

Third Annual Banner of Truth Lectures

Murray, KY, June 23 — 26, 2003

Place: Curris Center, Murray State Campus

Theme: *Back to The Old Paths — The Good way*

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein. Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, we will not hearken” (Jer. 6:16-17).

**Hear 20 speakers address 28 timely subjects during
four days of lectures.**

To see a list of speakers and subjects, please see inside

The Front Page

We have given attention to the **Banner of Truth Lectures** on the front page, even though we realize that thousands who receive BOT will be unable to attend any of the sessions. We want our readers who cannot attend to know what the lectures will be. By considering the speakers and the subjects they will address we trust that our readers will know that we are sincerely devoted to the upholding of the truth of God and opposing that which is contrary to His will. We've never seen a time when there was greater need to seek "The Old Paths" wherein is "The Good Way."

For more detailed information about the lectures please see pages 8 and 9 in this issue of *Banner of Truth*. – Editor

ET Phone Home (III)

Alan Adams, Assistant Editor

In our efforts to preach the Gospel in Taiwan, there were many challenges to face. Not least among them was language. However, learning another language is a fairly straightforward process as pertains to learning words, phrases, syntax, and structure. The most difficult matter to deal with is that of explaining or using concepts that are not a part of the mind-set or thought patterns of the people with whom you wish to communicate. This being the case, one might very well use as exact and as literal a translation as possible; the auditors may well recognize each word used, yet, yet they do not understand what you are trying to say.

There is a universal phenomenon: Glazed-over eyes. This is the kind of look people get when they hear and process your words but do not understand what you're talking about. This is the kind of look that people get when they are looking in your direction, yet look through and past you. In recent months I've seen that same faraway look on the faces of American preachers as I tried to discuss with them the concepts that have been part of preaching parlance for years; in fact, concepts that are as old as the Bible itself. One such concept is: *authority*.

Webster's New World Dictionary has the following to relevant entries as to the meaning of authority: "1. the power or right to give command, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions; jurisdiction. 2. this power as delegated to another; authorization: as, he has my *authority* to do it." Couple this together with that grand statement of the resurrected Lord: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). Such being the case, Christ has absolute jurisdiction over all that is said or done "in his name." When he further says that we "make disciples" by "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19), He is not suggesting a verbal formula that must be vocalized prior to baptism, but rather is affirming that we so baptize people by His authority.

The differences between the Lord's church and man-made churches (denominations) are of course too numerous to list in one sitting. Yet, the most glaring and obvious differences have to do with how we view the Bible. All of the denominations with which I am familiar follow the philosophy of: "If it is not expressly forbidden in the Bible, we have the right (or, authority) to do it." Put simply, this says: "If the Bible nowhere specifically says '**do not do this thing,**' we then have the right to do it. In other words they view the *silence* of the Scriptures as being equivalent to *Divine Permission*. This is exactly why many people have difficulty in understanding why churches of Christ (as they say:)

“Don’t believe in pianos.” Whereas we (the Lord’s church) look in the New Testament, see mentioned only of a cappella music, and conclude, “There is no authority for mechanical instruments”; they look at the Bible and say, “Well, it doesn’t say not to.”

Since the New Testament is the last will and testament of Jesus Christ (Heb. 9:15; 12:24), and since “all authority” is His, then it is clear that His authority, His say so, is expressed in that “testament.” In Acts 4, Peter and John had been arrested by the Jewish leaders and held over till the next day. “On the morrow, “ a bunch of somewhats gathered together, put Peter and John in the middle of this circus, and demanded to know, “By what power, or by what name, have ye done this” (v. 7). Peter responded, “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole” (v. 10). Peter concludes with these poignant words, “for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (v. 12).

Here we have a clear definition for Bible terms: To do something “in (by) the name of Jesus Christ” is to do it “by His power or authority.” Now read that classic Colossians passage: “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Co. 3:17). All our beliefs and practices can be categorized under the heading “word or deed.” This means that all our beliefs and practices, without exception, must be done “in the name of the Lord Jesus,” which is to say, they must be done by His authority, at His behest. They must be done according to His word. It’s not enough to say, “Well, the Bible doesn’t say ‘No,’ therefore, I may.” Rather, we must have some positive grounds on which to say the Lord has either commanded us to do a certain thing, or has given us permission to do the same. *Silence*, as far as Scriptures are concerned, is *golden*, only in the sense that we know we may not delve into beliefs and practices on which God’s word is silent. Remember the case of Nadab and Abihu; they “offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not,” and were themselves destroyed by fire from Heaven (Lev. 10:1-2). Whatever “strange fire” means, I know that they did something that God had *not* authorized them to do. It was something God had been silent on, and they died because of their presumption.

I once had a discussion with some preachers about the practice known as Children’s Worship, Children’s Bible Hour, and so on. I’m not talking about Bible classes for children, but rather The Assembly. I’m speaking of that time and place when the “whole church is assembled together” (I Cor. 14:23) for The Lord’s Supper (11:20), Singing (14:15), Praying (14:16-17), Preaching [edifying] (14:24-25), and the Collection (16:1-2). Some brethren are taking the children out of the assembly. But, more importantly, Christians, members of the church, who ought to be in the assembly, are also absent from the assembly so that they can take care of the children. I simply asked the question, “Where is the authority for doing that?” There either is or there is not Bible authority for this practice. After much discussion, the only answer I got was “Well, the Bible is silent on this matter, shouldn’t we be?” This is precisely the point: The Bible is *silent* as to such a practice, therefore there is no authority for it. This is why I some times feel like a stranger on a faraway planet (like “ET”). Language and expression that ought to be part and parcel of the preacher’s vocabulary and thought processes, is virtually foreign to many preachers among us. It is at points such as this that you begin to see the glazed-over, distant look in the eye.

