

BANNER OF TRUTH

July 2003

Informative Notes On Mormonism

The primary purpose of the following notes is to set forth, in a limited way, information concerning the fast growing, false religion of Mormonism. We will not attempt to deal with every aspect of this religion, as this would require a great deal of space and effort. We will, however, touch upon a few of its teachings and examine some of its so-called "inspired" writings, from the standpoint of harmony with each other and with the Bible. There are a number of works on Mormonism which go into detail and examine its doctrines and practices. We feel that a brief treatment in a few areas will be worthwhile in informing interested brethren.

In a booklet entitled, "*About Mormonism*," by President Stephen L. Richards, First Counselor in the First Presidency, and published by the Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter-day Saints, [no publication date] some information concerning the Mormon Church and its founder is given. The booklet also gives brief information about a number of doctrines. The information in the following paragraphs, as noted, is based upon the above publication and the direct quotations are from the same source.

In 1820, a 14 year old, poor, uneducated boy from New York state, by the name of Joseph Smith, Jr., was said to have become agitated and confused by the religious sects near his home. After reading a passage from James concerning asking for wisdom, he is said to have gone to the woods nearby and prayed. According to the young man's testimony he was suddenly seized by a terrific force and thrown violently to the ground. After struggling with the force for what seemed to be a long time, and during which his life seemed to be threatened, he had a vision. During the vision God and Christ appeared to him. He was told that none of the churches seeking his allegiance was the true Church, but that he was to be selected as an instrument in the restoration and establishment of the true Church of Christ.

Smith claimed to have had several heavenly visions. During one of those visions [1823] He was guided by a heavenly messenger to a nearby hill where a stone box containing golden plates was hidden. The plates were said to contain engravings of ancient origin. After a time the plates were placed in his possession and "He spent many arduous and eventful months in making a translation of the ancient characters engraved on the plates." "He caused a book to be printed and published in Palmyra, New York, from the translations which he had made, which was called the **Book of Mormon**.

Shortly after the publication of the Book of Mormon, "he caused to be organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 6, 1830, with six charter members, under the laws of the State of New York."

At the age of 39, some 14 years after he had organized the Mormon Church, Smith was killed by a mob. Among the people accepting his teachings "He was revered as Prophet and Revelator and organizer of the Church of Christ."

SOME MORMON DOCTRINES

Mormons claim to believe in the Bible, but in addition they accept three other books as "inspired." The three other books are: *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *The Pearl of Great Price*. In the four books are to be found "authority and verification for substantially all of the theological and religious doctrines of the Church." In addition to the books just mentioned Mormons "believe in modern and continuing revelations from the Lord – that Zion will be built on the American conti-

inent and that Christ will reign personally upon the earth."

Mormons believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. They believe that men must be called of God and ordained by those in authority [only Mormons have the authority according to their teachings] to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances.

In the area of revelation Mormons believe that individuals are inspired. Of the power of the Priesthood it is said, "It is frequently used in the blessing and healing of the sick and afflicted, in giving inspired counsel and in predicting things to come. Every man who holds it is entitled to divine inspiration for his own guidance and blessing of his family but the men who are appointed and sustained as officers in the Church are entitled to receive inspiration for the direction and blessing of the Church." "The ordained patriarchs of the Church administer blessings to its members, depicting, under inspiration, their lineage and forecasting their future lives."

Mormons believe in the "eternal progression" of the spirit of man. It is said of man, "They may ultimately become through progression as intelligent and as omnipotent as God, Himself."

Another Mormon doctrine is that of the opportunity of salvation after death, as a result of efforts of descendants and friends. "And the dead who have gone on into the spirit world without knowledge of the Gospel are to be hereafter given an election to embrace it through various works done for them by their descendants and other friends in the brotherhood of the Church. This work is done within the Temple provided for that purpose."

The above information, which touches upon just a few of the Mormon doctrines which are foreign to the Bible, concludes the information based upon the publication mentioned in the second paragraph of the above discussion. The following will deal with a few doctrinal matters and examine some of the Mormon writings which claim to be "inspired."

THE BOOK OF MORMON VS THE BIBLE

The *Book of Mormon* is either inspired or it is not inspired. If, as the Mormons claim, the *Book of Mormon* is inspired, there can be no conflicts between it and the Bible. But there are conflicts, serious conflicts! These conflicts cannot be explained except on the basis that one or the other, the *Book of Mormon* or the Bible, is not inspired. As for me, I will have to stay with the Bible, God's word. There are many reasons for choosing the Bible instead of the Mormon's writings. I will be setting forth some of these reasons in our continued discussion.

The Bible is shown to be a complete and everlasting covenant. Jude 3 (ASV) speaks of "the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." "The faith" has reference to a body of truth or doctrine. "Once for all" indicates fullness or completeness. The apostle Paul says that anyone preaching "any other gospel" would be "accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9). The *Book of Mormon* is certainly "another" gospel and even claims to be "another covenant." Jesus is the mediator of a "new covenant" (Heb. 8:6; 9:15) and that covenant is the "everlasting covenant" referred to in Heb. 13:20.

The apostles of the New Testament were guided into "all truth" by the Holy Spirit (Jno. 16:13). The apostle Peter tells us that "...his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). The Hebrew writer also tells us that God "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son..." (Heb. 1:3). Either, Joseph Smith and his *Book of Mormon* are false, or the Hebrew writer didn't know what he was talking about. Heb. 2:12 refers to Jesus as the "author and finisher of our faith." This would leave no place for Joseph Smith as the finisher of our faith.

In view of the above facts, and many others which could be given, any writings, other than the Bible, which claim to be inspired, are at variance with the Bible. The *Book of Mormon* is certainly in that infamous category, as we shall point out but a few of the many comparisons which could be given.

