental. A clear, vigorous discussion is imperative. If the matters causing this disturbance are scriptural, they must be taught and urged. But if they are purely of human devising, then those who press them assume a great responsibility.

But it has always been true that those who introduce things that disturb the peace charge those who ask for scriptural authority for such things with being the cause of the disturbance.

It is also true that un-Christian names are called. Notice in the above quotation, "clique," "lacking in the spirit of Christ," "pettiness," "prejudices," and perhaps the most unfortunate, "technique of both Nazis and Communists." I deeply regret feeling it necessary to call attention to such charges. Whatever differences exist should be discussed in the spirit and dignity of gospel dignity.



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## The Mission of the Church

When some one of important social standing, or wealth obeys the gospel, the remark is often heard, "He will be a great help to the church." When some one of low estate obeys the gospel, the remark has been heard, "He won't be worth anything to the church." Those who make such statements view the church very- much like the fraternal organizations are regarded. The mission of the church has never been to attain social prestige and the glamor of wealth. Yet there are signs that some try to attract notice and gain standing by no higher nor purer motive. The mission of the church has never been to gratify the ambitious social climbers, nor to exploit wealth for selfish ends. The true, humble Christian should be the highest example of social ethics, kindness, gentleness and of respect toward all without partiality. Wealth, when devoted to one's needs, and saving the lost, is the highest attainment of the use of wealth.

The church was purposed before the foundation of the world, purchased by Christ on the cross, established by the agency of the Holy Spirit, still on the earth for only one purpose or mission. That mission is to save the lost and to build up its members in holiness and righteousness till Christ comes to claim it as his bride. When the church turns aside from this mission it has failed for the purpose for which it was established. When the church as an institution, enters the field of social entertainment, community centers, athletic sports, and institutionalism—then the church has betrayed Christ, her spiritual head, lost sight of its true mission, and entered upon the road, which if followed, will end among denominations.

No opinion is expressed here in regard to what clean amusements and competitive athletics one may personally

engage in without harm. There are many things that a Christian may participate in that if made a part of the activities of the church as the spiritual body of Christ are outside the bounds of either scriptural authority or safety.

The work of the church is teaching, preaching the gospel, caring for the needy, restoring the erring, and worshiping the Lord. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:26-27).

It is very true that when persons of talent and consecration are obedient to the gospel, that it should cause special joy, but only because they will be of greater help in the true mission of the church, not to give the church worldly distinction before the world.

The mission of the church begins with the preaching of the gospel to the unsaved. "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This commission was given to the apostles for all the nations and for all time. Some people, for some reason, have held that the apostles only were bound by this commission. Yet they have admitted of course, that the preaching and baptizing of the believer still applies to every Christian now, but that to go into all nations does not apply now. Such a contention is both unreasonable and unscriptural. It is true that the apostles were endowed with the Holy Spirit so that they could preach to people in

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all languages. Yet the work of preaching the gospel to all nations to the extent of the ability and opportunity applies to the whole church today.

In the early days of the church, the Christians, or at least a large number of them, told the story of the cross to those with whom they came in contact. When the disciples were scattered abroad by the persecution they "went everywhere preaching the word." This is sometimes called personal evangelism.

When the church was restored in America, it is a matter of record that many of the members were diligent in spreading the gospel. The result in both periods was a great increase in the number saved, and the numerical increase of the church. Today the Christian teaching his neighbor is almost unknown. A few fine exceptions, but such is not the rule now as it was in the early days of the church, and again when the church was restored. We boast much of having restored the church as it was in the beginning. In theory we have made a fine success in so doing. But in zeal and individual practice we are far from the church as it was and should be now.

Preaching the gospel to the lost has become largely a professionalized matter of hiring and paying some one else for doing the work of preaching. We hire the preacher, pay him liberally, and say by our words, or actions, "Let the preacher do it. That is what we pay him for." We build a commodious church house, employ a preacher, then wait for the people to come and get the gospel, much like the merchant with goods in stock.

That is certainly all right as far as it goes. Preacher and member should be diligent in contacting individuals, teaching them when it can be done, and kindly inviting them to attend the place of worship.

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If each local congregation would get enough suitable tracts, and skillfully distribute them, there is no estimate in regard to the amount of good that could be done. But such tracts should be carefully selected that are suitable for those to be reached. Every one knows that some tracts that are very fine for some readers are not suitable for the present need of others. Yet I know by long experience and observation that it is not easy to get such literature read by many. But such can be done if approached wisely and persistently. We should not overlook the power of the many weekly and monthly papers by members of the church of the Lord. It is likely true that if individuals and congregations would send such papers to weak members, and non-members that greater results for good could be accomplished than by any other like cost in dollars.

Some one may now raise a question in the regard to the scripturalness of sending the gospel to those who need it in weekly printed form. Most assuredly it is as scriptural to pay some brother for the printed gospel as to pay some preacher to preach it orally. Some one may say there are faults and mistakes in the religious papers. I suppose no one would be so foolish as to say they do not have imperfections. Yes, and so do preachers make mistakes in manner and spirit in preaching. We have all heard, at times, the gospel preached in a manner and spirit that we thought was not with the respect, and on high level that the gospel teaches. So let no one think it is out of harmony with gospel principles to support the preaching by word of mouth, or by the printed page.

Any preacher or church that allows their work to begin when the building is entered, and ended when the door is closed by the caretaker, are falling far short of their

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opportunity, and failing to discharge their duty to the great head. of the church.

If the town, or city, is large enough preaching and teaching should be carried on in other localities than that of the church building. Other towns and cities, certainly should have the gospel preached, looking to the establishment of another worshiping assembly. Not long since, a preacher giving full time to a congregation that had perhaps been in existence fifty years, gave as a reason for not taking the gospel to other towns and cities, that the local congregation must first be built up to greater strength. Greater strength in what? Not in stronger faith and more zeal to save the lost. In real fact, how many of us realize that the disobedient are in a lost condition, without God, and without a ray of hope for the world to come. There is too much a spirit of complacency and unconcern in the church. To the extent that we really appreciate our own salvation, we will be interested in having others share with us the same blessing. No congregation has ever failed to increase in numbers and to grow in every Christian grace by sending the gospel beyond its borders. On the contrary every congregation observed by me, and the number is large, during many years in many states that were so self-satisfied that they were unconcerned about the lost outside their borders, generally decreased in numbers, or died of inactivity. So will it continue as long as congregations' and preachers' efforts begin when the door is entered, and ends when the door is closed behind them.

There are still many states in which there are few, or no worshiping assemblies found. There are hundreds of countries in which no such assemblies exist.

There are faithful men in foreign lands, laboring under the extreme difficulties of having to learn a strange

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language and adjusting themselves to strange customs. Such men are real messengers of Christ. Those of us who live in America and meet with a large assembly can have no adequate understanding of their trials. Learn about them and their work. Send them liberal aid. In this time of breaking up of old orders, political and religious, it may prove the most fruitful opportunities in generations to come.

The world is torn by wars—possibly worse wars to come more destructive than in all human history. The gospel is the only power that can solve the troubles of individuals, and to that extent, of nations. Now is indeed a time that tries men's souls. Perhaps when all is considered no worse time ever before existed. It is a time that furnishes the need of faith, courage, zeal and if need be of martyrdom. It is the time for individual Christians and the church as a whole to rise in the strength of the God of hosts, and under the banner of King Emanuel, and prove worthy of being called servants of the Redeemer, and fit to share in the fulfilment of the vision that John saw. "And I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband."

## Chapter III

### CENTRALIZED CONTROL

In approaching the discussion of differences in teaching and practices, matters of agreement should first be clearly stated. The next step should be the statement of matters of disagreement. Otherwise, confusion instead of clarity will result.

The fundamental principles involved in the present discussion by a large number of preachers and writers, are exactly the same principles that were thoroughly discussed at the beginning of the Restoration Movements, and -again when the apostasy began more than half a century ago.

The conclusions reached in each case by the churches of Christ were regarded scriptural—that any violation of the principles established, were a plain departure from the New Testament.

The first New Testament principle agreed on is stated as follows: The local congregation, with elders, deacons, and evangelists, is the only organization authorized by Christ, the head of the church.

The second New Testament principle agreed on is this: The work that the Lord assigned to the church is making and baptizing disciples; edifying and building up the church spiritually; caring for those in need. There are other duties to be performed by the church of course, but these given embrace the matters of disagreement among us at the present time. Of course it is understood that what are called necessary incidentals in order to carry out the work the Lord assigned the church, are matters of agreement.

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Perhaps no other New Testament principles have been so often and ably debated, orally, and in print, and so thoroughly and scripturally established, and so generally agreed on by so many preachers and writers as that the local congregation is the only divinely authorized institution or voluntary association in which, or through which, the Lord's work can be done, and that the church as such can not scripturally engage in, or carry on, secular work that the Lord has not assigned to it. These fundamental, scriptural principles have been stated in one form or another, orally or in print, times without number. Those principles have for many years been so fully believed to be scriptural that to violate them in teaching or practice is tantamount to violating plain declarations of the word of the Lord. Any teaching or practice even bordering on a violation of these principles has always created widespread alarm. They have been the guiding principles of the churches of Christ for more than half a century.

It is stated here, once for all, that no one opposes preaching the gospel wherever people are found. It is affirmed that the church and individual Christians must support those doing the preaching. The needy must be cared for by the church and by individuals as occasion affords. Failing to do so, zealously in season and out of season, is to fail to carry out the mission for which it was established on earth. On these matters there is, I think, entire agreement.

But there is uncompromising opposition to any unscriptural central agency that assumes the right to select the field, solicit throughout the country, many thousands of dollars from the Lord's treasuries, in perhaps more than a hundred congregations, manage and disburse contributions as a centralized control setup. Such central agency is

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in its every function a missionary society lacking only formal organization.

In the second place scriptural objection is made against churches collectively operating through a central agency, planning and carrying on a program of work that is purely earthly, secular, social and political, not related in the remotest degree to the work the Lord assigned to the church. That such enterprises are proper and right in the temporal affairs of people no one denies. But that the church can scripturally carry on vast undertakings in that field—who will affirm? No one has been so rash as to state in words that such an undertaking is scriptural. Yet many are calling long and loud that the churches shall enter that field, requiring hundreds of thousands of dollars to get it under way. Large enterprises of that character are already being carried out, as will be seen later in this chapter.

Union Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee, and Broadway, Lubbock, Texas, are the two most important churches in their large undertakings. I am not personally acquainted with elders in either church, nor, in fact, with any individual members. For them personally, I entertain the same Christian regards that I do for all members of the church of the Lord.

I suppose I have received copies of every important document that Union Avenue has sent out. I know nothing of what they are doing and proposing to do except what I have read over the signatures of the Union Avenue elders. I have not been misled, nor misinformed as some have charged. I shall now quote from the pamphlet they mail out in large numbers, for the most of the information I have, with a few statements in religious papers.

Quoting from pamphlet, "Voice of Opportunity From

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Japan," pages 7, 8: "There are two groups of people to whom I would address my thoughts. First is that group of religious persons who sincerely throughout the world, are united in what we commonly call 'denominations. The other is that religious group banded together under the name churches of Christ.'" These sentences were written by E. W. McMillan, but published over the signature of the Union Avenue Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee. No reasonable person questions the sincerity of the denominations. But that they follow the word of the Lord in teaching and practice in much they do, is a matter most seriously questioned by most of the members of the church of Christ. Are the Union Avenue elders sending this pamphlet to the denominations that McMillan says, "I would address my thoughts"? If the elders of the Union Avenue Church of Christ are not sending this pamphlet to the denominations, why, then, did they sign it as their production? Why does he seem so anxious to address his "thoughts" to them? This writer is amazed that he would make the statement, and especially so, that the Union Avenue elders signed it as their own. Before we are done with that pamphlet, I think we will be able to see in some measure what is back of his statement.

Firm Foundation, December, 1950, E. W. McMillan: "In my travels stirring up missionary interests, I was supported and directed by the Memphis congregation." From a pamphlet signed by Union Avenue: "Likely most of our brethren are aware that the Union Avenue Church of Christ sent our minister E. W. McMillan to China and Japan during the fall of 1947 for a first-hand study of the conditions and opportunities for the gospel there. It has occurred to the officers of our congregation that the best way to get this information before our brethren is to

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publish Brother McMillan's speech of that Sunday after. noon, January 4, 1948, which was recorded; also to send him wherever brethren may desire a personal visit from him."

In the Christian Leader, published in Dresden, Ohio, we find a full page advertisement, signed by the Union Avenue Church of Christ, 1930 Union Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee. Whether the space is donated or paid for I do not know. In either case it is an advertisement put out by that congregation.

Quotations are from several brethren, whose names are not needed to get the information before our readers. All that is in that advertisement is the material from Union Avenue elders. The statement of first cost of building is put at \$100,000. Not a word about preaching the gospel in the whole page.

Here are a few brief quotations: "Union Avenue church is certainly to be commended in taking the lead in keeping this great work before the brotherhood, and for forwarding funds for its support." Hugh Tiner in same advertisement says: "I have utmost confidence in the workers at Ibaraki, in the type of program which they are carrying on, and in the method being used by the Union Avenue church."

I present here the financial report for December, 1950. In the full report for that month 72 separate contributions are listed.

Total for December

Grand total

\$ 2,676.40

\$83,984.53

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### Financial Statement

Receipts through December 31, 1950	\$69,534.70
Disbursements to date:	
Real estate—church site and buildings	\$24,700.00
Support for orphans	2,600.00
Printing press	200.00
Hitachi church building	
New Testament and other books	
General mission fund	
Interest, transfer of funds, etc.	
Salary, traveling expense, postage, equipment	712.36
Total disbursements	\$69,224.83
Balance on hand December 31, 1949	309.87

1,650.00

220.00

12,993.00

149.01

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Who can longer doubt that this unassailable array of testimony quoted from the publications of the defendants, the Union Avenue elders, establishes beyond a shadow of doubt that they have set up and are operating *Centralized Control* over the contributions and the disbursements of a large number of churches, and of the work which they are carrying on? As attorneys in civil courts sometimes when unchallenged testimony is produced, they "rest" the case. It would seem that we might rest the case right here, with full confidence, without arguments, that the verdict would be that "centralized control" has been proven beyond reasonable doubt.

But for the benefit of any who may not yet be  
convinced

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beyond all reasonable doubt, I analyze and itemize some of the statements quoted.

1. Union Avenue elders selected a representative, E W. McMillan, and sent him to Japan to make a survey.

2. Brother McMillan made the survey as the representative of Union Avenue elders, returned and made his statement to them.

3. Large numbers of copies of the report were printed and sent to many churches and individuals.

4. Union Avenue sent their representative to many churches.

5. Contributions were urgently solicited, and tens of thousands of dollars were received and disbursed by Union Avenue.

6. Itemized receipts and expenditures are made and mailed to many churches each month.

7. They ran an advertisement in the *Christian Leader* and the *Gospel Advocate* in which the whole plan, inspiration, and management is attributed to Union Avenue alone.

Churches are urged to send contributions as churches from the Lord's treasury to Union Avenue for them to forward to Japan. Yes, they grant churches the liberty to send direct to Japan, and to state to what phase of work they wish their contribution to be used. Very liberal, of course.

But missionary societies, in their early days, before they matured into the ecclesiasticism called the *United Society*, granted churches the same liberty.

Is not Union Avenue a central place from which the whole plan originated, from which all advertising goes out? Do they not receive all contributions, or very nearly so? Do they not make an itemized report of all receipts

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through them or direct to Japan? Everything originated with Union Avenue. Everything goes out from them. They make all disbursements. Who "controls" the finances of any group spending money except those who receive the money and those who pay it out—disburse it? Does not Memphis send out solicitations for money? Do they not receive the money? Do they not make reports of all expenditures? Do they not "control" the money? Has anyone else on earth any actual "control" over the use of money received except Union Avenue elders? Can any man, yes, *any man*, "control" one penny of the thousands received by them except those elders?

In all soberness, if Union Avenue is not a "centralized control agency," handling thousands of dollars contributed from the treasuries of many congregations, then the federal treasury that collects-and disburses money is not a "central control agency" of the United States.