Brethren, I guess I’m just dumb enough to keep on asking: Where’s the authority for making merchandise of the Gospel by selling tickets so that people can come hear you sing “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs”? Where is the authority for the church to build a fellowship hall-*cum*-shower and tea facility? In fact, where is the authority (p. 4)

for the church to get into the business of entertaining, which is strictly the purview of that other Divinely established institution: the home? Where’s your authority for Youth Ministers, Married/Single Ministers, Body Life Ministers....? Where’s your authority for Children’s Church of Bible Hour (a “rose is a rose by any other name”)? I’m not suggesting that one must produce a statement or command that explicitly mentions these things. The Bible also authorizes by accounts of

action and implication. But, however it's done, there must be a positive procedure through which we derive the sound conclusion: Therefore, God authorizes me to do this or that.

Many brethren, today, deem such questions as raised above to be irrelevant, even impertinent. They often just smile, some even laugh; but, they do not respond. Neither did Nadab and Abihu.

ET Phone Home (IV)

Alan Adams, Assistant Editor

A steady diet of namby-pamby, can-be-preached-anywhere-at-anytime preaching has brought us a generation of brethren who are shocked, and sometimes offended, when they hear “the trumpet give a **‘certain’** sound (I Cor. 14:8). At times I feel like an alien when trying to talk to this “generation.”

Worship and the Worship Assembly are two concepts long understood by most, but now are severely misunderstood, misapplied, and downright abused. Some are saying that “Worship is not limited to any specific acts, it is an attitude, a state of mind.” One brother told me that we “Worship twenty-four hours a day.” Yet another has averred that what we call the Worship Service or Assembly is not an integral part of New Testament Christianity, but rather a matter of custom and convenience.

Different things give rise to these strange notions. Whereas, it is true that one may worship God during any hour of the twenty-four hour day, it is not true that anything one does during that same period is worship. I sleep several hours each day; I am not worshipping while I am asleep. Worship is a conscious “act of reverence or homage paid to God.” It comes from the Greek word *proskuneo* which is made up of the preposition *pros* which means “towards,” and the verb *kuneo* which means “to kiss.” The idea is that of “kissing the hand toward.” Again, it is a positive, conscious, particular act by which we pay or show reverence to God. Now, which of what act or acts are “acts of worship”?

I think I know at least two reasons as to why this everything-is-worship idea is popular with some: (1) It gives aid and comfort to brethren who don't like “going to church.” How many times have you heard it said, “Why, I can be just as close to God at home or down at the lake on Sunday morning as I would be in a church service.” Well, if everything is worship, then gardening, sleeping in on Sunday morning, or fishing would all be acts of worship. (2) It is a roundabout way of justifying the use of instrumental music in worship to God. If everything is worship, then playing the piano or organ, regardless of what music is being played, it is worship.

Of course, all of this is sheer folly. Everything is not worship: Only those *acts* prescribed by God in His word may be used to worship God. John 4:24 still reads, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” It is wrong to simply go through the motions of worship. Jesus said that it must be “in spirit.” The heart and soul of the supplicant must be brought into play if he desires to please the Almighty. But, neither may that same person just “decide” how or in what way he will worship the Father. It must be done “in truth.” What did Jesus say about “truth”: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (Jno. 17:17). To worship God “in truth” is to worship God according to His Word. The Creature may never arrogate unto himself the means by which he will pay homage to the Creator (Cf. Rom. 1:25). In reality, when people do this they are not worshipping the Creator at all, rather the Creature. Paul said of such people, their “God *is their belly*” (Phil. 1:19).

One of the meanings of the word *ekklesia* is that of the whole church gathered together for worship. It is essential to our understanding of the church that we know that in the New Testament

there is a *thing* called “the assembly,” and that if refers to a particular time and place wherein every member of a local church will come together.

I Corinthians 11:17 through 16:9 is an organically connected scenario in which a beautiful picture is painted of brethren, two thousand years ago, assembled together and engaging in specific acts of worship. It makes me sad and angry to hear brethren demean and make fun of the worship assembly. One Jubilee speaker, several years ago, in mocking and arrogant tones derided our assemblies by saying, we “push a little button and sing, then push a little button and pray, push a little button and take the Lord’s Supper...” Ignorance is bad enough, but conceited ignorance is an abomination. The whole tenor of I Corinthians 14 has to do with events within The Assembly: who is to do what, when and how. Paul ends the chapter by saying “Let all things be done decently and in order” (v. 40). To be sure, these Jubilee hucksters “push my button” when they romp on the Lord’s church and mutilate God’s Word.

As you examine the section of Scripture mentioned above, take note of such phrases as “come together in the church [assembly]” (v. 18), “come together into one place” (v. 20), “in the church [assembly] I had rather speak” (14:19), “whole church be come together into one place” (v. 23), “when ye come together” (v. 26), “as in all churches [assemblies]” (v. 34), “it is a shame for women to speak in the church [assembly]” (v. 35), and “upon the first day of the week” (16:2). Take care not to allow mention of “spiritual gifts” to distract you from the main purpose of this Assembly: worship (Cf. 14:25). The “spiritual gifts” were a part of every assembly in the infancy of the church. No one preached from the New Testament or sermon outlines (Cf. Matt.10:19-20). Prayers and songs: All of these items of worship were possible only by the use of spiritual gifts. Take away spiritual gifts (as they have most assuredly been “done away” (I Cor. 13:10), and what you have left is exactly what we call the Worship Service today. No humble reverent person would dream of joking or trivializing the Worship Assembly.