Before pointing out those conflicts between the two, we will call attention to some statements from the *Book of Mormon* itself, concerning its inspiration. Bear in mind that Mormons make great claims for the inspiration of their books.

1. In the introduction to the Book of Mormon the following statement is made: "And now, if there

are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ." This is a frank admission that there may be faults in the book. This being true, how could one be asked to accept it as proof of anything? How would one know the "mistakes of men" from the rest of it? But that there are mistakes in the book one can be sure! In fact, the whole book is a mistake!

2. I Nephi 1:3 says: "And I know that the record which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand; and I make it according to my knowledge." Note that it is according to his knowledge. I Nephi 19:6 is revealing also. "Nevertheless, I do not write anything upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred. And now, if I do err, even did they of old; not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in me, according to the flesh, I would excuse myself." How about the statements, "that I think it sacred" and "now if I do err."? Here is admission of possible error in writing with respect to thinking and knowledge. How can anyone believe in such as being "inspired"?

3. Now listen to Jacob. "And he (Nephi) gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates a few of the things which considered to be most precious" (Jacob 1:2). Jacob 7:26 says, "I conclude this record, declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge." Did you notice that Jacob was writing the things which he considered most precious and according to the best of his knowledge? Does that sound like inspiration?

4. Mormon 8:12 admits imperfections. "And whoso receiveth this record, and shall not condemn it because of imperfections which are in it, the same shall know of greater things than these." If that record has "imperfections" in it why wouldn't the rest of their writings have "imperfections" in them? It appears that it is intended that those who would accept the imperfections would also accept others.

5. Ether 5:1 tells us that "I, Moroni, have written the words which were commanded me, according to my memory." The apostle Peter differs with Moroni. Peter said, "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21). It seems to me that something based upon memory would not measure up to being "inspired."

Conflicts between Book of Mormon and the Bible. We offer only a few of the many.

1. According to Alma 7:10, the Son of God was to be born in Jerusalem. But the Bible says He was born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1; Lk. 2:1-7). In a discussion with two young Mormons (elders?), I raised the question of why the difference. Their response was, "Jerusalem is not very far from Bethlehem." I've had the opportunity of being in both places. They are not far apart but they are two different places to be sure!

2. At the crucifixion of Christ darkness was to cover the whole earth for three days, so says Helaman 14:20, 27. The Bible says there was darkness from the 6th to the 9th hour (Matt. 27:45; Mk. 15:33). I would say that is quite a difference!

3. Alma 46:13-14 has people being called Christians in B.C. 73. But the Bible says the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch (Acts 11:26). That was years after the crucifixion of Christ, which took place about A.D. 33.

4. Did you know that the Church of Christ or Church of God existed about 147 B.C.? I didn't, but Mosiah 18:17, says so, or that is the date given by the Book of Mormon. It was after A.D. 30 that Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Who can believe the Mormon writings?

5. Alma 10:20 informs us that the "kingdom of heaven was at hand" in B.C. 82. John the Baptist was preaching it was "at hand" somewhere around A.D. 30. God's word is true! The Book of Mormon?

6. Ether 1:35-37 lets us know that the language of Jared and his brother was not confounded at Babel. Genesis 11:9 says that the language of all was confounded. In many such cases as this there is no way one could accept both accounts. As for me, I will stay with the Bible!

Joseph Smith, Jr. claimed to be a prophet and Mormons strongly affirm that he was indeed a prophet. A Mormon “elder” said to me one time, “I might quit the church and do many things wrong, but I will NEVER CEASE TO BELIEVE THAT JOSEPH SMITH WAS A PROPHET!” Was Smith really a prophet? If so, what kind was he?

The Bible tells us how we can determine whether he was a true prophet or a false prophet. Note Deut. 18:22: “When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him.” Not only does God’s word instruct us as to how to tell a false prophet from a true one, it also tells us to put them to the test. In I John 4:1¹, the writer 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.” In view of these spiritual instructions with regard to those who claim to be prophets of God, let us put Joseph Smith to the test by considering just a few of his many so-called prophecies.

1. Concerning the building of the temple. “Hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the saints. Wherefore, this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion. And thus saith the Lord your God, if you will receive wisdom here is wisdom. Behold, the place which is now called Independence is the center place; and a spot for the temple is lying westward, upon a lot which is not far from the court-house” (Doc. & Cov. 57:1-3; 1923 ed.). “And behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed for the work of gathering of my saints” (Doc. & Cov. 101:20). “Verily this is the word of the Lord, that the city New Jerusalem shall be built by the gathering of the saints, beginning at this place, even the place of the temple, which temple shall be reared in this generation. For verily this generation shall not pass away until an house shall be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord, which shall fill the house...” (Doc. & Cov. 84:4-5).

It’s not difficult to see how Joseph scored on this test of this prophecy. A few years ago I visited that place in Independence, MO, where the temple is supposed to be built. In a discussion with an elderly man there on the spot, several questions were posed. His response was that he didn’t think we believed the Mormons’ teaching. He was right on that point.

2. Prophecy of unparalleled calamities. “I am prepared to say by the authority of Jesus Christ, that not many years shall pass away before the U.S. shall present such a scene of blood shed as has not a parallel in the history of our nation; pestilence, hail, famine and earthquakes will sweep the wicked of this generation from the face of the land, to open and prepare the way for the return of the lost tribes of Israel, from the North country. The people of the Lord, those who have complied with the requisitions of the new covenants, have already commenced to gather to Zion, which is the state of Missouri...Flee unto Zion before the overflowing scourge overtake you, for there are those now living upon the earth whose eyes shall not be closed in death until they see all these things, which I have spoken fulfilled” (*Smith’s History*, Vol. 1, p. 261, 262).

Have you seen the “wicked of this generation” swept from the land? Have you seen the return of the lost tribes of Israel from the North country? “All these things” were to have happened before all that generation died. Joseph scores another “F” on this test. That “F” stands for “False Prophet” according to God’s word in Deuteronomy 18:22.