Undoubtedly the general belief is that the work being done by Union Avenue church is being done as *elders of the local congregation*, and as official work of scriptural elders. Not the least part of their work in relation to the Japanese program is done, or can be done, in their capacity of elders of Union Avenue church. The word of the Lord plainly teaches, and we have universally held, that the official duty and work of elders begins and ends with the membership of the local congregation. True, elders may go outside their congregation to teach, preach and do any other Christian duty. But they do not perform any work outside of, and beyond, the limits of the local membership *as elders*. These brethren are not working in the capacity of

elders of Union Avenue church, but are a society, or group of men who have banded, voluntarily associated themselves together, and are performing a work in no

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way related to the oversight of the local congregation, which is the only official work of elders. The fact that they are elders of the local church does not in the least give them scriptural authority to band themselves together to perform a work covering our continent, and reaching into foreign lands 10,000 miles distant. They constituting an association, or group, performing a work outside of and far beyond, the scriptural limit of their official authority to act as elders, the limit set by God himself. It does not help the case in the least that they are elders, or that all are in one congregation. The principle involved is the same as if other members of Union Avenue church had banded themselves together for such an undertaking of setting up a central control agency. The principle apt plies even if members from different congregations had banded themselves together for the same purpose. Had any like number of members of Union Avenue banded themselves together and launched such a widespread operation of soliciting, receiving, controlling, and disbursing money from many congregational contributions, a tide] wave of protests doubtless would have swept over the whole brotherhood. But the fact that Union Avenue elders stepped out of their scriptural bounds of work as elders seems to have given it a sanctity in the eyes of many. But that does not alter the case in the least. If members from half a dozen congregations had so associated themselves in a district agency, it would not make it the less or more unscriptural. Neither does it change the principle because, as yet, no formal organization has occurred. The principle of organization is there and functioning.

If elders can go outside of the limits of the local con-

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gregation to perform any official work, then who can

set the bounds of an episcopacy?

I am not given, I think, to making rash statements, but I sincerely, confidently and reverently challenge any man to show from the word of the Lord that soliciting, receiving' managing, apportioning, and disbursing money from a large number of congregations is the work that God has assigned to elders over the local church of the Lord. I am willing to risk my standing before God and man on this statement. It is work outside of and beyond

the limits of their official work set by the Lord himself.

The first step to the maturing of the pope, was taken when elders began to exercise their official authority outside of the limits of the local congregation. Young men, mark this statement, in the years to come you will very likely have to meet this first step away from the limits the Lord has placed around the official work of elders. So far as my information extends, it has not been seriously investigated during the last half century.

The program originated in Memphis. The special representative was sent to Japan, and to many places in our country by the Union Avenue elders. Thousands of dollars have been received by the Memphis elders. The money has been disbursed by the Union Avenue elders. Reports are made to contributors and others by them. They advertise the program and plan in a whole page in the Christian Leader and Gospel Advocate. If they are not now a centralized control agency, how could such an agency be formed?

Program of Work

It would seem that enough has been given to show conclusively the existence of a centralized control agency.

The second matter to be considered is the character of

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the work proposed and being carried on in Japan. The *Method* of instrumentality through which work is done is of great importance. But the work that is being done by churches of Christ with money which is contributed from the Lord's treasury most certainly is not of less importance. It may be safely stated that what is *done is* of greater importance, from the scriptural point of view, than the *method* employed. The work of the Lord is so clear on both *what* the church should do, and *how* the church shall do it, that God has never given any grounds to conclude that he was pleased except when the *thing* done and *how* it is done is both carefully observed by those who would serve him acceptably.

Good men of unquestioned sincerity and of the highest Christian character have repeatedly said that I have been "misled," "misinformed," and that I have "misrepresented faithful elders" of the church. I must state again that all I know about the matters now being considered I have read from publications signed by the "sponsors" of the work and who operate the "method" employed. I have, and still have, quoted accurately and in full, everything to which I have protested, and affirmed that much of it is contrary to the letter and spirit of the word of the Lord. I am persuaded that some good men who have had much to say about the matters which are disturbing the peace and threatening the unity of the church of the Lord, either have not read all that has been published, or now approve the church entering upon a plan of work which they have opposed the church entering into, as

church, in  
America.

I have been surprised beyond measure how some of our best, most faithful men, men whose motives and methods have never been questioned in the least, have opposed with

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much powerful effect the church supporting from the Lord's treasury, schools or any other good institution, and now give full support to churches combining their money from the Lord's treasuries, and launching out on the kind of program now to be quoted from the Voice of Opportunity from Japan. This is signed and sent out in large numbers by the elders of the Union Avenue Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee. Pages 29, 30, 31 follow:

### OUTLINE—REPORT ON JAPAN

#### A. DISTANCES AND TERRITORIES

1. Our most distant point north from Tokyo—Hitachi, 100  
miles

II. Our most distant point southwest—Shizuoka, 120 miles

III. Our total manpower and possessions in  
Japan

1. Total congregations \_\_ \_\_14

2. Total members (depending on how we reckon them)

3. Total houses of worship

4. Total residences owned

5.

6.

7.

350—65

0

Total national preachers giving all their time \_\_5 Total national preachers giving part-time 7 Total foreign missionaries now in Japan or en route

IV. Locations of memberships and congregations:

-- 12

1. In the state of Ibaraki (100 miles north of Tokyo)

(1) Congregations 7; Total membership 150-300

(2) Preachers in Ibaraki (National preachers) \_ \_5

2. In Tokyo: (1) Congregations 1; Total membership 25-100

(2) Preachers 3.

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3. In Yokahoma: (1) Congregations 1;  
Total membership 50

(2) (47 baptized in 1947)

4. In the State of Chiba:

(1) Congregations 2; Total membership 25-100

(2) Preachers (Bro. Fugimori) 1

5. In State of Shizuoka (Town of Shizuoka or near):

(1) Congregations 5; Total membership 50-100

(2) Preachers

## B. COMPARATIVE NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN JAPAN; COSTS

### I. Needs

1. Definitely, we need nurses, Bible teachers, and and preachers, giving all their time to their work.

(1) Japan has 15,000 towns, 2,000 to 10,000 population.

(2) 20% of these have no nurse, doctor, church building or worship within ten miles of the cities.

2. We need in each town of this sort a building, to serve as a community center, especially for young people.

(1) They have no leaders and are eager to have them.

(2) They have little reading material, but are starving for it.

(3) A church building seating 500, with living quarters above it, will cost approximately \$15,000; but local people are so anxious for guidance they will donate material and labor, costs.

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(4) Each such center should have several workers:

a. To avoid starvation of loneliness for American understanding.

be. To share responsibility and work.

c. To afford more wisdom and influence in the work.

3. We need at least one school of preparation (may be in Tokyo).

(1) To thoroughly prepare missionaries in language and customs.

(2) English can be taught in this school.

(3) Through Bible classes alone, Brother Rhodes baptized 45 in Yokahoma during 1947— some of them city judges.

(4) This school could be housed in inexpensive quarters (comparatively) .

4. We need sewing schools, English classes and Commercial classes in as many centers as can be established and well operated:

(1) These will overflow with enrollment, as all precedents prove.

(2) They can be housed in relatively inexpensive quarters.

(3) They afford the best avenues of approach, and pay fairly well in tuition.

5. We need at least one good school in the high school and college bracket.

(1) It seems that the most promising location is in Mita, Ibaraki State.

(2) Blue print and costs for a school of 500 are in hand.

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(3) Schools and other avenues of every day service have proven to all religious groups to be the best ways of approach to both Chinese and Japanese.

(4) Other avenues of service besides schools can be health centers, community centers, nursing work, social service, community interest work, and other such things.

## II. Opportunities: Costs.

## 1. In Ibaraki State:

(1) 36 acres of land is being held for our consideration; the price seems fair; it is well located; the members in that vicinity are much above the average in intelligence, attainment, POSITION in life, and in enthusiasm. As I recall, the price is \$6,000, our money.

(2) The Mayor of Taga, five miles away from Mita, where the site is located; the governor of the state; the great Hitachi Works, which gave \$1,000,000 to the Taga Commercial College before the war; the congregations and smaller towns of Ibaraki State—all these enthusiastically worked for' and hope that, a school will finally be established there by us. They are much set back financially, hence cannot give much money now. A year ago, we were assured \$25,000 by a few sources voluntarily; but since then the government has greatly increased its taxes; prices have gone up, etc., hence getting money from Japanese persons and industries now is much less probable, though some can be secured.

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For example, a few men pledged \$1,600 as a beginning, and they are confident that \$20,000 can be secured, if and when we begin in earnest, within a year of time.

(3) Blue print and estimates in hand to accommodate a school of 500 students administration building, library, dormitories, athletic field, etc.—would cost an estimated \$325,000, our money. Much of that could be borrowed, if Americans would underwrite it.

(4) For a college of 400 students, the teaching personnel would cost approximately \$38,000 annually, teaching twelve months three semesters, as their schools run. High school teachers draw less for the same number of students, about 20% less.

## 2. In Kasumi-ga-ura (Southern Ibaraki, State).

(1) Buildings and ground formerly used for Japanese naval school.

(2) Owned by the government, will be for sale at reduced cost.

(3) Half-way between Tokyo and Taga.

## 3. In Shizuoka.

(1) Now operating a sewing school there.

(2) Miss Ewing is teaching Bible classes and has many calls she is not answering favorably.

(3) She and three other persons are opening a school on a small scale, teaching Bible and some commercial subjects. The school will begin within a few weeks—about February, as I recall now.

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(4) That section would be a fertile field for a school in either the high school subjects or college.

(6) Costs would be, of course, the same there as elsewhere.

4. In Torizawa (Half-way from Tokyo to Shizuoka).

(1) Town of 4,000 people; no doctor, nurse, church building or church service within ten miles; no prejudice, no knowledge of religion.

(2) House seating 500, preacher's quarters above, cost \$15,000; third donated by citizens in material and labor.

(3) This would be only a congregation, but it could be expanded into whatever developments may justify.

(4) Japan has dozens of similar places.

Here is proposed the establishment of a number of human institutions, the initial cost of which is \$419,000. Not one cent of the astronomical sum of money is itemized for preaching the gospel. Yet the contributors are supposed to believe that their money is to be spent for preaching the gospel. I venture to say that no one congregation on earth is financially able to give this amount, even if it desired to do so. I venture the further statement, that no one in all the church of the Lord believes that such a vast enterprise can be carried out without a *centralized, soliciting, supervising, disbursing agency*. And I will risk my standing before the God I serve, and before my brethren in the Lord that:

1. The Union Avenue elders must either extricate themselves from the complicated situation in which they have unwittingly, and doubtless with good motives drifted,

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OR

2. In time become formally organized, and defend it as an "expediency."

Shall we build according to the pattern shown by the Holy Spirit, in the word of the Lord, or shall we now copy the methods formulated by denominations? Shall we perform the work of the Lord assigned to the church —preaching the gospel, caring for the needy members, and building up the church in spiritual strength? Or shall we follow the lead of denominations and establish a system of social institutions, such as various kinds of schools, community centers, and leaders for the same, cafeterias, and athletic fields to train sinners to get them in proper frame of mind to convert them to Christ, or to build them up new Christians in holy living? These are questions of vital importance. They are two diametrically opposed ideas. For more than half a century we have held and successfully defended the POSITION that the church can not scripturally engage in things the Lord has not authorized it to do, and that we must not employ methods not authorized either by command or approved precedent. They constitute the two opposing positions around which the fierce battle with digressives raged.

The program of work proposed and being carried out, seems not to have been carefully considered by some who have given it their support, or they would have hesitated before committing themselves.

The gospel has been preached at home and in foreign lands with no agency or instrument other than the local churches. It can still be preached wherever men can go, with no human institutions.

But this program cannot be carried out without a *centralized agency* to solicit, receive, manage, report and dis-

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burse the money. It was not the work of preaching the gospel in Japan that called into being the sort of work in Memphis. It was the decision to launch a great enterprise of work not remotely related to preaching the gospel that made such an agency imperative if that sort of work was to be carried out. Should the Union Avenue church cease to function as a central soliciting, disbursing agency, the whole program would collapse, unless a similar one should be set up.

I think it safe to say that if preaching the gospel was the only work proposed in Japan, that no unscriptural agency would ever have been thought of, much less, to establish such an agency. It is the great program of various kinds of schools, community centers, cafeterias, and athletic fields, that make some sort of central agency bigger than the local church absolutely necessary. Otherwise the program would fail of support.

Every scriptural work assigned to the church by the Lord, has been, and is now being done, and still can be done in any land on earth, without any agency other than the church.

Every work undertaken by members of the church that is not assigned by the Lord to the church, must have unscriptural methods and agencies.

Mark well these two statements of fundamental principles.

It was suggested earlier in this chapter that we might find the key to the reason why McMillan and the Union Avenue elders would address that religious group of persons who sincerely grouped together in what we commonly call a denominational meeting. On the 30th page of the pamphlet we have this remarkable statement: "Schools, and other avenues of every day service have proven to

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all religious groups to be the best way of approach to both Chinese and Japanese."

I have wondered if the Union Avenue elders actually read, much less carefully considered, that statement. And did Brother McMillan really understand its fundamental and far-reaching implications. How many ways of "approach" to the Chinese and Japanese have been tried by "religious groups," to test their comparative merit? But he does state that "all religious groups" have proven this approach that he offers to the churches of Christ in general is the best.

Has the Lord given a "way of approach" to save the lost, whether Jew or Gentile, Chinese or Japanese, or Americans? If so, such rates second, or lower, when compared with McMillan's approach borrowed from "all religious groups," which denominations have "proven best." For what purpose is this program devised and "proved the best" to accomplish? Is it to convert Japanese to Christ, and build them up into churches of the Lord? Such a program can, and can only, establish a humanly devised social form of religion.

This is far different from the church of the Lord established by the gospel, and gospel "approach." Such establishments bear but little likeness to the simple in form, but spiritual and glorious church of the Lord, so plainly portrayed on the pages of the New Testament. Such an "approach" as is suggested never has, and never can, turn sinners to Christ. If any are converted to him it will not be by such "approach," but in spite of it.

What a great work Paul might have done in Corinth, Ephesus, and other great cities if he had first established sewing schools, nursing schools, cafeterias, and athletic fields, Olympian games race courses, and such, were held



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in high esteem in all such cities when Paul visited them to turn sinners to Christ and establish churches.

Reader, believe me, I think no other task to which I have been compelled by *conviction of duty*, has ever so deeply grieved me, and so pierced my heart and soul as to have to point out the far-reaching implications and final results that are to be the harvest from carrying out that proposed program. But individuals and churches should know the kind of program they are supporting, and from what source it was copied. All these things have their proper place in the earthly and social lives of people. But that they are the Lord's "approach" to save the lost, or that the church, as such, should embark on that uncharted sea of human experiment in order to attract the unsaved into a socialized form of religion is altogether another matter.

The Lord has given one "approach" to both the saved and the unsaved. "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." This is the program of approach given by the Lord to the apostles for all the nations and for all time. It saved and kept saved those who render obedience to the Lord at first. Following the example of the inspired apostles, the lost can still be saved and kept saved and prepared for the return of the Lord. To turn aside to plans and worldly programs devised by men can make a show of success when judged by the standards of men. But such fails to accomplish the mission of the church.

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For seeing that the world by

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its wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe. Seeing that the Jews ask for a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God stronger than men (1 Cor. 1:20-26).

Here is God's "approach" to lead lost men out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, to translate them into the kingdom of his dear Son. This program was for all in every nation, and for all time—even till the Christ returns to gather all the redeemed. It originated in the infinite love of God, planned by his wisdom, inaugurated by his power, accomplished by the death of his Son, assured and sealed by the resurrection and coronation of Christ as mediator great high priest, executed by the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the apostles to "guide them into all truth." No social nor carnal attractions were employed, and none were offered those accepting the Christ. On the other hand they were told that self-denial, sacrifice, and even persecution awaited them.

When convicted of sin, and made to realize their lost condition their only desire was to obtain pardon and become reconciled to God. Having been born into the family of God, their joy in his service and worship supplied their desires. Their joy was unbounded, unspeakable, and full of glory. They had been called out of the world, and understood that "all that is in the world is the just of the flesh, the just of the eye, and the pride of life."

Inspid and tasteless would be the offer of community centers, sewing schools, athletic fields in which to compete

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in physical sports, and "bodily exercises that profit nothing, in feeding and nourishing the soul, and build it up for a habitation of God through the spirit.

Once again, lest someone forgets—Such things may properly have their place in the social, and earthly course of life. But as attractions and aids provided by the Lord in his church, as means of convicting of sin and aiding the spiritual development of the soul—that is entirely a different matter.

Undoubtedly the foreign countries are in great need of better education in every line of human welfare; better methods of food production, health measures and economics. But that the Lord has placed that work on the church, in the church capacity, no one has yet produced any scripture that can possibly be used in a show of authority. But worst of all is the fact that when the church, denominational or church of Christ, embark on the experiment of carrying out a program of that character the final result is, not the establishment of the New Testament church and its simple form of worship, but such a course ends in establishing a social, economic, secular institution, bearing but little resemblance to the church that Christ built.

Every careful observer is aware of the fact that denominations are fast evolving into a socialized form of religion. Sincere repentance, the realization of sin, the necessity of forgiveness, and holy living—these have been practically given up as out of date—not adapted to the present age. Deny it if you will, but in many instances the churches of the Lord are moving in the same direction. Worldliness, desire for a "soft peddling" on the things that require a full surrender to the Lord—he who stresses a holy life, in some places, and exposes error, finds cool reception.

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Giving large sums of money, building costly meeting houses, and many other outward shows of success, have always made the decline of true piety and holiness of living. Gibbon notes with emphasis the fact that when piety and morality were on the decline in the church, that was the period when beautiful and costly cathedrals were built.