- - 1653 Pine Lane Dr., Cantonment, FL 32533

MOVING ? ? If you wish to continue on our mailing list for *Banner of Truth*, send us your change of address. If you forget, as some of us do at times, go ahead and send us your new address and you will continue receiving the paper. - - *Editor*

A Christian Will . . .

Marvin L. Weir

The word “Christian” is used like many other words are used today – loosely. One may claim to be a Christian when in reality he is far from being a faithful child of God. A Christian is a follower of Christ; thus, one who is not content to follow the Lord cannot be a **true** Christian.

A True Christian Will Love God. Jesus said, “...*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God will all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and will all thy mind*” (Matt. 22:37). A proper love for God will not leave room for a love of things that are contrary to His will. John warns, “*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world*” (I John 2:15-16).

We live **in** the world but are not to be **of** the world. This means Christians must make proper choices if they are to be pleasing unto God. One may convince himself that he can serve both God and worldly riches, but Christ says such is not possible (Matt. 6:24). It is either one or the other.

A True Christian Will Respect The Word Of God. So many today who claim to love God have utter contempt and disdain for His word. Jesus said, *“If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments”* (Jno. 14:15). John taught the brethren, *“Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous”* (I Jno. 5:2-3).

The word of God commands the Christian to *“have no fellowship with the works of darkness, but rather reprove them”* (Eph. 5:11). A faithful child of God will not support or encourage false teaching. This is a serious matter within the Lord’s church today. Many **claim** to disagree with the liberal path the preacher and elders are following, but they assemble each week to listen to unsound teaching and to give as they have been prospered.

If the word of God is respected one will not contribute in any way toward false teaching. A Christian will have the attitude of the Psalmist who said, (p. 6)
“...I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way” (Ps. 119:128).

A True Christian Will Cherish The Church Of Christ. The cost of the Lord’s church is a constant reminder of the precious nature of this spiritual institution. Paul charged the Ephesian elders, saying, *“Take heed unto yourselves and toll the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood”* (Acts 20:28). The Lord’s church is to be held in high esteem. Paul again teaches, *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish”* (Eph. 5:25-27).

The “Give me Christ but not the church” mentality which was espoused years ago is still alive. Many profess their love for the Lord while admitting their disgust for the one true church. One who does not love Christ’s church cannot love the Christ.

A True Christian Will Be Steadfast And Unmoveable. The apostle Paul warns Christians to no longer be like children, *“tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error”* (Eph. 4:14). To the Corinthian brethren he said, *“be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord”* (I Cor. 15:58).

A Christian has made the decision to follow Christ and do His will. One is not steadfast or unmoveable who compromises Christian principles with the world of man-made denominations. Jesus, knowing man, warns, *“No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God”* (Lk. 9:62).

- - 5810 Liberty Grove Rd., Rowlett, TX 75030

Welcome New Readers!

With every issue of *Banner of Truth* we have **New Readers**. We welcome them and look forward to hearing from them, and having their comments relative to BOT.

“CRIME-PROOF YOUR CHURCH”

Several years ago an insurance salesman stopped by my office and left a packet of material containing information concerning the protection offered by his company. One brochure offered a number of suggestions on how to Crime-Proof Your Church. Though fully aware that the church to be Crime-Proofed had reference to the church building, it occurred to me that some of the suggestions for crime-proofing a church building might in a sense be applied to a church, as a congregation of the Lord's people.

Webster defines “crime” as: “An act committed in violation of a law prohibiting it, or omitted in violation of a law ordering it.” The words “crime” (Ac. 25:16) and “crimes” (Ac. 25:27), are found in the New Testament (KJV) but are not so translated in the American Standard. The meaning of the word is that of a charge or accusation made against someone. While “crime” as defined by Webster is not found in the New Testament, the idea is found a number of times. Consider the following: In 2 John 9, the apostle says, “Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God...” In I John 3:4 we learn that, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Crime, then, is transgressing or committing an act in violation of God's law. But crime is also omitting that which law orders. In James 4:17, the writer says, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” When one sins by commission or by omission God's law has been violated, a crime has taken place.

It was suggested in the above brochure that most crimes can be stopped by following the “Four D's of Crime Prevention.” Those four D's are: “Deny – Entrance; Deter – Attack; Delay – Entry; Detect – Intrusion.” Let us note how these principles may be applied against those spiritual criminals who violate God's law and teach others to do so, whether by doing that which God forbids or leaving undone that which God commands.

DENY ENTRANCE. This is to refuse access, refuse to accept. Paul says we are to “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). Entrance can be denied by following the principle set forth in 2 John 9-11. If one comes, not bringing the “doctrine of Christ,” do not receive him and/or bid him God speed. The apostle John also says, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I John 4:1).

DETER ATTACK. Attacks may be discouraged by putting on “the whole armour of God...the shield of faith...the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:11-17). It is when weakness is apparent – When Paul's admonition to “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith...be strong” (I Cor. 16:13), goes unheeded that the spiritual criminal is encouraged to attack. Congregations weak in the faith are prime targets.