3. Prophecy concerning Kirtland, Ohio. “And it shall come to pass in due time, that I will give this city into your hands, that you shall have power over it, insomuch that they shall not discover your secret parts; and its wealth pertaining to gold and silver shall be yours” (Doc. & Cov. 111:4).

At this point another “F” on this one. Independence is not yet in the hands of the Mormons.

4. The Lord’s coming at hand. The following was prophesied Nov. 4, 1830. “For behold, verily, verily, I say unto you, the time is soon at hand, that I shall come in a cloud with power and great glory”

(Doc. & Cov. 34:7). “And they shall be looking forth for the time of my coming, for it is nigh at hand” (Doc. & Cov. 35:14).

Well over 150 years have passed and “soon at hand” has not happened! How many false prophecies does one have to utter to be a false prophet?

5. Triumph over his enemies. The following was prophesied September 1, 1842. “I feel like Paul to glory in tribulation, for to this day has the God of my fathers delivered me out of them all, and will deliver me from henceforth; for behold, and lo, I shall triumph over all my enemies, for the Lord God hath spoken it” (Doc. & Cov. 127:2).

If the Lord had spoken the above we can be sure that Joseph Smith would not have been murdered less than two years later. The “Prophet” would have been delivered “from henceforth” from his enemies. Another grade “F” on this one.

6. Concerning Smith’s death and the Lord’s coming. “Joseph, my son, if thou livest until thou art eighty-five years old, thou shalt see the face of the Son of Man: therefore let this suffice, and trouble me no more on this matter” (Doc. & Cov. 130:15). One could well raise the question as to why the Lord made such a statement about His coming by the time Joseph Smith was 85 years old. The Lord could have known that Smith would be murdered before he was 40 years old, much less 85 years. And another question, if Joseph Smith had lived until he was 85, would the Lord have come? Or, did Smith’s death stop the Lord’s coming?

The above are just a few of the many “prophecies” made by Joseph Smith. Needless to say, when they are put to the test they are shown to have been spoken “presumptuously.” Therefore, Joseph Smith was a FALSE PROPHET! Since Joseph Smith is a false prophet it must be concluded that the whole system of Mormonism is FALSE!

It is a mystery to me how that knowledgeable people accept such “prophecies” as those claimed by Joseph Smith. Could it be due to the fact that some love “darkness” rather than “light”?

In years gone by I have made an effort to learn more about the Mormon religion. I have been especially impressed in one particular area. That is, the more one delves into Mormon writings, the more glaring inconsistencies and absurdities are clearly visible. In a discussion with Mormon “elders” I was asked, “Just what do you think of the Book of Mormon?” My reply was that I had found a number of inconsistencies and contradictions. I was then asked if I had read all the book. Since I had not read all the book it was implied that I was not in a position to judge it. Since that time I have read more of the book and their other so-called inspired writings. The result? The errors in their writings have simply been multiplied. One wonders why people will swallow such error as the Mormons are propagating, but when we stop to think about it — What about Jim Jones of years ago, and other cults in more recent years? It is difficult to understand.

THE BOOK OF MORMON VS DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS

In the following we shall point out some of the differences between these two supposedly “inspired” writings. Not only do they contradict the teaching of the Bible, they contradict each other.

1. The Book of Mormon teaches that God is a “Great Spirit” (Alma 18:24-28).

Joseph Smith said, “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s” (Doc. & Cov. 130:22).

2. The Book of Mormon teaches that men should have but ONE wife and NO concubines. Having more than ONE wife is referred to as “wicked,” “whoredom,” and “abominable” (Jacob 1:15; 2:22-23; Mosiah 11:2; Ether 10:5). In Doc. & Cov. 49:15-16, Joseph Smith says that men are to have ONE wife. But in that same book Smith says that one may have many wives.

On July 12, 1843, Smith made a public revelation of a “new and everlasting covenant” in which he said, “David, Solomon and Moses received many wives and concubines and in nothing did they sin.” (Doc. & Cov. 132:28). In Doc. & Cov. 132:52-56, Emma, Smith’s wife, is commanded to “receive all

those that have been given unto my servant Joseph." In that passage it is also said, "And again I say let mine handmaid forgive my servant Joseph his trespasses." This shows that Smith already had plural wives before he made known his so-called "everlasting covenant." Mormons are now supposedly obeying the law of the land which says a man is to have one wife, but since the "everlasting covenant" says men are to have more than one wife the Mormons are guilty of obeying the law of the land instead of the law which they claim is of God.

3. The Book of Mormon teaches, concerning the Lord's supper, that wine should be used, and that those who do "more or less" will fall, "and the gates of hell are ready open to receive them" (Nephi 18:8, 13). Now compare Doc. & Cov.

Doc. & Cov. 27:2 says: "For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory..." The Mormons presently use water. In view of the Book of Mormon, "the gates of hell are open to receive them."

Not only do the two books above contradict each other, Doctrine and Covenants do the same. We shall note just one example, but this just adds to the clear evidence that the Mormon writings are from man, not inspired and not from God.

DOC. & COV. VS DOC. & COV.

1. Doc. & Cov. 18:2 says: "No one shall be appointed to receive commandments and revelations in this church, excepting my servant Joseph Smith, Jr."

In Doc. & Cov. 124:94, we are told that Hyrum Smith, brother of Joseph Smith, was appointed "That he may be a prophet, and a seer, and a revelator unto my church, as well as my servant Joseph."

If the above book was inspired of God, as the Mormons claim, it would be somewhat of a problem to decide which statement to accept. But since none of the Mormon writing is inspired, as Mormons claim, one is not faced with a problem. We must reject all their writings as a fraud.