As the church grows worldly, a show in material things that appeal to the eye is demanded to satisfy those who have lost their desire for the spiritual things of the Lord. It is well to recall the lesson the Lord taught the apostles near the close of his life: "And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, 'Teacher, behold, what manner of stones and what manner of buildings.' And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down" (Mark 13 :1, 2) . Evidently Jesus desired to impress upon the apostles that material things are not of first importance, but spiritual things are of first importance.

Christians should contribute liberally in order that the gospel may be preached to all the lost, suitable buildings for the meeting to worship, and caring for the needy.

The first work of the Holy Spirit in the apostle Peter was to convert sinners to the person of Christ. Peter appealed to the prophecies and their own knowledge to prove that Jesus was the Christ, raised from the dead, and crowned king in heaven. Hearers were convicted of sin. Peter declared that they were guilty of the crime of crucifying the Lord.

In Corinth, Paul preached "Christ." Those who heard and believed were baptized. They knew they were entering into a life of persecution and self denial. No other "approach" than Christ crucified, risen and glorified, was

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ever adopted as the method of turning the lost to the Lord. They were even warned that with I 'much tribulation" they must enter into the kingdom of Christ. Unless sinners then were willing to accept Christ, knowing the cost, they were not offered any other inducement for salvation from sin.

Paul went to Athens, the educational capital of the known world. The wisest of the earth were supposed by men to assemble in Athens for a display of their wisdom. Perhaps no other man before or since, has stood before a company of such distinction. He first of all declared their ignorance of the true God, and the folly of their worship. He told them that the time of such ignorance God had overlooked, but "now commands all men everywhere to repent." The idea of those men being called upon to repent, perhaps was regarded by them as pure impudence. When he informed them that the reason why they should repent was that God had appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17 :1).

I take it that we have here an example to follow for all time in order to turn men from idols to the living God. Their false gods must be removed as objects of trust. Then the Lord must be accepted as their living Savior. This work can never be done by the "socialized form of religion," sent forth by the denominations. If churches of Christ embark on the same unchartered sea of human experiment, then they will finally reach the same port of denominationalism.

In the Gospel Guardian, June 7, 1951, Brother McMillan says, concerning the Union Avenue elders, "They have never controlled, or tried to control? any missionary in Ja-

pan as far as I know." Are those in Japan without any oversight or direction? Are they in no way accountable to anybody, strictly on their own? This is what his words seem to imply. Who selected most of those workers? Who sent them to Japan with their endorsement? Who prepared the program of work now being carried out? Who solicited their support? Who disbursed the funds to pay their salaries? Is it not regarded that those who employ and pay workers exercise "control" over those employed?

Several writers recently asserted that the present centralized agencies are just like the sending of money to aid the poor in Judea. Some said that the aid was sent to the elders in Jerusalem, who in turn administered it to the various congregations in other places in Judea. Their attention was called to the fact that such claim establishes the Episcopal Diocese, that elders have jurisdiction over territory beyond the limits of the local congregation. In effect this was an admission that we have central agencies, exercising authority and supervision far beyond the local congregation, and second the endorsement of the Episcopal Diocese doctrine. Apparently these writers saw that they had entrapped themselves into an indefensible POSITION. We have seen nothing since of the two admissions. Another prominent writer said the money was sent "through" the Jerusalem church. Attention was called to the word of the Lord which states it—"sending it to" not "through" the elders. Quite a difference between to and through.

It was contended that there were various congregations in Judea besides the church in Jerusalem, and that the Jerusalem elders must have acted in some intermediary way between them. Here are two assumptions, pure and simple. It is assumed that there were other congrega-

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tions in other cities and villages beside Jerusalem. Second, it is assumed that the Jerusalem elders administered part of the relief to those other congregations. Neither is stated in the word of the Lord. Denominations read in the Acts of household baptisms. They *assume* that there were infants in such households. They assume, second, that such infants were baptized. That proves to them, infant baptism. Exactly a parallel with the contention of some brethren in regard to the matter of relief in Judea.

Again, such tried to prove that there were congregations in various cities and villages in Judea. This is proved(?) by McGarvey in his commentary on Acts. He did not know anything more about that than any of us may know by reading the record. He did *assume* that there were such congregations, but it was only an *assumption*, for the record makes no mention of them. Besides it would be perfectly consistent for McGarvey to make such an assumption to prove diocesan administration of relief, for he was an ardent and zealous advocate and defender of missionary societies all his life. It was possibly consistent for him, in view of his POSITION on the question of missionary societies. But it is a bold step for those who contend for no other association larger than, or different from, the local congregation.

Here is what the Holy Spirit has said about the question at issue: "And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren in Judea; which they also did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:29, 30).

The relief was for the poor saints in Judea. That is plain. It was sent to the elders. That is plain, also. Let us stop with the record and leave *assumptions* with others. One might well have an opinion that there were numbers

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of other places in Judaea, and as McGarvey in his opinion *assumes* that they had elders. One might further have an opinion that relief was sent to the elders of such congregations. To have and hold such opinions will not do any harm as long as they are held. But when brethren use such a string of mere opinions as the foundation of such arguments as those now disturbing the peace of the church of the Lord—that is taking unbridled license with the word of the Lord. No permanent intermediary set up in Acts.

But this is not all, nor even the worst of the claim that such set-ups are just like the New Testament example now under consideration. To bear the least kinship of resemblance the following would have to be assumed. That very little of the money should be spent to supply the food for the hungry, but most of it should be spent to build schools of various kinds—nursing schools, sewing schools, community centers, cafeterias, and athletic fields to train young people for sports. That is what most of the money sent through Memphis is being spent to accomplish. Are the churches of the Lord made to believe that what they are supporting bears any resemblance to the work of relief in Judea, That was a temporary case of immediate need of food. So far as we know, this one general contribution was all that was sent. Certain it is that no *permanent agency* was set up to last for years and on, with large contributions each month.

During the 1880's, 1890's, and into the 1900's, till the division was complete between the church of the Lord, and the Christian church, I was an intense and continuous participant in that battle. I was fully acquainted with the unscriptural and illogical attempts to give even a

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shadow of scriptural endorsement for their missionary societies and the work performed through them.

Try as I may, I fail to recall anything that equals the recent effort by brethren in their efforts to justify their embarkation on the same unchartered sea of human experiment. Things that are alike are defended by the same method.

For emphasis, I restate a few facts that appear in the first part of this chapter.

1. The scriptures teach, and we are universally agreed, that the official work of elders begins and ends with the membership of the church over which they have been appointed. They can and may perform scriptural work outside and beyond the limits of the local church, such as preaching, teaching and any other work of an individual character. The Union Avenue elders are engaged in advertising, soliciting, receiving, and disbursing large sums of money from many congregations, and forwarding it to foreign lands. Not one item of this work is being done as elders in their scriptural capacity, but solely as a group of individuals voluntarily associated together, and performing every essential function performed by district missionary societies in their early history. Should the number so associating themselves from the eldership of Union Avenue have been banded together from individual elders from a number of congregations, it would not alter the case in the least.

2. Not one item of what is planned and being carried out by Union Avenue in Japan is work assigned by the Lord as work of the church, except what is done in teaching and preaching the gospel, and perhaps a little for the needy. The whole plan appears to be an exact copy of what denominations have been doing for years. In fact,

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Brother McMillan says, "Schools and other every day service have been proven to all religious groups to be the best way of approach to both Chinese and Japanese." There it is in the plainest language. We build according to the New Testament model, or we launch out on the unchartered sea of human experiment. We are at the parting of the ways. We must choose which direction we will travel. One path holds us close to Jerusalem. The other path will end, as always till this hour, in the port of denominationalism.

It is high time that we cease trying to deceive ourselves. The work being carried out in Japan, and elsewhere, cannot be done without some sort of central agency, greater in scope and work than the local congregation. The gospel can be preached in Japan and other foreign lands without the semblance of any human centralized agency. Let Union Avenue cease to function as it is now doing, and no other such agency take over, and the whole grand social, economic, sporting athletics in Japan will collapse.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

## Chapter IV

## BIBLE COLLEGES

## BIBLE COLLEGES

The schools under consideration are not legally called Bible Colleges. Such names as Harding, Freed-Hardeman, David Lipscomb, etc., are names given in honor of their founders. Of course in these schools the Bible is daily taught.

If I had children of school age and decided to send them from home to school, I would select one of these schools. With all their faults, I regard them as perhaps the safest place to send children from home to school.

Perhaps the promoters and managers of such schools have shown the most sensitiveness toward any criticism, even when respectfully and constructively offered, of any other matter or differences among churches of Christ during the half century. Just why this should be true is not quite clear. Every one admits that they are human institutions, originated in the wisdom of men, managed and controlled by the wisdom of men. But this does not of necessity make them wrong. But human things are not always perfect and should be criticized and examined.

About the year 1906, J. A. Harding and Daniel Sommer were the outstanding disputants. The controversy was then, and has been till this date, very personal, and perhaps bitter. I deeply deplored the spirit manifested then, and also in later years. I was younger then than I am now. I had a very decided idea that if the two brethren could meet in the right frame of mind, an agreement could be reached that might end, or lessen, the tenseness. I appealed

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to each to know if he would agree to meet in Louisville, with Brother M. C. Kurfees as a sort of chairman, to keep matters under control. The two brethren unhesitatingly agreed to my plan of mediation. I made my appeal to Brother Kurfees for me to have them meet for such an interview. To my surprise and disappointment, he refused to have anything to do with the meeting. His reason given was, that each of them felt too strongly, and were too fixed in his views to agree to any concessions.

I think it safe to say that very little careful, impartial discussion has been done during all these years. The most pronounced results have been *name calling* which has been a shame to our profession as Christians. How many times the epithets of *Collegetes*, and *Collegism*, *Sommerites* and *Sommerism* have been hurled back and forth, is beyond estimate. Just what truth one thinks can be established by *such name calling*, or how much error can be refuted, most certainly is not apparent to the thoughtful reader. Denominations have called the simple gospel for the obedience of the sinner, Campbellism, and those who preach as did Peter and other apostles, Campbellites. We have long contended that such course has been contrary to fairness to the truth and to those who preach the truth. Yet in our dealing with our own brethren we have often outdone the most violent denominationalist. Will any one attempt to defend this course among us?

We should contend strongly for what we believe to be right, and refute, if we can, what we believe to be error. But we should maintain that honor and dignity which the gospel requires.

One man, or a company of men, have the same right to establish a school as men have to establish any other honorable business. It is right for a Christian to preach

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the gospel, or teach the Bible, in any place that is right for men to be located.

One of the two points about which so much controversy has raged, is the ownership of Bible colleges. Some such colleges are worth several million dollars in real estate, buildings, and equipments. *Yet, their ownership!* Who owns them has been a matter of much heated controversy for many years. Is it impossible to locate their ownership?

It has often been asserted that they are private institutions, as much so, for example, as a hardware store, or other business enterprises. I have wondered much, if those who make the statement have really tried to think clearly. If a company of men should establish such a store, would they not own it, and have the right to sell out, divide and use the proceeds of the sale ? To get anything resembling a parallel the following would have to take place. A number of Christians solicit funds from the church in general to erect buildings, supply it with equipment and goods. They further solicit from the church in general to contribute more money to pay the salaries of the clerks. They appoint a Board of Trustees from the church in general to hold the store in trust—for whom? The Board can not sell the store and divide the proceeds of the sale. And suppose again that the clerks teach some Bible part of the time. Who would be so rash as to say that such a store is privately owned—not owned by the church in general?

A number of Christians associate themselves to establish a Bible College. They solicit money from the church in general, erect and equip the building. They appoint a Board of Trustees from the church in general to hold the property in trust. For whom does the Board hold the property in trust? It is not their personal property. The

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simple facts prove as clearly as the noon-day sun that the Board holds the school in trust for the church in general. The church in general contributes the money to build and equip it, and pay part of the salaries of the teachers. Take the use of words as you may, yet you will fail to find any other *ownership* than the church in general. And we call them "our colleges." In conversation and in writing, every one who speaks of such schools call them "our schools" except those who oppose them on every point.

### Their Support

During the years that Bible Colleges have been built and operated in the South and Southwest, the vast majority of brethren accepted such schools with approval. But in 1938 a flare-up over their support broke out like a tidal wave. It started in this way: During the Lectureship at Abilene in February of 1938, Brother Cox and the board asked Brother G. C. Brewer to make a talk, soliciting personal contributions for the school. In that speech he strongly urged elders of the church to put the support of the school in their budgets, and make regular contributions from the church treasury.

From my wide acquaintance with young men, as well as older men, many of them graduates of Abilene Christian College, I was sure that a deep feeling of opposition would follow. Immediately after reaching my home I wrote Brother Cox, who was president of the college because of its historical value, for the present and the future, I give the letter in full.

Mr. Jas. F. Cox Abilene, Texas,

Dear Brother Cox:

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Crane, Texas, March 9, 1938.

I want to assure you that I am a friend to you personally, and also to Abilene College. I sincerely desire to see it prosper, and continue to render much help to young Christians to better prepare themselves for service in the Master's vineyard.

It is probable that I have as wide acquaintance over all the states where the church is established in any number, except the West Coast, as any preacher, and know perhaps as well the feelings of a large number in regard to Bible colleges any anyone else. I think I know fairly well just how a large number regard them.

About thirty years ago Brother Sommer and Brother Harding were attacking each other so bitterly that I made a strong effort to have them meet in Louisville, in the presence of M. C. Kurfees as a mutual friend and as a sort of chairman, and make a real Christian effort to agree on a safe basis, acceptable to both, and so end the strife. The effort failed because Kurfees feared that their attitude was not as to narrow the breach between them.

I was closely associated with the Review for more than twenty years, and many regarded me as being opposed to Bible colleges in any form, thinking that I occupied the extreme POSITION then occupied by Brother Sommers. But I never held that POSITION. My POSITION always has been that as institutions, owned and controlled by individuals, or groups, and having no vital organic connection with the church, that no one could enter a scriptural objection to

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them. I have also held that to join them to the church or congregation, by making their support a part of the work of the church by taking money from the Lord's treasure, would give them an unscriptural connection with the church, in other words, solicit from individuals as individuals for their support. I have always believed this POSITION scriptural, safe, and that it ought to satisfy every member of the church when carefully considered and understood.

About five years ago the managers of the Review announced in its columns this very POSITION that I have held all the time. As a result, a mere handful of preachers in the North pulled off and published a very small paper vigorously opposing any school, it makes no difference how formed or run, that teaches any Bible in it. Brother Sommer, as you know, made a trip through the South, also to Abilene, I believe, in order to take a long step to bridge the division that the Review had maintained for many years. I thought then, and time has served to increase my conviction, that the course taken by the Review marked the happiest event in twenty-five years for the church, its peace and progress in spreading the kingdom. It filled me with joy and gratitude.

I have had large numbers of preachers talk to me in Texas and Oklahoma in regard to Bible college work. I have found many who have been questioning and examining the whole question perhaps for the first time. Numbers of these are graduates of Abilene Christian College. I am sure that this is a good sign, for young men to think matters out for themselves, instead of taking things for granted as denominations expect their preachers to do.

This brings me to the matter that prompts this letter. On last Thursday night, nor at any other time, have I got

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an impression that either the Board, or any of the faculty of A.C.C. sought or desired any congregation as a whole or through the elders, to put in its budget plans and expenditures from the Lord's treasury as represented in the Lord's day contributions, but desired and sought contributions and subscriptions from individuals only. With that course I am in perfect accord, and I think most all the members of the church are in agreement. But Brother Brewer, who had been requested to make a talk about contributions at that time, argued that the elders of the church should put the support of Abilene in their budget and thus unite the support of the college with the church in its organized form. To this I have always most seriously objected. If this goes out, and it will be spread in every section of the country, and it will lose nothing in being repeated—and with the impression, as some undoubtedly believe, very likely because he was requested to make the speech by the college, which I do not believe, I say again going out this way, I greatly fear it will start again widespread contention and do much harm. I do not believe at all that the faculty knew he was going to make the statement. Of course if the faculty did so, they undoubtedly believed they had a scriptural right to put it on that basis, and will so state. But as it now stands, it will go out as having been inspired by the faculty, which I do not believe. This feeling will rearm its enemies, alienate the great number of brethren in the North, who have been growing into friends, create suspicion in many who have been its friends even here in Texas. All this will be greatly regretted.

It is my strongest judgment that if the faculty of Abilene Christian College, and all other such colleges, should make it clear in our papers, that they do not seek nor desire

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congregations as such, out of the Lord's treasury, to contribute to the support of such colleges, but desire and seek only support from individuals, that such a pronouncement would result in the following:

1. Utterly disarm the few remaining enemies.
2. Further cement the growing friendship of our brethren.
3. Allay the fear of thousands in the Southwest.
4. Make many new friends, and strengthen the friendship of many hesitating members.
5. Gain much more financial support than they now have.
6. Prevent another rupture in the church of the Lord, at no distant day. For if the belief becomes widespread that colleges are seeking support from the Lord's treasury, that sad event would surely follow.