DELAY ENTRY. Those now living cannot always guard the congregation, but entrance of the criminal can be put off until some future time. This can be done through study (2 Tim. 2:15) and spiritual growth (I Pet. 2:2). And, by Contending for The Faith (Jude 3). Elders can protect the flock against Entry, against the wolves, by taking heed unto themselves, and by feeding the flock properly (Acts 20:28-29). It is when the criminal makes Entry that the serious damage is done.

DETECT INTRUSION. Entrance may not always be detected, since there are false teachers “who privily shall bring in damnable heresies” (2 Pet. 2:1) and by “good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Rom. 16:18). But when Intrusion is detected (this is done by God's word) steps of eradication must be taken. The violaters are to be “marked” and “avoided” (Rom.

16:17). Paul gave place by subjection to those “false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily...no, not for an hour” (Gal. 2:4-5), in order that the truth of the gospel might continue.

Brethren what are we doing to “crime-proof” the congregation of which we are a part? Since Christ “loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Eph. 5:25) that we might be privileged to be a part of it, we can do nothing less than guard against those who would damage or destroy it.

Spiritual crime is far worse than that of the thieves who take physical or temporal things.

- - *Walter Pigg, Editor*

A Pernicious Periodical Commences

This was written by me almost exactly 18 years ago.

Over the years brethren have published periodicals. Some have lasted as long as a century, some for only a short time. Some have made great contributions to the cause of Christ while some have done much hurt. Today I received in the mail a brochure advertising a new periodical which will undoubtedly find a place in the latter category.

IMAGE Magazine is the name of the new egalitarianism. That this bi-monthly will set forth and “image” of the body of Christ which is far beneath the “glorious church” which our Savior intended is a virtual certainty. We have very strong reason for this outlook due to the editor and his staff. Bro. Ruel Lemmons will serve as editor, and the 25 staff writers include such men as: Randy Mayeux, Prentice Meador, Marvin Phillips, Landon Saunders, and Rubel Shelly.

Among the editor and his staff are men who uphold (1) the Crossroads movement, (2) a social gospel as manifested in the Family Life Center innovation, (3) “sincere, devout Christians in all the denominations,” and (4) those who are making overtures toward fellowshipping the Independent Christian Church through the “new unity” movement. Various other liberal tendencies are found among a number of these men.

That the above is accepted by influential brethren is evident by the highly favorable endorsement of IMAGE. Joe R. Barnett, “I am excited...pleased that these pages will feature editorials by Ruel Lemmons.” Cline R. Paden, Director of Sunset School of Preaching, “...it seems to me that you have already assured immediate brotherhood acceptance for the magazine, by having named Ruel Lemmons as your editor...” Steve Lemely, Pres. of Lubbock Christian College, “I welcome a new publication to the brotherhood...worthy of the support of all.” Gary R. Beauchamp, “Congratulations...you have put together an excellent team that promises to fill an obvious vacuum in our brotherhood...”

Editor’s Note: In two paragraphs left out, I discussed the changes which were taking place in the church at that time, pointing out that this change was much more tragic than some realized. Think what has happened within the past 18 years, if you will.

**Third Annual Banner of Truth Lectures
Murray, Kentucky June 23 – 26, 2003**

Theme: *Back to The Old Paths — The Good Way*

Sponsored by: Dexter & Hickory Grove Churches of Christ

Location: *Curris Center, M.S.U. Campus, Third Floor Theater*

Twenty Speakers will present Twenty-Eight timely lessons

Monday, June 23

- 10:00 a.m. Alan Adams — “The Old Paths” As They Apply Today
- 11:00 a.m. Don Greene — The Lord’s Supper
- 1:30 p.m. Rick Knoll — Speaking The Truth In Love
- 2:30 p.m. Michael Willey — The New Testament and Legalism
- 3:30 p.m. Bill Willard — Our Schools and Their Influence
- 7:00 p.m. Roger Campbell — Seeking The Lost
- 8:00 p.m. Joe Spangler — The Basis of God Approved Unity

Tuesday, June 24

- 10:00 a.m. Roger Campbell — The Old Paths and Our Youth
- 11:00 a.m. Joe Spangler — When Division is Necessary
- 1:30 p.m. Jeff Bates — Things Written Aforetime
- 2:30 p.m. Jimmy Bates — The One True Church
- 3:30 p.m. Garland Robinson — The All Sufficiency of God’s Word
- 7:00 p.m. Don Waggoner — The False Religion of Islam
- 8:00 p.m. Ken Burlison — Preach The Word

Wednesday, June 25

- 10:00 a.m. Tim Hester — The Cheerful Giver Whom God Loves
- 11:00 a.m. Gilbert Gough — The Sin of Homosexuality
- 1:30 p.m. Roger Sculley — The Whole Counsel of God
- 2:30 p.m. David Lemmons — Committing the Word to Faithful Men
- 3:30 p.m. Lindon Ferguson — Marriage as God Intended
- 7:00 p.m. Alan Adams — The Old Paths and Leadership
- 8:00 p.m. Gilbert Gough — Contending for The Faith

Thursday, June 26

- 10:00 a.m. Richard Adams — Seeking to Please God or Man?
- 11:00 a.m. Ken Burlison — Being an Example of Believers
- 1:30 p.m. Walter W. Pigg — Faith that Overcomes the World
- 2:30 p.m. Paul Curless — Leadership in True Worship
- 3:30 p.m. Don Waggoner — The Blessing of Tent-Making Preachers
- 7:00 p.m. Richard Guill — The Lord’s Vengeance on the Disobedient
- 8:00 p.m. Lenard Hogan — Looking Forward to a Crown of Righteousness

A Cordial Invitation is Extended to Attend The

Banner of Truth Lectures!