INSPIRATION OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

Mormons believe in a triple inspiration of the Book of Mormon. That it was (1) written by inspiration, (2) preserved by inspiration, and (3) translated by inspiration. Note the statement by Apostle James E. Talmage in *Articles of Faith*, Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1949. p. 255. The statement is only a pronouncement in words, without any accompanying evidence.

"The Book of Mormon is a divinely inspired record, made by the prophets of the ancient peoples who inhabited the American continent for centuries before and after the time of Christ, which record has been translated in the present generation through the Gift of God and by his special appointment. The authorized and inspired translator of these sacred scriptures...is Joseph Smith."

Not only do the Mormons claim the Book of Mormon is inspired, they claim it is superior to the Bible. I asked a Mormon why they claimed the Book of Mormon was superior to the Bible. His reply was, "We don't believe it is superior to the Bible, but it is scripture just like the Bible is scripture." When I read to him the following statement from Joseph Smith he had an entirely different answer. "I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone to our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than any other book." (Joseph Smith, Jr. *History of the Church*, IV, p. 461.), Also quoted in Joseph Fielding Smiths, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Desert News Press, 1956.

After the above statement the "elder" said, "Oh, the Book of Mormon is superior to the Bible. The Book of Mormon does not have any errors in it but the Bible does." I cannot but doubt one's honesty and sincerity when they resort to such as the above. It is true that people are often brainwashed, but even then one should know whether they are speaking the truth or a lie.

WILL MORMONS DEFEND

THEIR TEACHINGS PUBLICLY?

From the statement made in Doc. & Cov. 71:7, one would expect that the Mormons would be ready to defend their teachings in public discussion. “Confound your enemies: call upon them to meet you, both in public and in private; and inasmuch as ye are faithful, their shame shall be made manifest.” Now this statement is supposed to be “inspired” of God, but just try to get the Mormon “elders” to meet someone in a public discussion and see what they do.

Christians not only have a right, but also a responsibility, to meet the challenge of error! When Mormons or Jehovah’s witnesses come to our door we should never turn them away without offering to arrange a discussion of their teachings in the light of the Bible. If we aren’t able to discuss the Bible with them we should call upon someone who is capable of doing so. In the meantime, we should study the Bible and be as willing to discuss the truth as the cults are willing to discuss their error.

I once asked two “elders” why there were so many errors in the early edition of the Book of Mormon. They responded with three different answers, none of which made any sense at all. 1. They first said Joseph Smith had only a third-grade education. 2. When I suggested that would make no difference if the book was inspired, they said that Joseph Smith didn’t have smooth paper to write on. 3. When I challenged that idea their response was, “The rules of grammar were different then.” Those young men must have felt somewhat inadequate in view of their stupid answers. Calling the hand of false teachers by asking them questions for which they have no answer could cause them to stop and think.

Walter W. Pigg, Editor

Response from a Reader

Recently a packet of material, addressed to Banner of Truth, was received from brother Roger Jackson. Since I am the editor of BOT it is my place to respond. With most of the material I agree, but with the last page I have some questions. We quote below the first five paragraphs of the last page. The sixth paragraph is a quotation of Rev. 22:18-19.

Jesus said “I will build my church. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:12.

Paul said, “Let there be no division among you”, Then division started. “I am of Paul”; “I am of Apollos”; and “I am of Cephas”; and “I am of Christ;” I Cor.; 1:12

Since this occurred the church has been divided several hundred times, calling ourselves different names and different denominations. Whatever that means.

In our effort to restore the New Testament church we have given it a name, The “church of Christ”, creating another denomination. Why? Because we would not listen to the Bible. If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God. 1st Peter 4:11.

More than one hundred times the church is mentioned in the New Testament. Never once, it was called the church of Christ. It is simply called the church. Why add to it?

The title of the article is THE CHURCH. I have changed the format of all upper case letters. The punctuation is exactly as the original. My response follows:

“Dear Roger, I received your material sent to Banner of Truth. With most of it I agree, but I must say that I was somewhat surprised at some of what you had to say, as quoted above.

Your conclusion that since the division at Corinth “the church has been divided several hundred times, calling ourselves different names and different denominations. Whatever that means.” Makes me wonder as to your understanding. Do you actually believe the church has been divided several hundred times? Where do you get proof of that? Or, do you believe the man-made denominations are the

church? Surely you must not believe that.

From what source did you learn that calling (*p. 8*)

Christ's church "The church of Christ," made it a denomination? Is not the church His? Was it not purchased with His blood? Did not He say he would build his church? Did Paul make the churches of Christ denominations when he said, "The churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16)?

Was Christ wrong when He said, "My church"? "My church" is not "the church." Did Paul denominationalize the church when he referred to it as "the church of God"? Is it wrong to call the church the "house of God" since this is not "the church"? You must realize that a number of designations are used to refer to the Lord's church.

Would you say that Paul was right in calling the church "the church of God," but that he would have been in error to call it "the church of Christ"? Do you ever refer to Christ's church in any other way than "the church"? If you do, are you "adding to God's word"? Would you be making the church a denomination.

Roger, I can't understand your reasoning. It is now quite mod on the part of an increasing number of our brethren to do away with the term "Church of Christ." Christ is to have the preeminence (Col. 1:18) and to call the church the church of Christ is helping to do that. It is my prayer that you will seriously study these things, and come to a better understanding. Years ago I would never have imagined that you would espouse the idea that you've evidenced.

Walter W. Pigg, Editor

A Wasted Life

Donna Tommelleo of the Associated Press had an article concerning Katharine Hepburn, in *The Paducah Sun*, June 30, 2003. The following paragraph is from that article.

In a 190 interview, she told The Associated Press: "I'm what is known as gradually disintegrating. I don't fear the next world. Or anything. I don't fear hell, and I don't look forward to heaven."