I have taken this matter up with Brother Brewer personally, and I sincerely hope that he may find himself able to modify his statement that the matter may be so adjusted as to calm the minds of many. I needed to leave Abilene early the next morning, did not get to see him, and did not mention the matter to a single person in Abilene. I will let you know later what comes from my correspondence with" Brother Brewer. \_

Brother Brewer reaffirmed his statement and made it stronger. I wrote each of the college presidents, and enclosed a copy of my letter to Brother Cox. Each replied promptly, and seemed glad to make public their positions on the question of support for such school. I now give so much of their letters as relate to the question:

J. N. Armstrong, Harding College, Searcy, Arkansas, June 6, 1938. "Harding College has never appealed to churches, as churches, for help. This has always been my



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POSITION and the POSITION of every college over which I presided."

George S. Benson, June 7, 1938. "At Harding College it has been our general practice to solicit individual contributions. We expect to continue on this same basis."

Jas. F. Cox, President Abilene Christian College, March 4, 1938 "I have never, myself, raised any money, nor have I authorized any one to raise money through the churches

I regret that Brother Brewer mentioned the matter the other night. We asked him to say a few words to encourage the people to give to Abilene Christian College but we did not authorize him to make a statement about churches putting Abilene College in their budgets."

N. B. Hardeman, Henderson Tennessee. June 11, 1938. "I am truly sorry that we cannot get settled on matters relating to our schools. I certainly do not endorse Brother Brewer's statement, and would oppose any congregation putting Freed-Hardeman College in their budget. Such has ever been our sentiments."

Brother I. H. Ijams, president of David Lipscomb, Nashville, Tennessee, date, June 30, 1938: "For your information I am glad to say that during the time that I have been connected with David Lipscomb College, and so far as I know during its entire history, its directors and faculty have never appealed to churches for financial support. Our appeal has always been addressed to individuals, not to congregations as such—it is my conception, shared I think, by all our directors and faculty members, that the church and the Christian College are distinct institutions."

The statements of the college presidents were in the Firm Foundation, and also in tract for free distribution. There appeared to be widespread pleasure among many who believed the school question was quieted for a while at least. And for nine years there was little heard on the question.

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But in 1947 Abilene College put on a big drive to raise a large sum of money. Some statements in advertising matter provoked perhaps the sharpest discussion that has ever been in the South and Southwest. Many writers joined in the discussion. The issue involved was this: Is it scripturally right for elders to contribute from the Lord's treasury to support a Bible College? A number of attempts were made to have an orderly and full discussion, with the issue fully and definitely stated. No agreement was reached. Many confidently believed that by far the vast majority of brethren and churches were opposed to the church contributing from the Lord's treasury to the support of any humanly formed institution, whether called a Bible College or a Missionary Society.

A number of prominent and influential men advocated and defended the practice of a few churches, at least, contributing to the support of such schools. But so far as my knowledge and memory serves, I have never heard any one state specifically *why* the church should contribute to such support. The work of such schools is of two characters. First, teaching the various sciences, mathematics, English, business courses, Agriculture, athletics, such as baseball and football. Second, such schools teach some Bible. If they say it is because of what Bible is taught that the church should contribute to such schools, that not only means that they approve of the church functioning through a human organization, but contradicts POSITION held for fifty years.

The chief cause of the division more than fifty years ago was the organization of human societies to do the work of the

church, or the church working through human societies. This was a worse violation of the word of the Lord than instrumental music in the worship. Instru-

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mental music in the worship corrupted the worship but human institutions through which to function corrupted the whole organic form of the church and finally developed into the United Society, an ecclesiasticism. If those who plead for the church to send money from the Lord's treasury to support any form of human organization are right in so contending then we are terribly wrong when we oppose missionary societies. Will any man specifically affirm that it is scripturally right to support a school from the Lord's treasury because it teaches some Bible? If we were right when we contended that it was unscriptural to preach the gospel through a human society, how can we prove now that it is scripturally right to teach a little Bible through a humanly formed school? Preaching the gospel is the work of the church. But to do it through a human society is wrong, or so we have contended for long years. Therefore, if it was and is unscriptural for the church to support a man made missionary society to preach the gospel. By the same scripture and logic it is wrong for the church to support the teaching of the Bible through a humanly formed school.

Is it because the Bible College teaches the many branches of science that some think that the church, from the Lord's treasury should contribute to their support? I can't conceive of any one making such a claim, so I will wait to see if any one would risk his standing before a thinking brotherhood by making such a statement.

Bible colleges have greatly multiplied the number of preachers in recent years, and so greatly increased the gospel preached in many sections and states. The almost unprecedented spreading of the gospel, and establishing of hundreds of new congregations in recent years has been done by young men who received their education in some

of these colleges. Any one who would deny this fact would be either blind to what has been happening or so prejudiced as to refuse to see things that are plainly occurring. Every one should be willing to accept truth and admit facts regardless of where found.

So long as such schools are kept free from any unscriptural connection with the church of the Lord, and hold their teaching true to the word of the Lord, just so long will good flow from them. Religious journals are human arrangements, but have been the greatest single source of teaching, except, of course, the church in the restoration and the preservation of the New Testament order of things. The two are not parallel, but as they are generally agreed upon, I will leave the matter. That such schools may be kept separate from the church, and pure in teaching is, or should be, the devout wish and prayer of every Christian.

#### Their Inherent Danger

The future course of most of the congregations will be determined by the ideals that prevail in Bible Colleges. It has been estimated that more than ninety percent of our preachers are now and will be in the future, educated in those schools, that the vast majority will come out of college convinced that what they have been taught is right. There can be little doubt of this. A young student enters such an institution with awe, if not reverence for all that he finds there. Always a few exceptions. But the rule is that he will be thoroughly indoctrinated in the spirit, ideals, and teaching received at the feet of his learned teachers, with a high sounding degree. If the young preachers imbibe the pure word of the Lord in teaching, and are convinced that the gospel, the simple church of the Lord, methods and agencies of work are still the best for

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the salvation of the lost—if he believes that the Lord gave all things necessary to life and godliness' and that it was and is, adapted for all races and for all time, in that case the New Testament church will spread. But if he comes out with the belief that the gospel and the church was suited only for the primitive age of the world, but now as we in an age of progress, when we must do big things in a big way, then the church will be no more than a new apostasy. As the schools are so will the preachers be. And as the preachers are so will the church be. Corrupt the Bible colleges, and the church is corrupt.

The history of church schools from their beginning should be considered with the deepest concern. Harvard, and such schools that were established in the early days of our nation, were started and run for years by men of profound veneration for the inspiration of the word of God, and devout worshipers of God according to their light. But long since such institutions have abandoned all idea of the Bible being divinely inspired; the miraculous birth of the Lord, and that there is something from which men must be saved or be eternally lost.

When such divinity schools became rich, great and exalted with pride, a change occurred. Professors went to Europe, especially to Germany, to get such degrees as were required to give them prestige. Many, or perhaps most of them, came back steeped in higher criticism and modernistic ideals, all of which was and is pure materialism, otherwise expressed as materialistic evolution, denying all spiritual values. They taught and teach that a man was not created in the image of God by a miracle, but that he is no different in his origin from the lower animals. He has only passed the rest of the animal family by a little more maturity and advancement by the process of evolution.

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When that stage was reached, such schools were not of any aid to pure Christianity, but they turned churches into institutions of a socialized form of religion.

Alexander Campbell founded Bethany, and others soon followed. For about the first generation, possibly reaching into the second, Bible colleges were under the management of men of faith in and reverence for the word of the Lord. They believed that the gospel, and the New Testament church were given by the Lord for all peoples, and all times. While so existing they were without question, a mighty power for the advancement of the kingdom on earth. Then soon followed the apostasy, which was born in the minds, and led by Bethany College men, with few exceptions. More on this later.

I think we may safely say that every man of note among us will not only admit but will affirm that all church schools from the first till the last half dozen among churches of Christ, became centers of corrupt teaching that flowed through preachers educated in them, to corrupt the religious bodies supporting them. Now we are engaged in the same experiment. It is *no more than an experiment*, If Campbell could not safeguard Bethany after his passing, what assurance have we that men of the present can do more to safeguard the present schools?

Unless the present managers and their successors are wiser, stronger, and greater than all others who have gone before them in Bible College work, Campbell included, the present schools will, in time, become corrupt in teaching, and so again, lead the church into apostasy. I do not say this as an enemy of Bible Colleges, but as a friend, perhaps a better friend than those who can not, or will not, see danger for the future. The peace, purity, unity

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and holiness of the church of the Lord was never endangered by respectful, sincere warnings. Complacency is the danger-signal in any people. The idea that "it can't happen to us" is an opiate that dulls the will to think carefully.

Bible Colleges are here to stay and increase in number. My prayer is that they may be kept true to the word as long as possible to the end, if possible. To contribute what I am able to that end is my purpose in this writing.

For more than forty years I have given such schools my deepest thought. Their concern has given me many sleepless nights. And not for one hour during forty years, have I doubted that they will, in the end, go the way of all other religious schools.

There are two opposing philosophies in mortal conflict in our day. When used in their relation to the Bible, they have been spoken of as Fundamentalism and Modernism. Fundamentalism affirms the inspiration of the Bible and of course, the virgin birth of the Lord. Modernism denies both, and affirms that natural law has produced all that we have in the material world. The two philosophies are also called Naturalism and Supernaturalism. In reality Naturalism is pure Materialism, that rules out all spirits and even God himself.

Supernaturalism stems from the Bible, the creation of man, the miraculous birth of the Lord, man's accountability to God, redemption through Christ, final judgment, and future reward.

Naturalism affirms that man and all that he is was evolved by natural law; that natural law has never been contravened; that man is not a lost sinner; denies that he needs any redemption; that there will be a judgment and rewards. Here the battle is joined. There is no middle Ground, and no compromise. To accept the one is to reject

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the other.

I think it is safe to say that all colleges and universities in America accepted the Bible as the inspired word of God, till after 1859, when Darwin's book, "The Origin of the Species", appeared. Very soon Darwin's theory became the standard of measuring things, the Bible included. Now evolution is taught in most, if not all, high schools everywhere.

I am sure that faculties of Bible schools now have, and will have, a greater task to prevent the theory of evolution creeping into such schools.

It is my opinion that men who are now managing Bible Colleges desire to hold their teaching true to the word of the Lord. It is important that they carefully guard every possible avenue of approach of such insidious poisons.

It appears that the harder problem is to comply with the specified standards required in order to have their work accepted by other institutions of learning. It seems that specified scholastic standards are necessary by which to measure as best can be done, the rating of schools. It is required that those who head the departments of advanced courses, shall have completed such studies that entitle them to recognize degrees, as denoted by B. A., M. A., LL. D., Ph. D., and so forth. Large number of teachers from Bible Colleges must, it seems, attend higher institutions in order to acquire such titles. These are acquired, usually, by attending State Universities, and denominational universities. All such institutions are materialistic—steeped in the theory of evolution, the root from which all forms of modernism spring. How all this large number of teachers who attend such institutions can return to Bible colleges without any weakening of their faith in the divinity of Christ, the creation of man, and inspiration of



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the Bible, is a question hard to answer.

In my opinion, herein lies the first dangers of the modern ideas getting into Bible colleges. Not that one would return and proclaim that his faith in such fundamentals had been shaken. In fact it is possible that one might think his ideas had not been modified. A teacher whose child-like faith in the word of the Lord has been shaken, can easily plant the seeds of doubt in the minds of those under his influence even in a Bible college. Whether there are now teachers in Bible colleges? whose faith has been weakened by the studies they have experienced, I will not even venture an implication. But it is generally understood that all too many preachers are now showing the influence of the state and denominational universities to which they have been in many places.

If all of so large a number of college teachers who have returned from such universities, are unharmed in faith, it would be a high tribute to their strength of character. I am neither charging nor implying that teachers in Bible colleges are modernistic in their attitude toward the Bible. I am simply pointing out what seems to me to be a danger point that should be carefully watched.

In my opinion the greatest danger to the faith of Bible college students, is in certain branches of science, so-called, that are required by associate institutions of learning. In my sincere opinion much that is taught in psychology, and philosophy is antagonistic to simple faith in God. Such men as James and Dewey, Americans, who have in the past been held in high esteem, I think, make no reference to God as revealed in the Bible, or to Christianity as taught therein. True, they mention God, but not the one mentioned in the Bible, and religion. I think it will be found that they mean what is called natural religion—

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transmitted from ancestors, but not revealed. The harm that has been done to simple child-like faith in the Lord and his word by teaching of Freud, the European Jew, is beyond the imagination to compute. And his dangerous philosophy, or psychology, if it may be so called, has swept the universities, colleges, and schools of America. I think it has done more to undermine morals than any other one influence. How much of his teaching, if any has seeped into Bible colleges, I have no idea. This is only a danger point stated.

The last and greatest danger in found in Bible colleges is the theory of evolution. Evolution is the root from which every form of unbelief and opposition to the Bible stems. so far as I know, and I have been delving into biology more than forty years. There is not a text book on biology that does not teach evolution, or by dealing with plants and the lower of animal life, lay the foundation for the theory of evolution that denies every historical statement of the Bible relating to man's origin, or his salvation. I have in my possession a book on Biology, titled, Principles of Genetics, written by two professors in Columbia University. While it does not go as far as some who have affirmed that man's "immediate ancestor was some ape-like creature, somewhere in the tertia", it strictly affirms evolution. I shall forbear giving direct quotations from its pages. I will state that references as authority are given from more than twenty of the leading evolutionists from Darwin down to Dobzhansky. And who is he ? Born and educated in Russia, head of biology in Columbia University. When I asked the University of Chicago for a few names of the latest and best authorities teaching evolution, they put Dobzhansky at the head of the list. More than 150 times the student is referred to more than twenty of the leading

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evolutionists as authority. Darwin heads the list. That book has been used in a Bible College. The question that is too hard for me is, how can a teacher teach the theory of evolution to students and not weaken their faith in the creation of man, in the virgin birth of the Lord, and the inspiration of the Bible. I am of the impression that Bible colleges must teach biology in order to be accredited in the association of colleges. You ask me what can be done about it? I certainly have no answer, nor a suggestion for the solution to offer. I am simply calling attention to a difficult problem, one that should have the best thought of those who have to deal with it. I received my copy from a college president several years ago. We certainly are good friends. At least that is my feeling for him, and I think he returns my esteem. I have not given this to publication, nor spoken of it except to a very few mutual friends. I shall not at this time give the name of the brother who favored me with the text book, nor the college. I do not know what other colleges are teaching along this line. I think my good brother who sent me the book is aware of the difficulty in meeting scholastic requirements and still be safe. He wrote me: "Brother Otey, I don't suppose there is a text on biology that is entirely in harmony with the Bible." I have no solution to offer to solve the difficult problem.

During recent years I have received many letters from preachers in every age bracket. Perhaps the greatest concern of the writers has been the fear that the church is rapidly moving toward the one-man-pastor-system. The man who led in the Restoration more than a hundred years ago called it the "kingdom-of-the-clergy," in other words, preachers ruling the local congregations. I have long been convinced that a congregation can scripturally support,

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use and direct a preacher full time. My judgment is that it is perhaps the most easily abused, or permitted to get out of scriptural limits, of any other liberty. On this question, I shall let two men speak, whose POSITION, work, and opportunity to observe, clearly qualifies to speak on the matter as few men in the church. Undoubtedly J. N. Armstrong devoted more years of hardship, sacrifice, and worry in Bible College work than any other man in the church during the last half century. I think he valued such schools the highest of any man of whom I have read, or with whom I have been intimately acquainted. Just eleven days before his sudden death he wrote me as follows:

I feel distressed over the condition of the church everywhere. For instance I think that our schools are all in line to build up the clergy, and that the church in general is trending toward denominationalism, I do not know what can be done, maybe nothing, but I do think there is need for us to put on the brakes, and warn the brotherhood about the definite trends of the times. I am not a pessimist, but my optimism does not keep me from facing facts. I think as I said above, that all our schools are set for the training of professional preachers. I tell them at Harding College that we are also being influenced by these trends. For all these years the schools have not offered separate courses for preachers, and in the schools in which I have taught we have stressed the teaching of the Bible to all students. I am still trying to stress this. We have never had a class here that was not open to all students, both boys and girls. But still there is a stress here toward preacher training. I do not know that it does any good for me to write these things to you, but I do believe that you are in sympathy with the idea that I express. Maybe you could write an

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article for the paper that would." Doubtless many will read this letter with surprise.