**Twenty Speakers have been selected to present
twenty-eight profitable and timely lessons**

Below we have provided information on motels and other matters to enable our visitors to have a pleasant stay in Murray while enjoying a feast of spiritual food and a pleasant association with other Christians.

Shoney's Inn \$40.00, 1 or 2 people. Ask for this rate for Hickory Grove church of Christ.
1503 N. 12th. Phone 270 753-5353, 800-552-4667.

Cont. breakfast.

Murray Plaza Ct. \$36.00, 2 people. \$39.00, 4 people. Plus tax.

U.S. 641 South. Phone 270 753-2682.

Days Inn \$49.00, up to four people and two beds. Cont. breakfast, Frig., Microwave,
Coffee Maker. 517 S. 12. Ph. 270 753-6706.

Holly Green RV Park - \$10.00 per night. Complete hookup. 102 Parks Dr., Murray.

This park is located near the Curris Center. Phone (270) 753-5652.

Eating Places: Murray has a wide range of eating places. Ryans and Sirloin Stockade
Have buffets. They do not serve alcohol.

Video and Audio tapes will be available. Brother Jim Green will do the lectures and
tapes may be purchased from him. His e-mail address: jamesegreen@charter.net

Lodging in private homes may be available. For information call Richard Guill,
preacher for the Coldwater congregation. He may also give other information
concerning the lectures. Phone: (270) 489-6219. Office (270) 489-2219. E-mail:
rguill@wk.net

Further Information: Further information about the lectures can be obtained by
calling: Tim Hester (270) 767-0625. E-mail thester@yahoo.com. Walter W. Pigg
(270) 753-3675. E-mail wpiggbot@earthlink.net

Facilities for the Lectures: The theater at the Curris Center on the Murray State
Campus has very comfortable seating, a good sound system, lighting, etc.

Who should attend the lectures? Those who love the truth and profit by hearing
it preached by sound men. This is not just for preachers! It's for all who love Truth.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK

The word "walk" is used numerous times in the Bible, and most often it means to "go about on foot." Jesus **walked** by the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:18). He told the lame man to take up his bed and **walk** (Jno. 5:8). Walking was a major means of getting about in Palestine in Bible times, as it is in India and many other countries today. But **walk** is used a great many times in the New Testament in an even more important sense. It is used figuratively to mean, "The whole round of activities of the individual

life” (*Vine’s*). We might say the way we **walk** is the way we live. It is in this sense that we are using the word in the following discussion.

The great importance of the Christian’s walk is seen in the fact that it will ultimately determine one’s eternal destiny. This being true, every Christian, and those who would become such, cannot be too concerned as to how they walk during their earthly sojourn.

THE CHRISTIAN’S WALK IS IN NEWNESS OF LIFE

In Romans 6:4, Paul speaks of the consummating act of obedience by which one becomes a Christian. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” This newness of life, which commences with baptism, is “in Christ” (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). In Christ, one’s sins have been forgiven (Acts 2:38; 22:16). As a “new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17).

The Christian’s new life is in “the kingdom of his dear Son,” having been “delivered from the power of darkness” (Col. 1:13). In this new state “we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:14). One’s conversation [citizenship, ASV] is now in heaven (Phil. 3:20). There is, therefore, a change in one’s goals, aspirations, attitudes and priorities as Christ is acknowledged as Lord in one’s life (Lk. 6:46).

A new man is now walking in a new life, which leads ultimately to that eternal home of the soul that is called heaven. What a tragedy it is, what a blessing has been missed when one never knows what it is to walk in the “newness of life.”

THE CHRISTIAN’S WALK IS BY FAITH

Speaking of that blessed state which will exist with Christ after the Christian’s life, Paul says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7). We do not have to see heaven to know that it exists. We know that it does. We take God at His word, and that is faith. To walk by faith, demands that we always take God at His word. Since faith comes from the hearing of God’s word (Rom. 10:17), worldly wisdom as a guide for our earthly lives is ruled out (1 Cor. 1:21). Neither can one walk according to the doctrines of men, for they are all vain (Matt. 15:9). Walking by faith is not walking by one’s **feelings**. To walk by a subjective faith may lead to opposing God’s will as in the case when Paul [Saul] persecuted Christians he had the feeling that it was the right thing to do (Acts 26:9). Feelings can never serve as a basis for true faith.

To walk by faith is to walk “in truth.” John said, “I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we received a commandment from the Father (2 Jno. 4). We should rejoice when others walk in truth, and be saddened when they fail to do so; when they walk in error.

THE CHRISTIAN IS TO WALK WORTHY OF HIS CALLING

To the Ephesians Paul said, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation [calling, ASV] wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1). In Philippians 1:2, the apostle exhorts, “only let your conversation [manner of life] be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.”

The Christian’s calling is the most high and noble of all callings. No action in life should ever cheapen that calling. This involves the way we dress, our manner of speech; the entertainment in which we participate; even our general habits and practices of daily living. Paul prayed that the Colossians “might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing...” (Col. 1:10). Walking **worthy** rules out walking after the flesh (Rom. 8:4), carnally as men (1 Cor. 3:3); walking in vanity of mind (Eph. 4:17), or walking in darkness (1 John 1:6).