What a tragedy when people live only for this life and nothing more. Is not this a classic case of the influence of humanism upon man. Materialism, atheism, and humanism all leave God out of the picture. The Psalmist said, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," but that doesn't make it so.

Dressing Down For Worship

Darwin Hunter

One of the casualties of the modern age has been modest dress. Shamelessly, men and women boldly parade themselves in barely clad attire which promotes lustful looks and immoral thoughts. It is true that all of us must do all that we can to avoid lust (Mt. 5:27-29), but it is equally true that Christians must avoid dressing in a way which would incite lust in another (Mt. 18:6-7).

Worship attire has also taken a beating in our modern times. Some dress better for picnics and ball-games than they do for worship of their Creator. Do we think about this? Doesn't our dress say something? What would I be saying to a bereaved family if I dress for the funeral of their loved one in ten-

nis shoes and a “Cowboys” T-shirt? What would they think if I showed up in similar attire at their daughter’s wedding? It would show dishonor for the occasions, and disrespect for the one being eulogized at the funeral and for the couple being wed.

Can we not make application in worship? Our worship honors God, and is directed toward Him (Mt. 4:10; Jn. 4:24). Read Psalms 99 to get the “flavor” of worship. *“The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble”* (v. 1). *“The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above all the people”* (v. 2). *“Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool?”* (v. 5). Does this sound like a casual, ordinary occasion? Is it comparable to a beach picnic or sports outing? Of course not! Someone wrote to Ann Landers a few years ago expressing these same concerns:

Dear Ann Landers: I don’t buy the line that it’s OK to go to church in jeans and cutoffs, barefooted and in hair rollers, because “God loves us no matter how we look.” God loves adulterers and prostitutes, too, but that doesn’t mean we should use them as a standard. People dress up for things they value – job interviews, weddings, important dates and so on. Appearing in church in beach clothes says something about the way we feel about the Lord. — Young Monk in Collegeville, Minn.

Dear Monk: When I see people in a place of worship dressed for a picnic, I get the impression that they are careless and lazy. As you said so well, “People get dressed up for things they value.”

In our worship, we gather around the Lord’s Table to memorialize His death for us. It is a solemn occasion for reflection, self-examination, and gratitude. Shouldn’t this be seen in our attire? What would an unbelieving visitor think of over casualness in our approach to this sacred supper, or in our dress as we serve at the Lord’s Table? How would we dress before the President of the United States, or the governor of the state, if invited to their residence? Would they not view such nonchalance in dress as contempt for the office, or for the office-holder? If an ambassador from a foreign country appeared before our head of state in sandals and worn jeans and T-shirt, how would our citizens view that?

Think on these things. Parents, instruct your children in these matters, and set a good example for them. I am not suggesting a “Christian uniform,” but I am pleading for thoughtful change lest we dishonor the Savior Whom we have come to praise and adore. Casual dress and decorum are out of place in our worship of our King!

“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him” (Psa. 89:7).

- - 2307 Meriwether Rd., Shreveport, LA 71108

Our Dress Speaks Volumes

The way we dress has been called “non-verbal communication.” Our dress sends a message and makes a statement. Our clothing has a **language** all of its own. In Genesis 38, Judah believed Tamar to be a harlot. Why? It was the way she was dressed. Her clothing had a language all of its own.

I filed the following remarks years ago and the author’s name was not given:

(1) Men MUST wear dress shirts, ties, dress slacks and dress shoes. (2) Jeans are not allowed. (3) Tennis shoes are not accepted. (4) Shirts with writing and cartoons are not approved. (5) Hair styles must be neat, trim and clean.

(1) Women are required to wear dresses, skirts and blouses, and all must be in conservative style.

(2) Strapless or spaghetti strap dresses and bare midriffs are not acceptable. (3) Dress shoes and hosiery are required. (4) Jeans are not allowed. (5) Shirts with writing and cartoon are inappropriate. (6) Hair styles must be neat, trim and clean.

No, the elders of a local congregation did not impose the above guidelines. The above rules applied to the Sears, Roebuck & Company salespersons in the Los Angles group! An explanation was offered: "There is no substitute for good judgment in appropriate dress. Our customers deserve and expect to shop in a pleasant, professional appearing, courteous environment. Our employment relies on our ability to attract and retain the business of our customers."

Is worship more important than our job?

-- Marvin L. Weir. Editor's Note: Both the above articles are from *Rowlet Notes*, June 8, 2003.

Can You Remember When . . .?:

1. Most Gospel Meetings were for a whole week, and some times even longer?
2. Vacation Bible Schools were for five days, with at period of at least an hour and a half of Bible study each day, with little or no handcrafts?
3. Preachers often presented lessons on the One Church, and its distinctiveness?
4. Fellowship with the religious denominations around us was almost unheard of?
5. Sermons pointed out the sins of drinking, dancing, immodest dress, and mixed bathing?
6. Most people had moral standards which ruled out stealing, lying, and living together unmarried?
7. Parents at least made an effort to teach their children to mind and respect authority?
8. A politician with planks in his platform of abortion and homosexuality would have been doomed to defeat for certain?
9. Nearly everyone was expected to work for a living rather than wait for a handout from the government, made possible by those who do work?
10. It was not a thing to be looked upon with disfavor to believe in God and uphold His principles as a strengthening factor in society?

At age 77, I can well remember the above. It is no less than heartbreaking that many younger people have not the benefit of such remembrance. -- Editor

ET Phone Home (VI)

Alan Adams, Assistant Editor

It is natural to be attracted to your "own kind." I know what it's like to live in a foreign country for an extended period of time. Especially early on, it can be somewhat lonely being an "alien." I think I "phoned home" quite a bit in those early days! While I was in language school, I remember meeting and talking to a young black woman. At a glance, there were obvious differences between the two of us; but, I so enjoyed talking with her as she was an American. We talked about how "We Americans" do this or that as compared to the Chinese. There was common ground there; it was pleasant. That's why ET wanted to "phone home."