The other man who has given more years as teacher and president to Bible College work than any other man in the church is N. B. Hardeman' late president of Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee. On the occasion of the funeral of H. Leo Boles, February 9, 1946, he said: "I don't have to tell you that in harmony with government demands of transition and social changes so radically made, the same thing has crept into religious matters, and on the part of many there has been a tendency to drift away from the old landmarks. I think that every one who can observe matters at all will certainly agree that such is characteristic of this age. Our preaching has become largely professional, and since the school question has been mentioned by Brother Had, I have just fear that we are turning out professional pastors over the various congregations. Down at Freed-Hardeman we teach against such a drift with all our might. But with higher education, saturated with downright infidelity, there is a temptation for our schools to emphasize the academic departments, and to minimize the religious and Bible courses. Some no longer want to talk about things that characterize Bible times and the restoration movement. A man who preaches on Philip and the eunuch, or who discusses faith, repentance and baptism, is branded as a fellow who is narrow and old-timey and out of date."

What is the remedy? Can this drift from the New Testament order of things be stopped? Does any one know of any well defined "trend" that was ever stopped until it reached its full maturity?

We build according to the pattern revealed by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, or we embark on the un

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charted sea of human experiment, and that will land in the port of denominationalism.

The following is an editorial by G. H. P. Showalter

### THREATENING DANGERS AHEAD

"Take heed unto yourselves . . . I know that after my departure grievous wolves shall enter in not sparing the flock" (Acts 20 :29).

*Modernism.* Are there possibilities that loyal Christians may become modernists? A few years ago, thousands of members of the Christian Church became higher critics, wandered away from the faith and then were lined up with the more pronounced skeptics, which, in other words, in our day, are called modernists. In the realm of higher education and particularly in religious schools of all classes—except the church, the school of Christ—this is now the order of the day. This is one of the failures of higher education in modern life. A century ago the various denominational churches established schools—religious schools—for the moral and spiritual training of their children. They selected teachers who were deeply religious. All of them were of the faith and order of the various churches or religious bodies establishing the schools. The old practice among the puritans and their successors would bar any teacher who was not deeply religious. He must be a student of the Bible and of the faith and practice in his church; he must be prayerful, pious, consecrated, and capable of instructing children how to read and write and also in other branches of study, but especially in the Bible. As the schools and colleges and universities grew and became great, the effort was made on the part of these various religious schools to affiliate their work with the state schools. In order to do this, they must have teachers

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who had degrees from great universities like Yale, Harvard, and Columbia, and who could thus articulate their work acceptably with these great institutions. They desired teachers of their own faith and practice, but when those who could satisfy these conditions and still belong "to the same faith and order" were not obtainable, they secured others who had the qualifications minus the "faith and order." Thus they introduced skeptical teachers, higher critics, modernists and today by far the greater number of denominational schools are simply a hot-bed of skepticism, infidelity and atheism. The steps were gradual, but led unerringly to the sad plight of the present day denominational modernism that prevails almost universally among these schools.

The Christian church pursued exactly the same course. Alexander Campbell founded Bethany college for religious purposes rather than education after the manner of this world. But where is that school today, and where are many others like it? The leaders in the Christian church have taken strides longer and more rapidly even than many of their religious neighbors about them. It is not long ago since I heard one of their most distinguished leaders say that he was sending his daughter to a State University because he did not want to entrust her to the religious teaching of a school conducted by the Christian church. And I suppose that I am not betraying confidence in making this statement. Anyhow, it is true.

Are we prepared for the possibilities that seem imminent and for prospects that already are looming on the horizon of modernism in our Christian collages?? It may not prevail at the present time in any of them. It may not be countenanced by the leaders of the colleges or Bible departments now, but remember the head of Bible department in such

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schools becomes the authority. He is the one to dictate and give out the religious views of the entire school. If this assumed prerogative is not exercised in all the schools, or if it is not exercised in some now, the time will come when it will be so exercised. As great educational institutions are developed—as they grow larger and greater and more wealthy—it will be necessary to get men of learning—men who hold degrees from great universities—to become the head of the religious division or department in the school and what these heads of such departments are, and what they become, and what they advocate, and what they authorize, and give out, will influence and modify the life, faith and practice of all students who attend the schools and are influenced—as students most generally are by their teachers. There are dangers—and some of them serious—that in this brief paper it would be impossible to detail—the prospective possibilities in educational institutions that claim to exercise authority in the realm of religion. They place their men here and there among the churches and as is the faith and standing of the religious school in the educational institution, so will be the faith and practice of those who go out from them. It is not possible to control them now for the days to come, and hence it is an improbable presumption that they will always be free from such doctrine and influence as will wreck the faith of some. Let the churches remember that they are, in deed and in doctrine, the teachers in the school of Christ and that no educational institution of men has the right, or is prepared to take up and carry out this particular spiritual and religious education that God has divinely placed on the churches themselves.

## Chapter V

## THE PATTERN OF APOSTASY

The gospel, and the church, was revealed and established by the ministration of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the gospel is to reveal to man God's infinite love, convict him of sin, to bring him to a sense of his lost state, reconcile him to the loving Father, and translate him out of the darkness into the kingdom of the Son of his love.

The church is the last and greatest work of God to sanctify and make man fit for his own habitation; an institution designed, not only to bring man back to the sinless state from which he fell, but to the society of angels from which there can be no fall. The church is far greater than the creation of the material universe. (If we may be permitted to speak of God's works by way of comparison). The universe is material and for time only. Man's soul is spiritual, bearing the likeness of God, and will survive the dissolution of the stars and the sun in the heavens. The preparation of man for the reception of the gospel and the church extended over some four thousands of years. Patriarchs, prophets, and angels viewed in advance the plan and purpose of the salvation of man. The Lord said, "Abraham saw my day and was glad." The Holy Spirit, through Peter said: "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching the time, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should fol

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low—which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter I :10; 11 :12).

When the plan of salvation was so completely revealed in the new covenant, and given to man for his acceptance, he did not end his interest in man's behalf. Christ was seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high as King, Mediator, and great high Priest. He rules in the hearts and over the lives of men only in love. He mediates between erring man and the God of redemption. As priest he ever makes intercession for the weak and erring.

The church, even though the simplest in form, and lowest in esteem by the world, is so exalted in God's mind that it is listed as one of the seven units that compose the plan of man's salvation. One God and Father, who is above all and in all; one Lord who in love rules over all; one Spirit that guided prophets and apostles in preparing the way and establishing the church; the one body, one faith, one hope, and one baptism.

We may say reverently that when the church was established on earth, with all that is embodied in that institution, that God, himself could make it no better for man's redemption. It transcends in perfection, in glory, in its power to transform the lives of men and make them happier and better, in the eternal endurance here and in the world to come, all other institutions that relate only to the earth and to time. Happy indeed would be man's lot had he stayed his impious hand in attempts to improve its perfection.

God made no provision in the church and its appointments to gratify the "just of the flesh, the just of the eye, and the pride of life." The unbridled passions do not bring man good and happiness but evil and sorrow.

Beginning in perfection, apostasy marks the history of

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the church. Apostasy is easy—like drifting with a swift current. Gratification of the ambition for power and preeminence to rule over others, and the desire for amusement in the members is the alluring and propelling power.

Reform is hard, like rowing upstream against swift moving current. Faith in God, and the all-sufficiency of his word, and a love for the simple, spiritual things of the Lord's house, and a desire to please him is the sustaining and moving power of the servant of the Lord.

Some years ago, Brother Jesse Sewell said to me: "Brother Otey, I am not afraid that the church will ever introduce innovations. But I am greatly afraid that the church will become worldly." One of Brother Sewell's experience and wisdom should know that the seed of innovations never have, and never will find congenial soil in a pious, devout, spiritual membership. Such a membership wants nothing more than the things the Lord has ordained for his house. I think it safe to say that whenever the church becomes worldly-minded, and ambitious to impress the world by outward show, that institutionalism and inventions of men in the worship soon follow.

Apostasy always starts, perhaps, with good men. It is certain that no apostasy has ever started on a large scale. The first divergence from the New Testament model has always been so small that few observed it. One elder aspiring to have the preeminence of rule over his fellow elders (likely in numbers of congregations) developed in maturity, in the pope of Rome being voted the supreme head of the church. The "trend" was very small at the start. Such an elder at the beginning could well have been called the "Chairman of the Official Board." That is too often heard today. But in about six hundred years

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the man of sin was full grown. For a thousand years the word of the Lord was kept from the people.

Many attempts were made at reforming the corrupt church. Much error was thrown out and much truth and light was given the people.

During the first half of the 19th century the first attempt to go back of all reforms to the beginning and restore the church of the Lord as it was established by the apostles, was made. And unquestionably, that marks the most glorious period in the church since its apostasy. Large numbers threw away their man-made creeds and united on the one foundation of which Christ is the chief corner stone. Once again the church of the Lord, in organization, in worship in the work performed, was a mighty power for the redemption and sanctification of men. The very foundation of denominationalism was shaken, the prayer of Jesus for the unity of believers was being answered.

But ambition and worldly men were not satisfied. In 1841 Bethany College was founded. In 1849 the first missionary society was formed. The aged Campbell was elected its first president. But it is my impression that he was not present, and never attended a meeting of the organization. In 1867 instrumental music was used in the worship for the first time. A congregation in St. Louis bought a meeting house which had been vacated by some denomination who left an organ in the house. It was used. A storm of protest swept the church in general. A committee was formed to decide the matter. McGarvey was one of the committee. The decision was reached to cease its use. The agreement was soon broken by those who wanted to use it. Institutionalism that corrupts the organization of the church, and instrumental music in the worship, started the

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church toward the formation of ecclesiasticism now known as the United Society of the Disciples Church. From 1867 on the apostasy moved like a tidal wave. Opposition was offered, but was about as futile as a boy casting down his cap to stop the incoming tide. And, gentile reader, when was a well defined "trend" away from the pattern shown in the New Testament ever stopped?

The writer of the Hebrew letter gives a long list of servants of God under former dispensations who endured great sacrifices in remaining faithful to God and commended them for the encouragement of all who live afterwards. He also made reference to many who drift away from the Lord. He warns all under the reign of Christ to take heed lest they also drift away from God.

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul warns against doing as some under the law in the wilderness did in turning away from the Lord. He says that these things happened unto them for examples, lest others "fall after the same example of unbelief." Few indeed, till this day, "give heed" to such examples of punishing the unfaithful. We in this day have this warning against doing as the Israelites did.

But we have a more recent solemn warning that should prevent us from drifting into apostasy. A little more than one hundred years ago we believe the New Testament church was restored as it was first established. Perhaps no greater joy has been experienced by followers of the Lord than many thousands have experienced who united in that great movement. Many actually believed that unity of all believers in Christ was soon to be achieved. They thought all denominations would soon be supplanted by the simple church of the Lord. Had those who made up the church for the first number of years remained satis-

fled with the Lord's arrangement without any change, and had lived the gospel half as well as it was preached, none but the Lord can know what the result would have been by this date. But soon many began to be dissatisfied with the simple arrangement of the Lord. Ambitious men desired humanly formed organizations to furnish them places of pre-eminence to rule over others. The membership had grown numerous. Many wealthy ones sought ways to impress the world of the importance of the church of the Lord above human standards.

Before any movement can make great progress, the mental attitude of large numbers must be prepared, so that the idea of the movement is desired by many. That condition prevailed in general at the time the apostasy began to gain momentum. Few remain now who know by experience the state of mind inspiring the movement toward apostasy. The division was about complete very early in the present century. Those who are now under sixty-five years old, know practically nothing from personal observation or experience. A few have had access to information reflecting the situation from fifty to eighty years ago.

I am sure that a clear picture, though brief, will be of much aid to our young preachers and writers. The most vivid portrayal of the conditions at the time the apostasy began to gain momentum that I have seen is given by W. T. Moore, and D. S. Burnett reciting facts from 1840 up to and including 1867. W. T. Moore wrote of Burnett: "He did not stop in the formative state of the work, but carried it forward to organization. The present system of societies among the Disciples owes its origin to his efforts more than to any other man." In a letter to the editor of this work dated Baltimore, February, 28, 1867,

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he says: "I consider the inauguration of our society system, which I vowed to urge upon the brethren, if God raised me up from my protracted illness in 1845, as one of my most important acts of my career" (Note, first society was organized in 1849).

I now quote from a sermon by Burnett written a short time before he died in 1867: "Fifty years have now elapsed, and the little band of disciples who inaugurated the initial movement, and who were despised for their very insignificance, have grown to be one of the most powerful and influential religious people of modern times, numbering in the United States alone not less than five hundred thousand communicants. Such astonishing success—a success unparalleled in religious movements."

"For many years the preachers were, for the most part, plain uneducated men. But they knew the word of God, and how to make the people understand it."

"The movement has now passed the formative state, and is rapidly developing the condition of permanent success. Under the fostering care of Disciples, schools and colleges are going up all over the land, while the churches are supplying themselves with educated pastors to break to them the bread of life. Every thing indicates an advance toward thorough and complete organization. When this point is fully reached, we trust that the days of sectarianism will be numbered.

"The Disciples are just now passing through a state of transition, and it will be interesting after fifty years, to look over the speeches by representative men of this period" (Living Pulpit, 1867).

The careful unbiased reader will see an almost exact picture of 1951. Just as the work of the first fifty years of the Restoration Movement was performed, as admitted

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by Burnett, by uneducated men, when measured by some standards, so again after the division about the beginning of the century, the same class of men rebuilt the church till some years ago. In 1896 there were fewer than three hundred preachers remaining, who opposed innovations. I have the picture of all the preachers who could be listed at that time. I think there were not a dozen of them who had received a college education. Don't try to interpret this to mean that I oppose preachers obtaining all the education they possibly can, which will contribute to their strength as proclaimers of the gospel. It makes no difference where, or how much, education is obtained so long as it does not injure him as a preacher of the gospel.

With the change of one word in Burnett's picture of the condition in 1867, the picture could be easily taken for 1951. He frankly says "pastors." We say "located evangelist." But Brother Hardeman says, "I have just fears that we are turning on the various congregations professional *pastors*." That is far more than I have ever stated. But he has had far better opportunity to know about the matter. At the least what he says should be given careful thought.

There has been some discussion about where and with what class of men innovations originated, and were introduced into the church.

Some have said that innovations came out of Bible Colleges. Others have just as confidently affirmed that religious papers led the church into digression. Perhaps it might be a good idea to look into the matter just a little.

What papers advocated innovations in their columns ? The Christian Standard and the Christian Evangelist. Who were the writers and promoters of these papers? Bible

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College men almost entirely. Errett was not educated in a Bible college but I call on any man to show a single effective advocate and promoter of innovations from 1867 to 1900 who were not Bible College men. What papers opposed innovations ? The American Christian Review, The Gospel Advocate, and Firm Foundation. With few exceptions writers for these papers were not educated in Bible Colleges. This is just to keep the record straight. But this is not all. Errett and Burnett were not educated in Bible colleges established by disciples. They came in before Bethany was established.

I will here call the roll of the men who advocated innovations up till the division was completed. I shall give the name and the date at which the man entered Bethany, or the date he was graduated. W. T. Moore, 1855; C. L. Loos, James S. Lamar, 1853, L. B. Wilks, 1849, O. A. Burgess, 1851, W. K. Pendleton, 1841, the year Bethany was founded. After Campbell he was president. A. R. Benton, 1845, Joseph King, 1845, William Baxter, 1841, Thomas Munnell, 1850, J. W. McGarvey, 1847, Moses E. Lard, 1845, Robert Graham, 1843, Robert Milligan 1854, John Shackelford, 1854. Except Moses E. Lard, we may safely say that all the others were the early and zealous supporters of innovations. True that McGarvey did not like instrumental music in the worship, but he never openly opposed it, and he gave his full support to innovations, and was a most ardent advocate of missionary societies.

With Campbell as founder of Bethany College, and this list of fifteen of his graduates who pressed the formation of societies till 1867, can any one retain the least doubt that the whole society movement was born in Bethany, and nursed by Bethany graduates till graduates from other such colleges came on the scene to help in the spread of innova-

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tions? These are the front rank men who came out of Bethany, indoctrinated with the "spirit of progress," and who orally and by their writings in the Christian Standard, and the Christian Evangelist, led most of the churches into the formation of the denomination now known as The Disciples Church.

In view of the fact that organizing various societies violates the very fundamentals of the word of the Lord, as well as the often repeated solemn pledges of the leaders in the Restorative Movement why did they so soon depart from those principles, and why did innovations gain so fast? Men's love for organization; ambition to have preeminence over others; the desire to do big things in a big way; to impress the world, and denominations with their importance.

But one fact that served to give societies appeal was the fact that Alexander Campbell was made the first president. It is not believed by many that he ever attended a meeting of the society. Many regarded him then as almost inspired. Many yet talk and act about the same way. Why did he consent, if indeed he did, to violate at the very close of his life the principles he had advocated and defended during all the years of his strong mentality? On the same principle that many other strong men, when in feeble age, have so modified what they stood for in their prime when nearing the close of life.

Perhaps a majority of strong men in the past have either made statements that seem to indicate a change, or to so modify former writings, that those who can use them to serve their purpose, quote them favoring more liberal (?) positions. There are psychological reasons to explain this in part but I will leave that for others.