THE CHRISTIAN’S WALK IS A WALK OF LOVE

Paul says, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children: And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering..." (Eph. 5:1-2). To walk in love, as here commanded, is to walk in love toward God. We are to imitate the same type of love which Christ demonstrated for us, though we cannot die on the cross as He did. But Christ did tell the church at Smyrna to be "faithful unto death," that is, to the point of dying for their faith (Rev. 2:10).

The apostle of love masterfully explains the meaning of love as so often used in the New Testament. "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it" (2 John 6). Love, as demonstrated by walking after the Lord's commandments, not only insures love for God; it also includes mutual love for brethren, and love for all men. Paul said, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" (I Thess. 3:12).

ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN'S WALK

Hebrews 11 includes Enoch and Noah as heroes of faith. Of the things "written aforetime for our learning and hope" (Rom. 15:4), it is said, "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24). "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God" (Gen. 6:9).

When Paul came near to the end he declared, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2Tim. 4:6-8). His walk as a Christian had been such that better things awaited him on the other side. Where will the walk we are now taking lead us? - - *Walter W. Pigg*

Sound, Reliable Preacher Wanted

The Northside congregation in Meridian, Mississippi, is looking for a preacher to work full-time with them.

Interested preachers should contact: Don Potts (601) 485-4673, or Ken Williams (601) 681-8156.

Does Legalized Drinking Discourage Drunkenness?

It is not unusual to hear people reason that "If liquor is legal people won't drink as much." To try to shore up their misunderstanding, they may make reference to some place which is "dry," but where is quite a bit of drinking. But is their reasoning valid?

If people drink less liquor where it is legal, why in the name of common sense do liquor companies spend huge amounts of money to promote legalization? The makers and distributors of alcoholic beverages are in the business for one reason alone. That is to MAKE MONEY. More profits come from greater sales and greater sales from legalization.

In states where the legal drinking age has been raised to 21 from 18, there has been a decrease in alcohol related deaths among those of that lower age. Why is that the case? The inescapable conclusion is that legalization encourages drinking and those tragic things which accompany it.

Does this mean that where drinking is not legal that no one drinks? Of course not! But the matter of concern is that there is **more** drinking where it is legal.

Drunkenness is a “work of the flesh” (Gal. 5:19-21). Not only is it a factor in many deaths and injuries from drunken driving, it is a great factor in many broken homes and terribly mistreated children, and also adults. Many health problems are caused or increased by drinking. How do these things affect the non-drinker? He is often endangered by drinking people and his insurance costs are much higher. But the greatest harm from drinking is the loss of the soul. Drunkards can’t go to heaven. Indeed, drinking has many defenders BUT NO DEFENSE. – Ed.

A Letter of Response

Editor’s Note: When the following letter was received, some words on the right side of the page did not print out clearly. The few missing words will hardly affect the message and its tenor.

“Dear Mr. Pigg (I can’t with all sincerity call you my brother). I am appalled at what I refer to as hate mail that is sent out of Christians. You and many others of your like mind set, have taken it on yourselves to blast, unfairly attack, and hurt many of the brethren who promote the cause of Christ in a more sincere and loving way. You...like to spend so much time attacking people and the sad part is you justify your actions by saying God expects that. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I have met many people of your mind-set in the church and they only hurt the cause of Christ. People are so searching for love of...world, and it is up to every Christian to show them the love of Christ in our lives and attitudes. When people are so bent on attacking and...destroy others striving for the same place, only the devil gets t... I have been a member of the church for over twenty years and this I will never understand. People are dying and going to hell everyday...of the Pharisees attitude coming from so called conservative, self...hypocrites in the church, are responsible for many going to hell. You and others like you start praying for the lost and quit pointing to the splinter in the brother’s eye, and concentrate on the 2 by 4 in yours. I really pity those that are so preoccupied with the rules and traditions they miss the big picture of God’s blessings and his magnificent...praying for you who choose not to see the big picture. And one day..., or some of us, get to heaven, many are going to be shocked to...did allow and embrace! This comment is written out of love and concern for His church and people.

Signed: In Christian love, Linda Sanders”

My response is as follows:

“Dear Linda Sanders,

From the tenor of your letter you must be a very troubled person. The teaching of the New Testament must give you a real problem, since you obviously don’t agree with much of it. If the apostle Paul were here on earth today, you would, if consistent, be writing him a letter very much like yours to me.

Linda, in the following I will try to help you and others to see yourself as you really are. To use Paul’s expression, it is a real problem when people “think of themselves more highly than they ought” (Rom. 12:3). You have clearly set yourself up as a judge, rendering judgments, not on the basis of God’s word, but upon your rank subjectivism or some other thing which is not God’s word. Now to your letter.

1. Linda, from your letter, I may not be your brother or you my sister. It appears that you have a tragic misunderstanding of what it means to be a Christian in the true sense of the term, and the deportment which should characterize a Christian.

2. You try to portray me as about the most rabid critic of all time. Yet, your letter to me is just about as critical and judgmental as it could be! Are you not able to see your great inconsistency? Apparently not, though I encourage you to think about it. Have you not read Romans 2:21-23, and seen how that applies to you? Do you believe you have a right to judge me so critically, and that without any biblical basis at all, but that you are free to judge whoever and that unjustly?