One of the beauties of being in The Kingdom, being a Member Of The Church, is the commonality,

the sense of “joint participation (fellowship),” shared by those of “like precious faith.” There’s so much bitterness, rancor, and divisiveness in this world. The church of our Lord can be a soothing oasis in this “desert of sorrow and sin.” Because brethren are dedicated to living and working “according to the pattern,” they “speak the same thing,” they are of the “same mind and judgment.” Unfortunately, now it’s a whole new ball game. There are so many among us who speak a different language. Make mention of a “pattern,” and you’ll either get a silly grin or a laugh from some; or, others will look at you as though you’re speaking to them in a foreign language. Ask the question, “Where does the Bible authorize that?,” and you will see that many brethren, even preachers, do not have a single clue as to what you mean. It’s sad.

The Assembly is one aspect of ancient Christianity that is really being *beat up on*. There have always been renegade brethren, who willingly go AWOL from The Assembly; soldiers refusing to “march in rank” (Cf. 2 Thess. 3:6). But now there are others busily chipping away at The Assembly in other ways. Pure simple a cappella singing, the kind you **can** read about in the New Testament is being corrupted by additions such as humming and using the oral facilities to imitate the sounds of mechanical instruments. The Bible talks of “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). Many brethren have perverted this into a “get down, hoe down, boogie-woogie-all-around, hand-clapping, high ‘ol time.” People who are doing these things can’t have read the Bible. God has **never** allowed mere mortals to choose how they will worship Him. Please, spend time with The Book. Read Heb. 11:4 and Gen. 4:4 and ask yourself, “Now, why exactly was it that God ‘had not respect’ for Cain’s offering; and why exactly was Abel’s sacrifice...more excellent”?

Other corruptions of The Assembly described in the New Testament are: Dividing The Assembly by age (known as Children’s Bible Hour, and by other names). I know of one assembly which had a large number of PhD’s and they wanted their own assembly; one more suited to their needs. Of course, some brethren have been practicing the “Divided Assembly” concept for years; they just stay at home and participate in, shall we say, The Home Assembly, House Church, or Home Bible Hour. You see, once you give this Divide-The-Assembly-To-Meet-The-Needs-Of-(Whomever) practice its head, there’s really no logical stopping point. The Bible picture of “the whole church...come together into one place” (I Cor. 14:23) is so pristine, so pure and so right!

The Assembly is something that happens at a particularly designated place. It’s “one place” (I Cor. 11:20; 14:23 KJV). Paul speaks of “every place” where men and women were assembled together for worship, particularly “prayer” and “teaching” (I Tim. 2:1,8,9,12). He waited “seven days,” just so he could go to a *particular place* in Troas in order to assemble with the brethren “upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread” (Ac. 20:6-7). And, of course, the Bible also **says**, by implication, that The Assembly takes place at a *particularly designated time*. A Christian may not presume to set his own time and place to “be close to God,” such as 5:00 a.m. out on the lake! But let me hasten to add, brethren. If you can justifiably take the children and their adult supervisors out of The Assembly which is to occur at a *particularly designated place* and at a *particularly designated time*; then you can also remove the PhD’s, the women, the men, the 40s, the 50s, and the 60s. It doesn’t take a great leap of the imagination to move from this to saying, “Hey, I think I’ll just keep on dividing The Assembly right down to my little ‘ole self ‘cause I’ve got special needs: NFL, a nap and fishing.”

Don’t scoff brethren. If you can divide The Assembly for one, you can divide for all. And furthermore, we have some *scholars* among us who have concluded that worship is not limited to **any** particular act, much less five. Because they haven’t done their homework on the Greek words variously rendered “worship” and “service,” and have failed to see the difference between the two; they erroneously believe that everything we do is worship. Put that together with the divided assembly practice and there you have “good ‘ole brother Jones in his ‘home Bible hour’ assembly *worshipping* as he catches forty winks, cheers on the Raiders, or reels in the big one!” I, of course, “speak after the man-

ner of men” (Rom. 3:5; ASV).

Logically running an idea out to its absurd conclusion(s) is a time honored practice. Of course, the above scenario is both silly and false; but, it is the logical implication of false doctrines and practices that are presently among us. Read Rom. 3:1-9. When Paul said, “Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man),” he was following the exact same procedure to demonstrate that some of the ideas of his fellow-Jews were false, because they, among other things, logically implied absurdities. **Rule # 1: Any doctrine or practice which implies a doctrine or practice which is false and/or absurd is itself a false doctrine or practice.** This ought to be self-evident.

“NEVER GIVE UP”

Sir Winston Churchill, the former Prime minister of Great Britain, was a great voice during World War II. His eloquence stirred Europe when facing capture by Hitler and the Nazi forces of Germany, Churchill’s voice throughout that darkest period was a calming, stabilizing, and same voice to the troubled people of his day. His perseverance and resolve were reassuring when things looked their gloomiest. Following the victory over Germany, Harrow Preparatory School invited their famous alumnus, Winston Churchill, to speak before the open assembly of his former school. The headmaster instructed the assembly to take notes of the former Prime Minister, “who was one of the greatest leaders during World War II.” Churchill stood before the huge audience and said, “Never, never, never give up,” and abruptly sat down. What meaning in the words of Churchill, and how stunned the headmaster must have been when the great leader took his seat! Yet, those students would never forget those five concise words. Who better than Sir Winston Churchill to utter those majestic words of perseverance? No one could have accomplished it like one of the greatest leaders of the twentieth century.