A special reason for the rapid gain of innovations is the

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fact that the best and most loyal men failed for years to see the danger. Even Ben Franklin tried to work with the society movement for a number of years. After one has aided in such movements, even when he changes he has lost the power to oppose such with effect. But reduced to the lowest level, the explanation is a lack of faith in the Lord, and the unchangeable plan he has given to save the world. Search the record of departures from God's revealed will throughout the Jewish dispensation, and in the early days of the church, and in every instance a lack of faith is the basic cause. In our day when new plans, agencies, and work is launched that is not even mentioned in the word of the Lord, the basic trouble is *lost faith* in the New Testament plan being adapted to our advanced day and way of doing big things in a big way.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIAN  
COLLEGES

(G. H. P. Showalter)

"Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (Jas. 3:1) .

Last week in this column, I published a letter from Brother Ernest Madison Wright, head of a "department" in a well known "Christian College. The communication came to me unsolicited, unrequested, and unexpected. It set forth certain fundamentals in Brother Wright's belief and teaching as it is regularly and persistently expressed in one of the prominent religious schools of our land—a school that applies particularly for the patronage of families identified with the churches of Christ. I do not criticize Brother Wright for thus defining his POSITION—I wish that all teachers would show the same candor and moral honesty.

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It is nothing but a matter of ordinary fairness that parents know the religious and moral atmosphere of those institutions of learning to which they entrust the training of their children. A teacher is a public servant, and as such holds a very sacred trust. When one becomes a teacher he very greatly extends his liability and thus his responsibility. He is accountable, not only for his own personal life in morals and religion, in faith and practice, but he must share also the responsibility for the way of life into which he leads those who are under his teaching—who repose confidence in him—and are thus peculiarly susceptible to his influence. It is therefore a serious thing to enter upon that high realm of life where we propose to teach others particularly is this true in those great schools and colleges where the teacher contacts such a large per cent of thinking people who themselves in turn serve their fellowmen as leaders and teachers. I not only think therefore that Brother Wright is certainly right in defining his belief and teaching, but I am very stoutly of the persuasion that no school or college or any member of any faculty, can be doing just "right" when they—or any of them— fail to declare themselves with clearness and boldness on the great issues that pertain to life and salvation. The Savior and all the apostles drew a line of distinction between those things that are of heaven and those that are of the doctrines and commandments of men, and so should we. It is vain to talk here of a neutral POSITION. These are not matters of indifference. I desire therefore to submit for our readers and specially for our Christian College brethren a few reflections:

1. Even colleges are a dangerous thing if not properly administered.

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"A little learning is a dangerous thing, Drink Deep, or touch not the Pierien Spring."

"Paul, thou art mad; thy much learning is turning thee to madness" was the exasperating scream of Festus, the governor, as that peerless apostle and bold exponent of God's truth expatiated upon the merit of the blood of a crucified Savior—the judgment to follow upon sins unforgiven—the necessity of the glorious light of the gospel to show men how to live—"that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me" (Christ)—that "the Gentiles . . . should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance"—and "the resurrection of the dead." Festus was ignorant of these gloriously sublime and heavenly truths and at the height of Paul's fervent appeal shouted forth his untimely exclamation. The schools are sending forth too many with entirely too "much learning" on things that are foreign to faith and subversive of all that a Christian holds dear in the gospel of God's grace and too "little learning" on those things that make for man's peace as set forth in the word of the Lord. It is surprising how short-sighted some men and even some preachers—have become as a result of a "smattering of knowledge" on a few college subjects with a failure to "drink deep"—go to the bottom of things. The result is that many new, strange and hurtful doctrines are springing up among the churches of Christ that are bringing, and will bring, grief to many, and that will "overthrow the faith of some." I regret that the limits of space do not permit me to recite important specifications and particulars, just here, but many will find illustrations in the local church with which they are familiar. To go off to school

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loaded down with a confidence in said school and in anything and everything that might be advanced in the classes by teachers who have been promoted to high places on the faculty—who are far more speculative than faithful—who, in some instances, are not even members of the church at all—who have no conscience, and less knowledge of the Bible—but who possess, nevertheless, suavity of manner, and an impelling gentleness, ease, and grace in their approach on the unsuspecting and unsophisticated mind of the young—in such a situation, the student may soon easily find himself less intolerant of evil and the sin of unbelief, as well as less faithful and devoted in the church of our Lord.

2. I am writing not to hinder, but to help—not to increase difficulties now faced by Christian teachers but to assist in the solution of them. Schools are making history and some of them are making it pretty fast, just now. The churches of Christ at this time as at all times are in duty bound to co-ordinate their efforts in the security and defense of a common cause, and by a mighty, coherent concert of action uphold, defend and exalt the "common faith," "once for all delivered to the saints"—to maintain it, magnify it in their lives and make it permanent, One great trouble with the colleges—all of them, not excepting "Christian colleges"—of our day is they are trying to teach too many things foreign to our holy religion and entirely outside of and sometimes contrary to the Bible. In most of these schools it is hardly fair to say that the Bible has even a "secondary" place its place is so small and subsidiary that it falls away down the line so far as it concerns value, or as importance attaches to courses of study. In Paul's day covetousness was "idolatry," but in our day, in the Christian Colleges, athletics is "idolatry."

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They worship the athlete, instead of God—if the object of worship means the thing, or the one, occupying the chief place in our hearts, affections, and lives—and this is the sense employed by Paul when he declared that "covetousness is idolatry," and by John when he said: "Keep yourselves from idols." But in this they must keep up with the other schools of the day—and they feel justified—notwithstanding the gambling, and other notorious evils connected with it. They feel justified and must follow the other schools, and standards set by other colleges, whether they follow Christ or not. Who can read the New Testament and suppose that if Christ were here on earth, today, he would be crowding, in a jam of people, for a ticket to see "cats," or "tigers," or "steers"—or something—in a "big play"—or fight—with all the profanity, vulgarity, gambling, and other types of high-handed wickedness, upon which the maledictions of heaven have been recorded in God's holy word? Which one of the "fans" would go to the Lord and say: "Here, Jesus, I have bought you a ticket to the big game; hope you will have a good time—so long and adios." Would they expect him to go? Or, would it be regarded as blasphemy—the mere thought of such an approach to our Lord? And still they sing lustily: "Where he leads me I will follow—I will follow, follow on." But, it is "affiliation," or "standing," or something—you know we must hold "our schools" up to the standards about us—just like ancient Israel were determined to "be like the nations about them"—at all hazards—the leadership of Jesus does not apply when we don't want it to—not in schools for instance—some of them!

3. And this brings forward another reflection—this idea of "affiliation" and of conformity in the realm of accepted academic standards as erected—not by Christians

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or Christian Colleges—but by denominational schools and by state colleges and universities. Has it come to pass that we just must "affiliate"—Bible or no Bible? Are we prepared for the conclusion that "affiliation" is of first importance? Are the educational and intellectual standards of a grossly materialistic and skeptical age, to be appropriated in their entirety, and employed without discrimination, without question, and without modification, as a criterion for the safety and purity of our children and our homes, and as a canon for the safeguarding and maintenance of that simple New Testament faith among the churches of Christ ?

4. At this juncture denominational churches took a fearful and frightful risk and they lost! Today nine-tenths—and most of the other tenth also—of sectarian schools, colleges, and universities are a hotbed of materialistic speculation and of atheistic philosophy. They no longer teach the Bible as the word of God, or as an inerrant revelation from heaven! They scoff the very suggestion the writers of the Bible were guided by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And it all came about in this way. They built colleges and then great universities. They must rank with the state schools and measure up to state institutional standards. When they needed some special academic recognition in some "department" or some "school" or "college" in a university and did not have available a man of their "own faith and order" to fill the bill, they went out and employed the man, minus the "faith and order" just to fill the place so they would not hazard their "standard of recognition." They went from bad to worse. Scientists and philosophers with no "faith" at all and no "order" either—and no religion—became the order of the day and the result is the downright infidelity, modernism, atheism,

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and what not that, today, is not only prevalent, but dominant, in practically all the great schools of protestant churches. Where is the piety, the faith, the prayer—the reverence for the word of God—of Luther, Melancthon, Knox, Whitfield, or the Wesleys? It would make John Wesley or Adam Clarke turn in their graves—so to speak—to know of the discard of the Bible, the collapse of the spiritual, and the eclipse of faith such as is now the chief mark of distinction among those religious groups that perpetuate in their nomenclature, the worthy names of those honored reformers.

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5. About the saddest concrete example of the "higher" in the realm of the intellectual and spiritual may be seen in the history of the "Christian Church" during the century just gone. It was almost exactly a century ago that Alexander Campbell became deeply impressed with what he recognized as a necessity in the establishment of a school, and a college, to safeguard the plea and the faith of the children of those who shared with him a desire for the restoration of the ancient order of things with reference to religion, the Bible and the church. He founded Bethany College. For a time things went well. Other colleges were founded along the same lines—and later still others were builded. But Campbell died and all that generation—and all the fathers that outlived Campbell—that illustrious and honored host of pioneers in a worthy, mighty movement for the restoration of the primitive gospel—they have taken their place with all the silent host in the vast domain of silence to await the glorious day, when, from the hand of the mighty invincible Conqueror of Death and of Hades, they shall have imposed on their foreheads, in blissful triumph, the imperishable crowns of matchless glory and everlasting life.

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But the schools they founded—and the colleges—what of them? They soon wanted to become like the colleges about them. And so they did. "God gave to them the desire of their heart," but "sent leanness into their souls." They went out among the irreligious, the atheistic and the sectarian schools and colleges to find "heads" or "tails" or both—with which to top off or cap off their "departments."

And preferment, and much honor, and good pay, and over the children and children's children of Campbell and the other reformers. These young people admired these godless, faithless, atheistic teachers, they noticed the "preferment" the "distinction," the "honor" and the fat "salaries"—they came to love and appreciate them. The mighty work of the disintegration of the "plea" and of the destruction of faith and the disruption of churches began. Musical instruments were introduced into the worship—church societies—most anything, everything—whatever the soul desired. Faith as based upon the authority of God's word was gone. The young fellows who had been off to college had now returned—they knew all about what was important and what was unimportant—and they showed the old brethren and the old churches just how to do it—and if these old brethren did not do it just right, they did it themselves—they knew better how to do it anyway—they learned it at college. The pastor system and the rule of "the clergy"—alias "preachers"—was set up. The "Christian church" has become a sect among sects. Most of them know it and glory in it. They have departed further from God in a short time than any other religious group—possibly because they recognized no humanly made laws of church government, creeds, disciplines and articles of faith—as other sectarian churches to put even a tem-

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porary check on them. And they did it through their colleges.

6. Are we slow to learn ? Or, are we yet to be introduced to the lessons left us by those who slumber in the dust? Are we willing to go headlong in total disregard of the mistakes that have been made by those who have gone on before, or by the reckless experiments of others still living and working in defiance of the ways of God? What are these "Christian colleges" doing and what are they going to do? There will come a day of reckoning. For my part, I believe that the churches of Christ as represented by godly mothers and fathers, who have sons and daughters to educate—children, dear to their hearts as the life blood that warms them—will rise in the strength of Israel's God, and insist, with all the power and fervor of a loyal Christian's faith, that the safeguards of New Testament teaching and of the common faith and the purity of the Christian life be thrown about these young people who "go off to school." They have a right to expect it. Recently I heard an eloquent appeal in behalf of "our colleges" and of that supposed loyal support from the brotherhood to which they were entitled—and it was a good speech and in it the speaker made the claim that perhaps 85 % of the preachers of loyal churches now are those being turned out by "our Christian colleges." I had the opportunity of a short speech to follow this, and I stated that I did not know what percent of our preachers were made by the colleges, but that I take it that we would be pretty safe in saying that almost one hundred percent of the fine gospel preachers made at their mothers' knees, and by the churches of Christ over the country, are sent to the "Christian colleges" for a "finishing" or topping out of their work—they are all counted as products of the college

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—and fathers and mothers and churches have reason to expect help and co-operation. They are reposing in the school a very serious trust—what to them means everything—and this trust and confidence should be regarded as most sacred. Sometimes these very preachers that God has made through churches and godly mothers and fathers—come back home all ruined—because the college has tried to undo the work of God and make these young preachers all over again.—G. H. P. S. in Vol. 52, No. 12, March 19, 1935.

## Chapter VI

## JERUSALEM AND MEMPHIS

It has been repeatedly asserted that the plan of the work now sponsored by Union Avenue Church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee, is exactly like the work of the elders in Jerusalem in ministering the relief for the poor saints in Judea. Some consideration has been given to this matter in a former chapter. But in view of its importance in the present discussion, further consideration is required in order that the reader may have the clearest possible understanding of the matter.

The first point is: The central agency set up and in operation by the elders of the Union Avenue Church.

The second point is: The character of the work planned, proposed, and being carried out in Japan.

It is my sincere desire that the reader may have the clearest possible analysis of the two cases, Jerusalem and Memphis, in order to reach a scriptural decision. The issue is so great that we should sincerely desire to reach a scriptural conclusion. All bias and prejudice should be considered and some other things about which there is no disagreement.

Should we try to prove our point by the fact that some one else has changed, or supposed to have changed, his POSITION ? The digressives exhausted that method many years ago. Any one has the right to change if he thinks he has been wrong. But he should so state. Personalities, their consistency, or inconsistency, should have no place in any investigation concerning the scripturalness or un

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scripturalness of any teaching or practice. Our appeal should be to the word of the Lord, or to universally agreed principles of what is right.

To illustrate: We have long agreed that the church can not organize any human institution through which to work, nor work through such already in existence. We have also generally agreed that the Lord has assigned to the church certain work and duty, and that the church, as a church, cannot as one congregation, or as a number of congregations unite to perform any secular work not assigned to the church by the Lord. Individuals have a wide range of secular and civic activities in which they may engage. But with the church the work is specific. When, therefore, we show that a clear violation of these principles has occurred, it is generally agreed that the scriptures have been violated.

Point first: Union Avenue church elders sent a representative to Japan to make a survey.

2. He returned and made a report to Union Avenue.

3. Union Avenue elders printed and sent out large numbers of his report. Voice of Opportunity from Japan.

4. Union Avenue sent their special representative to a large number of churches over a large territory.

5. Many churches sent their contributions to the Union Avenue elders.

6. Union Avenue elders selected and sent men to Japan to begin work on the plan submitted in their pamphlet.

7. The estimate for the cost of land and buildings alone total \$419,000.

8. Various schools, such as sewing schools, nursing

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schools, community centers, cafeterias, athletic fields to train athletes.

9. Not one item of all this work by Union Avenue was done in the capacity of elders, or as official work of elders. The work of elders begins and ends, as elders, with their oversight of the local church. Union Avenue received and disbursed the money.

10. All this work was, and is, being done as individuals who have associated themselves in a self-formed and voluntary association or agency, working outside of, and far beyond, the limits of their official bounds. If it is claimed that elders may officiate as elders beyond the limits of the local membership, then that adopts the Diocesan Episcopacy, without any bounds of territory. Who is ready for such a great violation of the word of the Lord who limited their work to the local congregation? Second point is embraced in the above paragraph.

## Jerusalem

1. The saints in Judea were in need because of the famine.
  2. The churches in Macedonia and Achaia heard of their need and made contribution to aid them.
  3. They sent it to the elders in Jerusalem. If sent to other congregations it was sent to elders.
  4. Nothing is stated about what, or how the money was disbursed.
- S. Supplying the needs of those in want is part of the work the Lord assigned to the church.

6. Administering the need was the work of elders in their oversight of the church. These are about all the facts we read about it in the word of the Lord.

How much likeness can the reader see between  
Union

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Avenue and Jerusalem? In order for there to be a mild likeness we would have to read much more than is recorded. The following would have to be in the record:

1. The Jerusalem church sends a special representative, for illustration we will say, to Egypt, to make a survey to learn if it was a promising field for the gospel.
2. The representative makes the survey, returns and makes his report.
3. The Jerusalem church sends their representatives into many fields to stir up interest in the Egyptian field, and to solicit contributions.
4. The Jerusalem church prepares a plan for the work to be done in Egypt.
5. This plan is sent to many churches to stir them up to make contributions.
6. The plan calls for building many schools, the estimate to be a large amount.
7. Such schools as commercial, nursing, sewing, community centers, cafeterias, and athletic fields are strongly urged as the "approach," proven by the other religious groups, to be best for the Egyptians.

8. The Jerusalem church receives the contributions from Macedonia and Achaia, manages the money, disburses it to the workers, and sends reports of contributions and disbursements at regular intervals to the contributing churches.

9. The plan set up in Jerusalem was continued indefinitely.

Memphis has been in operation, I think, more than three years and unless continued permanently, the whole enterprise will collapse. How any one, over his own signature, can assert that Memphis is just like Jerusalem, is more than I can understand.