3. You condemn me on many counts, yet without a shred of evidence to prove your case. This is the kind of judging which Christ condemns in Matthew 7:1. Are you not aware that we are to “judge righteous judgment” (Jno. 7:24)? Your judgment of me certainly does not qualify as “righteous judgment” since you give no basis for your mean-spirited attitude displayed in your letter.

4. Have you seriously studied God’s word in those twenty years? If you have, I’m at a loss to understand your letter. You give not one (NOT ONE) verse of scripture to uphold your unfounded tirade. Is it that you do not know better, or is it that you just don’t care what God’s word says? It must be one or the other.

5. You say several things about “love.” You must not understand what that means. Jesus said, “If ye love me keep my commandments...” (Jno. 14:15). In verse 23 He says, “If a man love me he will keep my words...” John says, “For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments...” (I Jno. 5:3). You have not pointed out one thing I violated in God’s word. Why? Again, your criticism seems to come from a self-appointed judge, who does not base judgments on God’s word.

6. You sign off your letter: “In Christian love,” Let me say sincerely that if this is a sample of “Christian love,” then may I never possess such. Paul says, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one...” (Gal. 6:1). If you have “love” for me why don’t you point out from God’s word my error and try to “restore” me? You certainly seem to set yourself forth as a “spiritual” person, by your own standards. Yet, you haven’t done one thing but harshly criticize me, and that without a scriptural basis.

Linda, I’ve written from the standpoint of that higher form of love (agape) which we are to have for others. That love does that which is for the well-being of an individual. If you will seriously consider what you wrote and what I’ve written in reply, I sincerely believe it would be for your spiritual betterment. I know it could be, and it is my prayer that it will be of some help. I pray that your “love and concern for His church and people” may come to harmonize with our Lord’s teaching on the matter.

I’ve also written this response, trusting it might help others not to engage in that which is contrary to God’s word, as you have done. Others need to see your letter and learn from it.

For the cause of Christ,
Walter W. Pigg.”

The tenor of the above letter from a reader is so very much like other letters of criticism I receive. It is very few critical responses that I receive, but one thing is so common with virtually every one. That is, the critic seems to believe that he has every right to be critical and judgmental toward me, but for some reason he feels that he is to be exempted from criticism, regardless of how far off base he might be.

I used to wonder how such critical people dealt with the criticism by Paul and others in the New Testament, even that of Christ. More and more it seems that such people do not feel kindly about the criticism which is set forth by those New Testament characters. It seems to me that a person would have as much right to disagree with the critics such as Paul and others, as they would to disregard that those men taught by inspiration. They have no right in either case, however. - - *Editor*

Words Have Meaning

Alton W. Fonville

Since early childhood we were taught to listen to different words and consider them carefully, because they meant something important to us. Sometimes the word was “Don’t” or “No,” or “Perhaps,” and we learned to evaluate each word for its meaning. When we didn’t, we usually got some “peach tree tea” to help us understand. Now, some reading this will no doubt ask, what is meant by that strange term. But, it was a different way of life in years gone by. So many young mothers and fathers say to their young, “If you do that again, I will spank you.” After the third or fourth time of saying that, the child has been well educated to the fact that the parents do not mean what they are saying. Their “words” have no meaning, and the child grows up with that understanding and will certainly suffer the consequences. History has proven this to be true so many times.

The Bible is a book full of God’s words, first spoken to the people through family heads. Then through the prophets, and later through His “only begotten Son,” and the apostles (John 14:26; Heb. 1:1). Every word of God is important and has a definite meaning, even though we may not understand it at first. And the way translators twist some of the words does not help. When there is a question or doubt, the original language should be consulted. In God’s wisdom and providence, the particular Greek used in the original became a dead language. Therefore, what it meant two thousand years ago is the same that it means now. Our language changes through the years and words do change their meaning, but the word of God as used in the beginning, is the same as then. Some folks ridicule the use of the Greek, but when your soul’s destiny depends on the correct understanding of God’s holy word, it is the wise thing to consult.

For several hundred years the dependable King James Version of the Bible has been used and understood by people. True, some times the words have changed their meaning and are no longer used today, but we can know the certainty of the meaning of them if we put forth the effort. The command to “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly (p. 14)

Dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15), shows the necessity of diligence in our dealing with God’s word. It is a shame for some who read Romans 10:9-10, in the NIV version, and hear them try to keep from defending “faith only.” If you have not read that perversion lately, you need to look at it so you can be warned of its false teaching. Words do have meaning. The words, “believe and are justified” conveys the idea of faith alone.

Jesus gave us ample warning about the use of words when he said, “For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:37). If our words are that important, what about the words of God? Words are given to save our souls. The relating of the story of Cornelius in Acts 11 shows that Peter was to tell him “**words**” whereby he and his household could be saved (v. 14). Those “words” were the Gospel, to which Cornelius was now becoming amenable, as a Gentile, and would be the first to be converted.

Some words demand a change in our lives and we may not like it, thus rejecting them and thereby rejecting God. Jesus tells us plainly that He spoke only what God commanded Him to speak. And the Holy Spirit guided the apostles to say the exact words which God wanted spoken (Jno. 16:13). Listen again to Jesus, “Then saith Jesus to those Jews which believe on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jno. 8:31-32). “Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do” (Jno. 8:43-44). “He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God” (Jno. 8:47). Yes, **words** do have definite meaning and it behooves us to do some searching and study and **repentance** for our neglect.

“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself: but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that this commandment is everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak” (Jno. 12:48-50).