“Never Give Up” is the equivalent of perseverance, endurance, and persistence by incorporating these virtues that will facilitate progress. Great Biblical characters like Abraham, Moses, and Job were synonymous of patience and endurance. Therefore, we would all do well to emulate their example. The Hebrew writer wrote, “Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside ever weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1). Note the following examples:

1. Babe Ruth struck out 1,333 times, but we always remember the Babe for hitting the 714 home runs during his illustrious career. Babe Ruth never gave up following a strikeout, but kept his resolve, and continued hitting home runs. Baseballs’ greatest hitter was a tremendous example of endurance.

2. Cy Young, one of the greatest pitchers of all time, won 511 games during his career. Yet, forget the number he lost. Even the most successful player will face adversity during his lifetime. How he copes with disappointment and failure will determine his success.

3. Abraham Lincoln was badly beaten when he ran for the legislature. He then failed in business and spent seventeen years to eliminate the debt. Lincoln failed trying to get appointed to the U.S. Land Office. They defeated him in his bid for the U.S. Senate, while his effort to be elected Vice President met with defeat. Stephen Douglass defeated the “rail-splitter,” from Illinois in a competitive contest.

The man from Illinois suffered one setback, defeat, and upsetting drubbing after the other. Yet, through perseverance and his “never give up” attitude he became President of the United States. Lincoln possessed stickability and a never say die attitude that eventually brought him to the pinnacle of his political career. Quit was not in Lincoln’s vocabulary, and we would do well to emulate his example (Phil. 3:13-14).

Some Christians “believe for a while, but in time of temptation fall away” (Lk. 8:13). These lacking a root could not persevere, but gave up and subsequently lost their souls. Similarly, Israel often re-

placed God with their idols (Jer. 2:32). When things are well with us, we are on top of the world, but adversity causes many to give up. Remember the words from Holy Writ, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that ye may be able to endure it” (I Cor. 10:13). Success comes when we throw off disappointment and “never, never, never give up.”

- - From church of Christ in Mammoth Springs, AR. No author given.

A Trail of Errors

Bob Henson

I have a file that I have collected over a period of several years, in which I have placed bulletins, articles, papers, new items, etc. that will help document the direction that many in the Lord’s body have taken relative to New Testament teaching. Among the items in the folder, there are a number of newsletters from some of “our schools,” such as Freed-Hardeman, David Lipscomb, Abilene, Oklahoma Christian and others. There are articles written by men who have changed their direction over the years — men who were once considered faithful preachers and teachers of the Gospel. Now, for reasons of their own, they have changed and are determined to wreck the faith of many. According to my little file, there has been and continue to be a steady departure from the faith once delivered to the saints.

Let me share a good example of what I’m talking about. *The Christian Chronicle*, styles itself as a service provided by Oklahoma Christian University, stating that it is a brotherhood “international newspaper for members of churches of Christ since 1943.” I have an archive issue of the *Christian Chronicle* before me as I write this. The article is by Ted Parks and is under date of April 30, 2001. It is an interview with F. LaGard Smith, “Scholar in Residence for Christian Studies” at David Lipscomb University. What is a Scholar in Residence? His primary duty, according to DLU, is to “help faculty members at DLU to link Christian faith with their individual academic disciplines.”

Lipscomb provost, Craig Bledso, says “Smith is someone who is always able to challenge you.” DLU President, Steve Flatt, praised Smith for “his ability to touch both the mind and the heart” (Note the distinction between mind and heart. bh). He is a prolific writer, being the author of several books which are read by many in the church. Brother Smith spends about half his time in the Middle Tennessee area and the other in rural England, where he writes.

Lagard makes a point of telling the interviewer that “I’ve tried to ask tough questions.” It’s just here that I would personally like to ask LaGard some tough questions. 1. Do you ever worship with a denominational group while you are in England? 2. Do you now or have you ever worshipped with a group in England which uses the instrument? In the Parks interview, LaGard makes the statement that, “you don’t defend a cappella singing on the same basis as baptism. It is a more subtle doctrinal issue.” 3. Brother Smith, have you ever taught that there may be saved people who have not been immersed? Of course, the answer to each of these questions is YES. But, there is more.

In the article in *Christian Chronicle*, LaGard states, “I am not formally trained as a biblical scholar but I can take what is known by scholars, and I can wrap it up in understandable packages.” Well, now, brother Smith has recently written a book titled, *Radical Restoration*. Believe it nor not, in chapter 1, he teaches that churches of Christ are “denominational.” On page 27, he makes it clear that he believes that broad-minded community churches typically are more genuinely independent and non-denominational than ourselves.” He compares our communion service to the “Catholic sacramental

Eucharist..." (p. 136).

But, brother Smith (another tough question), have we not restored first century Christianity in the matter of the Lord's supper? Well, according to brother Smith, we have failed to make it a part of a larger "fellowship meal." So, we need to have a "fellowship meal" in conjunction with the communion! So says LaGard (p. 132). We might approach our "Scholar in Residence" with this question: Is there anything that we are doing right in our worship services? He would say our worship is like "an orchestrated religious spectacle" and "bears little resemblance to the dynamic, interactive worship we read about in scripture." (p. 155).

Back to the *Christian Chronicle* article. LaGard says that what he is calling for is "radical restoration, both in terms of the church and the Christian lifestyle." No kidding! Who would have ever imagined that. For those who may not know, LaGard was once a part of the Anti-eating-in-the-church building bunch. He's come a long way! Now we sin if we do not have a meal — and with the Lord's supper at that! Oh, I forgot to mention that LaGard says, concerning I Corinthians 16:1-2: "The truth is, there is simply no evidence that the early church ever made weekly contributions as a part of an apostolically-mandated worship ritual." (p. 164). Remembering that LaGard stated in the *Christian Chronicle* article, "I am not formally trained as a biblical scholar," I for one, say that I am fully convinced of that fact.

F. LaGard Smith would have done a faithful brotherhood a great service by continuing to practice Law and leave God's word to REAL scholars – the ones that believe it!