## Chapter VII

A PAGE FROM  
HISTORY

I think it may be safely said that the greatest errors in departures from the New Testament order started from a very small "trend," so small that few considered it as error, or at least so harmless appearing that it was not opposed. One elder seeking the pre-eminence was a local matter, just one man in one congregation, or one in different congregations, yet it was a seed of error. Since the beginning the law of God is that every seed shall bring forth after its kind. Innocent appearing error can grow into a great departure. About 600 years was required to reach full maturity—the *pope*. I think it is usually understood that the first time that sprinkling was administered as baptism was in the case of Novatus, who was thought to be too sick to be immersed. From that time on sprinkling has been administered as baptism.

The Disciples Church is now admitted to be a denomination, with its United Society, an ecclesiastical organization. But the start toward that ecclesiasticism appeared very innocent. At first few believed it was a transgression of the word of the Lord. I have refrained during more than sixty years to impose my personal experience on readers. But I apologize for relating what I have seen and observed in regard to how little things seemingly grow into great

error.

I think it was in 1889 that I attended my first New River District Cooperation meeting. Yes, such organizations were then called Cooperation meetings. The time and place of meeting was announced. When the meeting

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convened, the names of the messengers from the various congregations in the district were called by the secretary. Pledges from the various congregations were recorded. Some pious, venerable elders from different congregations composing the board held a council. The amount of money pledged for the coming year was tabulated. The Board, after consultation, selected some preacher to travel and preach throughout the district for the following year. The secretary-treasurer received the money from time to time from the pledging congregations and sent it to the preacher. That is a very fair description of Cooperations about sixty years ago in the New River District in Virginia. Though young I took no part. I did not believe it was the Lord's way of doing things. Repeated and persistent efforts were made to induce me to cooperate. They tried to hire me as their preacher at one Board meeting. Colonel J. R. Miller, the secretary, urged me to attend their Board meeting in Pulaski City. I went. After the meeting convened he made a very enthusiastic speech expressing pleasure that I had accepted his invitation. I said a few words, as follows: "Brethren, I know every earthly interest I have is against the course I am taking in declining to work with you. My reason is that I do not find any authority in the word of the Lord for such an organization as you have here. If you will show me any scriptural authority for doing it in this organization I will work with you with all my heart. But unless you can show me the word of the Lord for doing it this way, then all the gold of Klondike can't buy me." I sat down. Silence was oppressive. Colonel W. J. Sheburne, a venerable elder from Edgemont congregation, said, "Let us proceed with our business." That was the only word I can now remember, and as it was one of the most tense moments of my life I am sure that I can

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repeat almost every word spoken. I then rose to my feet. I spoke the following words: "I suppose we will have to let the Lord decide for us at the judgment. As for myself, I am willing to trust him." Without hand-shaking I walked out of the meeting. Again, I beg pardon of readers for giving this personal experience, but in this connection, I feel that it is not out of place.

For the following fifteen years I was in the battle against innovations, privately, publicly and in the press. After fourteen months of pressure, J. B. Briney agreed to defend his teaching and practice, the first man of any note at least to attempt a public defense. He was the most ardent supporter of innovations in the Christian church for many years. In Louisville, September, 1908, he affirmed that the use of such organizations as the Illinois Christian Missionary Society, the Foreign Christian Missionary Society, etc., is authorized in the New Testament scriptures, and is acceptable to God. I think it is safe to say that he made the strongest defense of societies that has been made during the entire controversy for fifty years. He was opposed to the effort then developing of merging the whole list of their societies, perhaps six or more, into one big organization something that had never been proposed or even thought of for many years.

Two years and two months later I attended their national convention. The skillful tactician, Peter Ainsley, Baltimore, Maryland, was chairman and millionaire lumberman, R. A. Long, Kansas City, sat on the rostrum with him. The movement for uniting all societies into one big one had been gaining momentum for some time. Each side knew that the convention of 1910 would be a critical meeting.

With a vain hope of defeating the movement for merging all societies, J. B. Briney, the leader of the group,

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Zack Sweeney and perhaps a dozen others of the conservative element of the Christian church took seats in front of the rostrum. Two or three times, when resolutions aiming at consolidation were being made, Briney sprang to his feet and tried to make a speech in opposition. The chairman did not permit him to get in a single sentence. I thought at the time, and I still carry a very vivid mental picture, that his face showed the deepest humiliation and despair that I have ever seen on any man's face. For perhaps forty years he had been the strongest and most effective supporter of such societies in the entire Christian church. My best information is that from that day till his death he opposed the United Society.

The Christian Standard and its editor, Isaac Errett, were principal supporters of missionary societies from the founding of that paper till that time. Till the present, now forty-one years later, the Christian Standard still opposes the United Society.

What must be the regret of men who aid in starting some apparently innocent movement then see it grow farther away from the word of the Lord till they turn to oppose it till their dying day.

If I could give any young man one piece of advice only it would be this: Don't teach, aid, practice or tolerate any "trend" that diverges in the least from the straight course of the word of the Lord.

## Chapter VIII

THE RIGHT OF  
OPINION

Those who set out to restore the New Testament church in America accepted as a guiding principle: "Where the Bible speaks we will speak; where the Bible is silent we will be silent." This same truth is stated by the apostle Peter: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." That truth soon proved too restrictive for ambitious, would-be leaders. They rejected it and substituted matters of opinion liberty." Under that broad unscriptural principle a flood of innovations were brought into the church. The end result has been the establishment of another denomination.

Again there is much talking and writing about "the liberty or right of opinion." It is asserted that "Every one has the right to his opinion." On that specious and dangerous plea, a number of things are being taught and practiced that are disturbing the peace and threatening the unity of the church of the Lord.

Authority for this "right of opinion" is sought in the 14th chapter of Romans. It is doubtful if any other portion of the word of the Lord has been worse wrested from its proper application. Long years ago "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," was quoted in justification of infant church membership, sprinkling, and about every other denominational error. Now we hear some prominent brethren declaring, "every man has a right to his own opinion." The time is ripe for a careful examination of the scriptural application and limitation that God

in its place: "In matters of faith, unity; in

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himself has set to every man's use of his "right of opinion, or as Paul calls it, "weak faith."

#### Romans 14:1-5

"But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him . . . One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike" (Rom. 14:1-5) . Who is it that is "weak in faith?" Is it one whose faith in Jesus as the Son of God is wavering? Is it one who is weak in faith in regard to obedience to the requirements of the Lord? It is unthinkable that any one would affirm that the "weak faith" Paul here mentions has the remotest connection with or bearing on faith in Christ, or the facts, commands, and promises of the gospel. Their "weak faith," or what we often call "opinion," led them to refuse to eat meat, and to observe certain days religiously as holy to the Lord. Whether their "weak faith" was produced by applying to themselves the abolished law of Moses in regard to certain kinds of meat and the observing of days, or whether it was produced by illogical reasoning, or by both, it was not a gospel faith; it was not produced by the gospel. Paul said, "Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind" whether he would eat certain kinds of meat or refrain from eating; whether he would "observe" certain days, or regard every day alike. Such practices were and are personal, private matters and have not the least bearing on or relation to the work and worship of the church. They are left entirely out of the realm of the church assembly. Those who bind on themselves as individuals the "observance of days"

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and a vegetable diet are granted that liberty as individuals; and such brethren who are "weak in faith," must be accepted as brethren and not "set at nought." Undoubtedly, every one is granted the right to hold this "weak faith," or as we sometimes say, opinion.

But such must HOLD his "weak faith." No one is granted the right to press his "weak faith" on any brother, much less disturb the peace of the church with it—as will be clearly noted later in this writing. One greatly errs when he persuades himself that he is granted the right or liberty to bind it on any one else, much less to formulate his "weak faith" into practice and thrust it into the work and worship of the church. Paul settled that question for all time. "The faith {opinion} which thou hast, have to thyself before God" (Rom. 14:22). It is impossible to imagine a plainer violation of the word of the Lord than for one to stress, with tongue or pen, his "weak faith," or opinion in the assembly of the Lord, or in the general brotherhood, or to formulate it into practice, and thus disturb, the peace and unity of the church of the Lord. The solemn injunction of the Holy Spirit forbids any man to impose his weak faith on any one to the disturbance of peace among brethren. "The faith which thou hast, have to thyself" makes it a personal, private matter. So long as a man holds this character of faith to himself, it cannot disturb the peace of the church, and will not necessarily injure the one holding it. When brethren "have this faith" to themselves, they must be received as brethren in all matters of the teaching and practice plainly commanded by the Lord.

But when brethren will not "have their weak faith to themselves" but persistently press it to the disturbance of the church, then there is not a word in all the New

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Testament that they shall be "received" and permitted to destroy the peace and unity of the church.

### "Weak" Faith vs. Gospel Faith

Bear in mind that "weak faith" is not produced by the plain teaching of the Lord, but comes by misapplication of the scriptures or by illogical reasoning or by both. The faith produced by the gospel is bound on every child of God and governs them in their personal life and public assembly. Brethren who are weak in faith are granted the liberty to bind themselves in certain matters that are personal and private in character, but are not permitted to bind such matters on their brethren. Had this scripture been obeyed, the restored church of the Lord would have remained in unity and peace until this day. The plain violation of this truth occurred when men "weak in faith" (having a faith not produced by the gospel) formulated their weak faith into practice, and then forced this practice into and onto the church. If brethren today would be content to hold their "weak faith" in the private, personal character it ought to have, and cease to stress it with tongue and pen, disturbances would end, and peace would reign within the church. Not a single matter of those so seriously disturbing the peace of the church today is based on any command or example in the New Testament.

By misapplying scripture and illogical reasoning, men may come to believe that they can introduce instrumental music into the worship of the church and may preach the gospel through a missionary society. These things come not of faith produced by the word of God; they are not taught in the New Testament.

Brethren may reason themselves into a faith that the Christ will return to the earth, set up a kingdom here,

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and reign on the earth for a thousand years. This is not a gospel faith, and it is only produced by a long and involved series of human speculations and reasonings. Even its advocates frankly admit that even if such might happen in the future, it does not add a single duty in our present service of the Lord, and proposes no new hope except a vague idea of being permitted to sit on some earthly throne, and rule people then on the earth. If the guess should possibly prove true, it does not change our present duty one whit—as its advocates are free to admit. Let such brethren obey the injunction of the Holy Spirit: "The faith which thou hast, have it to thyself before God."

Brethren may reason themselves into the "weak faith" that "any good work may scripturally be supported from the Lord's treasury," as some are now contending. Teaching the Bible in a school is a good work. Therefore, it is argued, schools that teach some Bible should be supported from the Lord's treasury. But such a faith is not a gospel faith, because supporting a school is not authorized in the Bible either by command or by approved example. On the basis of the liberty taught in Romans 14, individual Christians certainly have the liberty to support good schools that teach some Bible. But they most certainly do not have a New Testament right or liberty to impose such upon others; and beyond all question have no grant from the word of the Lord to incorporate it into the church. Such a claim opens the door of the church undertaking the support from the Lord's treasury of any organization or enterprise that performs any good work. Why pious, good men fail to see this truth, and why ambitious men are not deterred from thrusting into the church the support of human institutions, is amazing.

For decades we have successfully established and

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undoubtedly defended the truth that the church cannot be scripturally connected with, or function through, any human organization. While individuals may aid in many good causes, the church moves alone in its congregational capacity. Shall we now make the church an adjunct to some human institution. Or shall we adopt some human institution as an adjunct to the church? Is the church of the Lord so weak and defective that we must supply it with a humanly formed crutch? A good man who has recently taken up a highly important work in publishing the gospel says, "I wonder if the Lord is not more concerned about our motive than about our method." Possibly that is what Nadab and Abihu thought when they offered strange fire. Perhaps that is what David thought when he put the ark of the covenant on a new cart instead of on the shoulders of the priests. There is not a line in the Bible that can be reasonably construed as meaning that God has not always been concerned about our method, or how we do things, as well as about what we do.

#### Modern "Trends"

Pious, zealous elders of a local congregation may reason themselves into a faith that they may plan a great enterprise, engage workers, send them into a field, solicit contributions from a large number of distant congregations, and they themselves take the sole management and control of the funds thus gathered. But such a "faith" is not produced by any direct command or approved example in the New Testament authorizing such a set-up. It is a plan for extending the kingdom of the Lord. The work is glorious beyond human comprehension. But it is a set-up that should be given the most serious consideration. If the scope of the work expands, how long can such an

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arrangement be kept in the control of the local congregation?

All great departures from the New Testament order of things have originated with good, pious men, who began an almost indistinct "trend" from the straight line of the gospel. This writer attended some local, weak movements called "Cooperation Meetings." He watched those almost imperceptible "trends" grow into an ironclad ecclesiasticism called "The United Society" of the Disciples' Church. Sixty years ago, when this writer first became acquainted with the "trends," few men were wise enough to foresee what would be the full maturity of such a small, insignificant divergence from the New Testament model. Having observed for more than sixty years the growth of apparently harmless "trends" till they became pronounced serious departures from the word of the Lord, I would respectfully but with all the earnestness of my soul, urge elders and brethren everywhere to seriously review the present "trend" toward centralized control of mission works. Is it not far safer for control of these mission funds to be on a basis that will conform to every principle of scripture truth? Will not such a course allay the fears and the apprehensions of a multitude of brethren.

I fear that many do not realize the full extent of the unrest among many of the most faithful and zealous members of the church today. If the present centralized arrangements (by which many churches turn over their funds to be managed and spent by one church in some foreign field) are strictly scriptural, and just such as have been generally believed to be in harmony with New Testament commands and approved examples if this is true, as some are affirming, why then this sudden widespread and serious disturbance about the methods being

employed? It would be interesting if someone would offer a reasonable explanation why such a sudden and great disturbance has shaken the church if nothing new has made its appearance. Will someone offer an explanation?

Brethren who claim great liberty to stress with tongue and pen, in season and out of season, their questionable matters, become extremely sensitive to any criticism, however mild and respectfully it may be offered. They seem to think they have every right to exploit their "weak faith," or opinion, it matters not how much disturbance may result. Shall they be permitted to enter congregations and stress their "weak faith" to the division of the church? The Holy Spirit did not leave that question unanswered. Continuing the same problem raised in Romans 14, Paul goes on in the sixteenth chapter to say, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and turn away from them." No plainer command is found in all the New Testament than that which is here given. Elders who have been given the oversight of the flock, and who must give an account, should take heed to their responsibility.

We build according to the plain "pattern" the Lord has revealed in the New Testament, or else we start a seeming harmless "trend" that will in the end mature into another denomination. We have not only the word of the Lord to warn us, but we have the very recent apostasy of the Disciples' Church to show us just how dangerous a "trend" may be.

## Chapter IX

THE RIGHT TO  
LEGISLATE

On the mount God said: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him" (Mark 9 :7). Just before he ascended to heaven to be crowned king, Jesus said: "All authority in heaven and on earth is given unto me" (Matt. 28 :18). To the apostles he said: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me" (Matt. 10:40, 41). God committed all legislative authority to Jesus. He in turn gave to the apostles who were guided by the Holy Spirit, full authority to speak in his name after he ascended to heaven. This side of the spoken and written word of those inspired by the Holy Spirit no man nor company of men have ever been empowered by God to speak with authority—to legislate—in the kingdom of Christ even in the least matters. As king, Christ is the only law-maker in his kingdom—the church—which is his spiritual body. In whatever measure men have in the past, or do now, assume the right to legislate in his kingdom—the church— even in seeming by small matters, in that measure they are in rebellion against the authority of Christ, the King. When the last apostle died, legislative authority ended.

But notwithstanding the fact that legislative authority ended with the death of the apostles, God has made ample provision for carrying on the work and worship of the church in an orderly manner. All the "law of the spirit of life" is fully written by inspiration. Men with proper qualifications were designated to have the oversight and leadership of the church) in carrying on the work of preaching the gospel and attending to the work and wor-

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ship of the church. Every item necessary to the spread of the gospel and edification of the church was given by inspiration. The general principles were also given for carrying out the details of the work. The leaders were called evangelists, elders or overseers, and deacons, as servants in material matters. The qualifications of all these are plainly and definitely stated; their work described, and the general principles for the work to be done. But there is not the least semblance of authority given them or the entire church, to enact a single law a rule of action. Their sole work consisted in administering the law of Christ and in carrying out his work. They were to be guided solely by the law that he as supreme king had enacted by the Holy Spirit as his agent, through the inspired apostles. The church is not a democracy, but a supreme monarchy. Christ, the King, is the only lawgiver. Christ commands; his subjects obey. He rules; citizens in his kingdom serve.

If believers in Christ had first learned and heeded this truth, no apostasy could ever have come. When we forget and begin to violate this truth, admitted by us in theory, in that degree we start another apostasy.