- 337 Madison 4605, St. Paul, AR 72760

Concerning the International Church of Christ and Kip McKean

The following is a part of an article sent to me by Mark McWhorter. The article was entitled, **“Loss of leader, governing body hurts group formed in Boston,”** By Farah Stockman, Globe Staff, 5/17/2003.

It was one of the fastest-growing and most controversial churches in America, banned as a cult from dozens of college campuses while boasting 135,000 members worldwide. Its followers were known for spending their free time recruiting new members and waiting on doorsteps at 4 in the morning, hoping to persuade those who had “fallen away” to come back to the fold. But now the central organization of the International Churches of Christ, a strict religious body founded in Boston, is collapsing.

Thomas “Kip” McKean, its charismatic founder, has stepped down. Its world governing body has dissolved and dozens of local church leaders have resigned or been fired, in part because churches can no longer afford to pay their salaries.

Behind the story of a teetering church empire is the tale of the autocratic visionary who built it and his independent-minded daughter, now a Harvard senior, whose decision to leave the church sparked turmoil in the already troubled group. “It caused her father to step aside and it caused the group to reexamine itself,” said Michelle Campbell, executive director of REVEAL, a non profit organization that provides information and support to former members of the church. “It was sort of inevitable that Kip would fall. The standards he set, no one could meet. Not his children, not even himself. The very thing that he created came back and bit him.”

McKean, who was forced to resign his post because of his own rule that church leaders must step down if their children leave the church, said in a telephone interview that he participated in his own demise. “I think I hurt people’s feelings in some areas,” said McKean, who still belongs to the church.

Editor’s Note: The above is only a small portion of the article, but it reveals the turmoil within that apostate group. When I was making trips to Ukraine this group claimed to have 2,000 members in Kiev alone. “Crossroads” was the beginning of the group.

FELLOWHELPERS

Jan., Feb., March 2003

Berea church of Christ	100.00
Saks church of Christ	175.00
Pine Ridge church of Christ	100.00
Maple Hill church of Christ	300.00

Alhambra church of Christ	75.00
Rockford, IL	25.00
Wayne Crum	5.00
Vella Harshbarger	50.00
Elmer Scott	30.00
Anonymous	300.00
Shirley L. Miller	15.00
Robert M. Price	600.00
Elizabeth Sublett	10.00
Theresa O. Weir	95.00
Ronald E. Childress	25.00
M/M John H. Brown	75.00
Anonymous	5.00
Anonymous	100.00
Grace Bell Dozier	40.00
Donald R. Shiflett	100.00
Dorothy H. Strattis	50.00
Clarence E. Hall	100.00
Samuel W. Evans	50.00
Ken & Catherine Pennington	50.00
Anonymous	25.00
Anonymous	75.00
T. W. Meredith	20.00
William L. Trees	20.00
Leon Cole	<u>10.00</u>
Total contribution	2,615.00

***“That ye may be fellowhelpers
to the truth”*** (3 John 8).

We continue to be most encouraged by the way our brethren liberally supply the financial needs which are necessary to publish *Banner of Truth*. The paper continues to grow as do our expenses. Mailing costs are now more than \$700 for each issue. Tomorrow we will receive paper in the amount of \$1,600. There are other expenses but we are thankful that the needed finances are available. We continue to be most thankful for all who make BOT possible. *–Editor*

Banner of Truth Financial Report

Jan., Feb., March 2002

Balance on hand January 1, 2003	15,217.60
Jan. – March Contribution	<u>2,615.60</u>
Total funds available	17,833.20
Jan., Feb., March expense:	
Mailing Jan., Feb.-Mar. BOT	1,426.45
Service call on press	150.00
Software for labels	19.95
Ink and other supplies	122.60
Negatives	174.26
Phone	22.09
Labels	51.80
Stamps and other postage	<u>122.60</u>

Total expenses, three months	2,089.75
Total funds available	17,833.20
Less Jan. – March expense	<u>2,089.75</u>
Total on hand March 31	15,743.45

Our contributors have a part in getting the truth out to almost 7,000 people. It is most encouraging to receive requests from people in other countries, as well as just about every state in our own country. This enables us to get the truth to countries where we will never have the opportunity of going in person. - - *Editor*

Again, we apologize for being so behind in getting *Banner of Truth* out. We have had to combine two months in two issues. I have spent so much time in connection with the cataract surgery on both eyes and the surgery on my hand. I am to go to Nashville the last of this month to see the doctor who did surgery on my hand. I'm finished with the therapy on my hand and only have to get my glasses since the cataract surgery. I will be very busy with regard to the lectures in the next few weeks, but will try my best to get out an issue of BOT for June. I should then be able to keep up. We trust that our readers will understand. - *Editor*

Don't Miss It !

If at all possible, **Don't Miss** the *Banner of Truth* Lectures. Where else in this general area is it possible to hear 28 timely lessons by 20 sound preachers in four days? Truth will be upheld and error will be condemned.

When has there been a greater need for the preaching of all the counsel of God, without the fear or favor of man?

People, both preachers and other members of the church, will be coming from several states and from this area. Those who like sound preaching and fellowship with those of like-mind greatly enjoy the occasion.

There are hundreds of congregations with a hundred miles of us. We would greatly appreciate their participation in the lectures, and the spreading of the news of the lectures. This news will go out to more than 300 congregations and many hundreds of individuals. In this time when the Truth needs to be upheld, the lectures are a **Great Opportunity!** Please don't miss it!

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