Citizens in a supreme monarchy have no vote. The vote is the sign and symbol; the fundamental principle, and chief instrument of a democracy—a self-governing organization. All laws are decreed, directly or indirectly by vote. Christ has "all authority," and made the laws to govern his kingdom by decree, spoken and written by the Holy Spirit. In a civil democracy, voters elect representatives, who enact laws that govern the voters. In some instances laws are enacted by direct vote. Votes, wherever or for whatever cast, directly or indirectly, make laws—rules of action. These principles have long been accepted by "us"

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in theory. All admit the principle is scriptural, but some of "our" practices have seriously violated the scriptural principle by which we have bound ourselves in theory.

## What Is a Vote?

"Act or power of expressing an opinion or choice, a suffrage." The expression of an opinion or choice, for or against one or more of a number of ideas or propositions is a vote. A vote may be cast by printed ballot as it is done in civil elections. In social organizations or in religious procedure, the vote may be made by written ballot; by standing, lifting the hand, or by voice. To mail or hand cards to church members to be signed and returned to express choice on any proposition, as is very often done, and then declare that such procedure is not voting is a shameful subterfuge, and would be unworthy of decent politicians, to say nothing of those professing to be Christians.

The vote is the symbol of democracy; the instrument of legislating or enacting laws for self-government. Law may be by decree of a supreme monarch who governs the citizens in his kingdom. Christ is a supreme monarch. A vote by citizens in his kingdom usurps his authority to the extent of the matters voted on. Till it is shown that Christ has not made ample provision to administer the affairs in his kingdom in an orderly manner, and that men must remedy the defect in his law to govern his subjects— till that is done, to vote in religious matters, is to that extent a usurpation of his power to rule. Doubtless some one will deny this statement, but no one is able to disprove it.

Citizens in a democracy elect representatives by majority vote who pass laws to govern the voters. Without the

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majority vote no democracy can be established. When established, it can exist and function only by the majority vote. To whatever extent a religious group decides matters by a majority vote, to that extent such a group becomes a democracy with legislative powers. In truth a vote makes a law to the extent and for the time the voters are governed by the principle voted on. If the vote is for choice of a preacher selected, that vote binds the voters so long as he serves. If elders or deacons are voted into office, the voters are bound by and obey that vote as long as those voted into office serve. These conclusions are self-evident.

It seems that the majority vote is justified by saying: "The matters we vote on are not of much importance

just incidentals. We will never vote innovations into the church." To that it is replied that the majority vote is in its very nature a fundamental innovation. Till someone produces either a command or approved example for the majority vote in the word of God, it will remain not only an innovation by the basic innovation, by the instrument of which most other innovations are introduced into religious procedure. Defenders of instrumental music in the worship appeal to Jewish practices under the law for their authority. Those among "us" who practice voting in the church do not have even that "shadow" of authority to plead in defense of their practice.

For many years "we" preached and debated against voting by denominations, in deciding who should be baptized and admitted into their fellowship. "But," says one, "the Lord has settled the question of how to get into the church." Did he fail also to settle the question as to how the work and worship should be carried on? Who so affirms?

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Some one may ask, "How are we going to decide which preacher we shall employ; when we shall hold our meetings, and similar questions?" The Lord ordained that qualified men shall have the "oversight" of the work and worship. But these are not "dictators" nor arbitrary "bosses," but shepherds of the flock; to guide the church in carrying out what the Lord has authorized to be done. It may be that arbitrary rulers and bosses have furnished the excuse for resorting to the majority vote. The writer is not unmindful, in his personal observation, that the temptation is strong under such cases to invoke the vote by an appeal to the membership. But a bad rule of individuals can't be cured by invoking a far more dangerous unscriptural procedure. The "boos" will soon be pressed out by proper protests. But when the vote is invoked, it becomes a generally approved policy, and where it has led in past centuries will be noted later in this writing.

The question: "Why invoke the majority," is one of most serious moment. It is not boasting for the writer to state that his field of observation for years, and undoubted information coming from the most unquestioned sources, show that, in the vast majority of cases, the preacher has invoked the majority vote against the elders, who were, or were regarded, as arbitrary bosses. To the extent the vote becomes general in this regard, it will to that extent establish another kingdom of the clergy, so strongly opposed by those who were the leaders in the restoration a hundred years ago. Once again, it is frankly admitted that boss-rule of those appointed to the eldership, probably furnishes the excuse for first starting to invoke the vote. (A page could be filled here of the reliable instances of congregations being wrecked for years by the vote. This writing deals with the general principle, not its use).

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Ambitious men who desire to rule the church are the ones who most often introduce the vote.

If a congregation with scripturally qualified men appointed as overseers, or without any appointment at all, have a reasonable measure of the spirit of Christ, and desire nothing else but to please the Lord, and do that which is best for the edifying of the church, they can and always will manage all their affairs in peace. But if some are self-willed, contentious, carnally minded, and lacking the spirit of Christ, they will be in strife and division, biting and devouring one another, and all the voting that can be done cannot prevent it. For such conditions in a membership can be cured, not by a resort to a humanly prescribed remedy—the vote—but by taking the Lord's infallible remedy: sincere, bitter repentance.

That God never commanded or approved any practice that plainly violated a fundamental principle of the gospel, will be affirmed by every believer in the Bible. What bearing does the majority vote have on a plainly taught principle of the gospel?

Jesus prayed: "Neither for these alone do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21).

That God commands a unity among believers in Christ as close as the unity that exists between God and Jesus, and that division is accepted in theory by every preacher and writer in our large brotherhood, is unquestioned. And no one will affirm that God has commanded or approved any act or practice that plainly violates the law of unity. The majority vote violates God's law of unity. A vote in the church either creates a divided sentiment or makes

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worse a divided sentiment already existing. No vote can be taken without proposing two or more questions on which to vote. If there is a divided sentiment, a vote makes it worse. If there is no divided sentiment one must be created, else there can be no vote. Who can take the responsibility of either making a divided sentiment worse, or of creating a divided sentiment in the church of the Lord?

Who among the many who manage church matters by majority vote will rise and explain why it is so great a sin for our religious neighbors to manage their affairs by majority on a large scale, and so righteous for us to thus manage our church affairs on a small scale? Can we see one hand lifted with an answer ? "Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practice the same thing" (Rom. 2:1).

The majority vote has never advanced a single item of truth, nor one single command of the Lord. It is safe to say that no vote has ever been taken by church people in favor of one truth or of a divine command. What God has given never has needed any human invention to establish it. Every time a vote in church matters is invoked, it is in support of something not taught in the word of God. To appeal to a vote serves only to settle some question in doubt, not by the word of God, but by human judgment. These are unquestioned facts. They cannot be brushed aside. The course of the church for future years is involved in these matters.

What has been the fruits of the majority vote, the right of self-government, from the first ? The majority vote adopted the first creed; revised and perpetuated every creed down to this day. By it the church of Rome came

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into being, and by it the Pope was declared infallible. The majority vote created every Protestant denomination, placed their ecclesiastical heads over them, thus supplanting Christ. Human innovations from the beginning have been introduced and perpetuated by the majority vote. Take away the vote and every human creed would soon disband, cease to exist, and become disorganized confusion. The vote is the one vital instrument, without which denominations could never have been established, nor still exist.

The majority vote lifted the floodgate through which poured every innovation that led the majority of the churches of the Lord, in the past century, into the great apostasy that now makes up that unhappy people known as the Christian Church.

Let churches of Christ continue to appeal to the vote, not to settle matters that the Lord requires, but to settle untaught things by an appeal to human judgment—just as certain as the law of God, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," and that "every seed shall produce

after its kind," will another apostasy be the harvest. It may be a generation, or even longer, but in the ripened harvest will be apostasy.

## Chapter X

LETTER TO YOUNG  
PREACHERS

I cannot close this volume without a brief letter to you young men who have chosen the work of preaching the gospel.

The work of the gospel preacher is as much greater than any other work as the soul of man is greater than the earthly house of clay; as heaven and eternity are greater than earth and time.

The gospel embraces the wisdom, power and love of God to save and prepare a lost world and fit it for the habitation of God. The gospel is God's remedy to remove the stains of sin from the soul, and renew the image of God in the likeness of the Christ. The church is the institution ordained of God in which and through which redemption can be secured. It was established for all races and for all time. While kept unmarred by the hand of man it is a perfect institution for that purpose. The Holy Spirit through the apostles warned against any change in its form, means or method of work. History of the church from its beginning establishes the rule that any departure in the organization or method of work leads in the end to apostasy.

It will be but few years till the church will be under the complete guidance of you who are today in your youth. Your responsibility is so great that it should fill you with the deepest humility. I would suggest first of all that you keep in mind that you will run your race and finish your course. Above all things you want to finish with joy, a clear conscience and full confidence that your father will

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approve your life work. I can well imagine that to look back over a life with much regret would be sad beyond all expression.

As it has been from the beginning, many questions of teaching and practice will arise on which you will have to make your decision. Strive with all your heart to decide from the word of the Lord. That is the only safe yardstick. It never changes while the standards of men are never stable—ever changing.

The question has often been raised in regard to what period of time tried men's souls most, whether martyrdom, or in peace and prosperity. John says, "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It has ever been true that when one has crucified the flesh; put off the old man and put on the new; when one has completely, or as nearly so as mortals can, surrendered to the heart and soul to Christ Jesus; when that point is reached, no sacrifice is hard and no duty burdensome. Many have not made that surrender.

One danger is to yield to the spirit of the times in which one lives. It is so easy to float down stream. It requires no effort. But it requires strength, courage and a willingness to "endure hardness as a soldier of Jesus Christ." It is pleasant and intoxicating to march in the parade and be one of the multitude. When Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, the multitude followed, even spreading their garments in the way for him to pass over, and cried loud hosannas. But little did they know who he was and what was his mission.

It is a part of our very being to love approval and praise. If there be one who does not desire approval, certainly that one is without ambition. When this inborn desire is misdirected, it leads to compromise of the truth. It was

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said, that "many believed on him but would not confess him openly, lest they be put out of the synagogue, because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Ask first of all, *what will the Lord think?* Then what will men think. Many will find this one of their greatest temptations to compromise the truth.

In this age of high cost of living SALARY is bound to influence the thinking of many of you who are now young preachers. Years ago the most of the preachers in the church of the Lord had to make most of their living, such as it was, even with help from the wives and young children. There were few preachers, yes, very few for years who received enough for preaching to live on, yes, I mean *live* on. That day is gone; a complex, expensive day is with us. When a young man has even a small family to care for, the matter of support should enter into his thinking. But not to allow it to influence what he preaches and how he preaches —that is the question. Sincerely, brother' my heart goes out to you in regard to the seriousness of the danger of this question influencing your work as preacher. It is the worldly, liberal ( ? ) members who are often the biggest givers. Their pocketbooks are very sensitive. Sin, worldliness and error must be reprov'd. But I am not suggesting for a minute that you rant, rave and bluster, using sarcasm and try to appear as courageous. I am sure that if the preacher is sincere, earnest and really desires to lead others in the way of the Lord, and without apology, manifesting the spirit of Christ, that most who need the lesson will take it in the right spirit. There was strife and divisions in the church at Corinth while Paul was still living. And you will find the same sad situations in some congregations today. When I was young I imagined that Christians would always dwell together in peace, unity and

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love. Perhaps as long as humanity is in the flesh such things will still happen. My observation during a period of many years is that such troubles start by a divided sentiment in the leaders or elders. The motivating cause may be two who aspire to have the preeminence. Whatever may be the seeming cause the real cause is just what it was at Corinth, and down through the years till the present. It is *carnality*, walking as men, and after the flesh and not after Christ. Such situations demand all the wisdom, patience and kindness, backed up by firmness. My observation has been that when situations of this sort exists that some preacher, with good intentions, gets the idea that all the wrong is on one side. He takes the side he thinks is in the right; then follows a division. When no doctrinal or practical question is involved, it is seldom if ever that all the wrong is on one side. No man on earth can settle troubles for brethren. He can be of great help, but if such matters are ever settled the ones involved must settle them. When I have met with such troubles, I have firmly told them that when all concerned get in the right attitude toward God their troubles will be easily settled. As long as some are stubborn and unforgiving, no settlement can be made. Sincere, bitter repentance of all wrong by all concerned, is the remedy that God has prescribed. When taken in full measure it has never failed to cure the ailment. No one from outside can dictate terms of settlement. Never become a *party* to a *party*. Try to see what is right and stand firm but kind. Just as long as a membership is just half as good Christians as they ought to be, just so long will they work together in peace and love. So long as the carnal mind is ruling, just so long will strife prevail.

Study carefully, sincerely and seriously the character, qualifications and work of the preacher. Then you will be

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better prepared to preach on the qualifications and work of elders.

"Preach the word; be urgent in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort." Try to be a balanced preacher. Negative preaching must be done. But negative preaching never did build. At best it clears away the ground for building. It requires preaching the whole truth as far as possible to build the house of God.

Preach the gospel with clearness, earnestness and power, without modification or apology. If that stirs up opposition, it is what happened when the Lord and apostles preached the truth and exposed error.

If you have opinions, heed Paul's admonition. "Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God." Opinions *held* will never cause trouble. Preached and stressed, they have caused much trouble.

We have often made great efforts to convert people to the legalistic *form* of the gospel and church, lacking much of the spirit of Christ. The apostles made every possible effort to convert the sinner to Christ. We often strand on the rock of legalism. The Lord said, "Ye pay tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone." Unless the sinner believes with all his heart, repents in deepest sorrow, all the water in lakes and rivers will avail nothing in salvation from sin. We might shout the command, You must believe, ten thousand times, and it would never create faith in the heart. We might cry out, You must repent, but that alone can never bring the sinners to repentance. The person of Christ must be presented to the mind and heart of the sinner till he believes with the whole heart. The terribleness of sin must be so earnestly driven

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home to the heart of the sinner till he abhors and turns from his sinful ways. A new creature in Christ the Lord is a great change. There is a trend everywhere, even in some places among us, of enlisting persons in a social form of religion. Study carefully the preaching of John the baptist, Christ and the apostles. They offered no inducement to enter the kingdom except salvation from sin. Without a sense of sin and a lost state, no one can have any assurance of being acceptable to the Lord.

Many hold up the hand and count off as fast they can talk, "You must, you must repent; you must be baptized," with about as much heart appeal as if repeating the multiplication table. Such matters should be presented deliberately, reverently and with all the burning earnestness that can be commanded. I once heard Gypsie Smith, the famous (?) evangelist, make an appeal in this way, "Now I am wearing your school ribbons. Won't you wear mine? Stand up." A runner was sent out at once to have a card signed. I heard one of our noted preachers make an appeal in these words, "Who wants to have the honor of being the first one to come forward in this meeting?" Do you think it was calculated to bring sinners to Christ with a deep sense of sin? To the few remaining from fifty and more years ago, it seems a rather light appeal to the lost.

The gospel is the highest, most glorious theme ever to engage the mind and employ the tongue of men. The manner and spirit of the preacher should be on a plane of dignity, not snobbishness, worthy of such sublime a message. Wisecracking, joking, frivolity, do not comport with the holy message from heaven.

Study to avoid preaching *down* at the people. The attitude should make the audience feel that he is talking *with* us not at us. After a sermon by a preacher of some note, a



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preaching brother said: "I did not like that sermon. It did not make me feel right." I replied that the attitude was that the preacher felt that he was on an elevated plane, preaching down at his audience. Try to make the hearer feel that the message is *for* him, but not at him.

One of the dangers of the preacher is that he will feel himself in the attitude of the physician. The doctor prescribes his medicines for his patients but does not take them. If we do not search our hearts often, we will have the attitude of the doctor, "the medicine is for the hearer; I am in good health." "When preaching on the Christian living, unless the preacher realizes that the medicine is for him as much as for the hearers, Parseeism is nearby.

Now I must mention the twin sins of preachers and writers. *Envy* and *jealousy* are the besetting sins of many of us preachers and writers. He who can truthfully say, "I have no jealousy or envy of any one else," is either a great saint or self-deceived. I have often said that I think as much harm has come to the cause of Christ from these as perhaps any one other sin.

Remember that Christ *lived* is more effective than Christ *preached*, unless accompanied by holy living. You, my young brother, have a human nature as well as Adam and Eve and all of their sons and daughters. Let me warn you that there are bounds of propriety and safety between men and women which if crossed is most likely to lead to terrible mistakes. Indiscretion, when no actual overt act is done, can damage the cause of Christ more than we can possibly know. Your life is your loudest sermon.

And now because of limited space I must bid you adieu for the present. More than sixty years I have been trying to preach and write the gospel. One can't avoid a review of his past long life without serious thought. My mistakes

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in manner, spirit, and attitude toward others—I find much I would change. Now it can't be done. One thing only am I entirely satisfied with in my long work, and that I would not change in the least. Nearing the close of work when I must soon appear before him whom I have so imperfectly served, that one thing gives me joy beyond expression. It is this: *I have never taught, practiced, aided or tolerated any trend that I felt sure would lead away from the straight gospel line. I would not change that for any wealth that earth can offer. I wish for you the same satisfaction in the twilight of life. May God keep you strong in faith, full of zeal, and the courage, if possible, of Paul. There is no neutral ground between truth and error; between right and wrong.*