- - 61 Darnell Cemetery Ln. Benton, KY 42025

Editor's Note: The following is from Mark McWhorter, July 23, 2003:

Dear Gal328.org Subscribers,

I'm happy to report that there are currently two ministry openings in churches that practice the full inclusion of women in their work and worship. Naturally, both of these positions are open to male or female applicants.

One is with Brookline Church of Christ in Brookline, Massachusetts. The posting is fairly lengthy so here's a link: http://brooklinechurch.com/staff_position.html

The other is with Cahaba Valley Church, An Ecumenical Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama. A detailed job description can be found here:

http://cahabavalley.org/job_description.htm

Here is a summary of the Cahaba Valley Position:

Outreach and Education Ministry (Full-Time). An ecumenical Church of Christ in Birmingham, AL, is searching for a person, male or female, to help us develop creative ministries in community outreach as well as to coordinate all educational programs for young children through adults. Some preaching responsibilities also involved. Theological degree highly preferred. Organizational skills and a deep love for people essential. Position available July 15, 2003. If interested, we strongly recommend you visit our web page at <http://www.cahabavalley.org> to learn more about us and to read the full job description with salary information. Send letter of interest with resume to Search Committee, Cahaba Valley Church, 5099 Caldwell Mill Rd., Birmingham, AL 35242. Thanks for helping get the word out about these positions.

Peace, Lance – Lance Pape, Lance@Gal328.org

<http://www.Gal328.org> "Gender Justice & Churches of Christ"

How do we go about rating preachers?

It is interesting to note that some may think a preacher is great, while others may think differently. There must be some basis upon which people rate a preacher. It might do us good to sort of consider how we as individuals rate preachers. Over the years I've observed some things which play a big role. We shall consider just a few of those things:

CONTENT. In my estimation, content should be the most important consideration. The main objective in preaching should be the setting forth of God's truth and encouraging people to obey it. .

DELIVERY. The manner of delivery varies greatly. To some, volume is about the most important basis for rating a preacher. To others a moderate volume is preferred.

QUOTING SCRIPTURE. Does the following sound familiar? "He didn't even open his Bible!" To some, this brings about the highest rating, though content is not all that important. Ability to memorize is a great blessing, but quoted scripture is no more powerful than when read from the Bible. It is said that Nikita Khruschev knew most of the Bible by memory, but evidently didn't believe a word of it.

ENTERTAINING. Antics weigh heavily with some, but the message may be shallow. - - *Editor*

WEST-DOWNRIVER FAITH & CHARITY

**Band named One Time Blind
Gets word out with music, skits**

The above is from the *Detroit Free Press*, Feb. 5, 2003.

The following is the article in its entirety, with the exception of the photo of the five performers:

One Time Blind will perform at 7 tonight at the Trenton Church of Christ.

The band's name is a play on the words, "I once was blind, but now I see," in the Bible, said Darryl Carty of Bellville, the group's creative director. The man Jesus gives sight to "actually is speaking physically, but there is a spiritual element that says my eyes are being open to so many things that I have never, ever seen before," Carty said.

The group, based in Bellville, uses drama, testimony, percussion, dance and music to offer messages to audiences. Members are Tony Shaver of Westland, Ryan McCullough and Laura McCullough of Canton and Drew Smith and Kathlene Smith of Bellville. Carty and his wife, Montina Carty, and Jason McCullough of Plymouth handle office work.

One Time Blind also performs skits that incorporate the members' life experiences and struggles.

"We have an opening number we use that breaks down stereotypes of what people think our performances is going to be like," said Darryl Carty. "The percussion comes in, and we involve dance and gymnastics. We combine these things to hopefully take the teens by surprise."

"The show is an attempt to open people's eyes to the way we typically approach the Lord or church, and to open people's eyes to what the Lord's love might be like. Everything is geared toward that."

The group, together since 1994, performs at youth conventions, colleges and churches across the United States and in Canada. The performances used to feature a karaoke and more music, but now more drama is involved. Performances last about 45 minutes to an hour.

"We had to see what our real passion was, whether it was music or the Lord," Carty said. "I think that's the great thing about what the Lord did with us. Because we were willing to let go of what we

thought this group should be, the Lord has taken it and made it much bigger than we thought."

Trenton Church of Christ is at 2650 Grange. There will be a freewill offering to benefit needy families in the Downriver area. Call 734-676-1797, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. weekdays.

By Mary Lendzion, Your Week Staffer

For more information about One Time Blind, call 734-697-9878, anytime, or visit www.onetimeblind.org. To inquire about booking a performance, call 866-333-8663, anytime.

Editor's Note: The above is being carried to remind serious-thinking brethren of what is happening within the Lord's church. Perhaps the most tragic thing about the above is the claim that the **Lord is doing these outrageous things!** The band name, One Time Blind would be much more fitting if it were "Still Blind," with regard to what the Lord wants from those who supposedly serve Him. That Carty's eyes are being "open to so many things that I have never, ever seen before," must be attributed to something or someone other than the Lord.

**Video and Audio Tapes of the
3rd Annual *Banner of Truth*
Lectures are Available**

The above may be ordered from: James E. Green, 2711 Spring Meade Blvd., Columbia, TN 38401. Phone: (931) 486-1364. His e-mail is: jamesegreen@charter.net

The tapes contain 28 lessons by 22 speakers, relating to the theme of the lectures: **Back to The Old Paths — The Good Way.** Video set \$35.00. Audio \$30.00.

Fourth Annual *Banner of Truth* Lectures – June 14-17, 2004

We ask interested brethren to try to schedule events in 2004 so that the time for the lectures will be open. We intend to get information about the lectures out earlier than we did this year. Some invited speakers could not come due to conflicts. - - *Editor*

FELLOWHELPERS

April, May, June 2003

Berea church of Christ	100.00
Saks church of Christ	180.00
Crondull church of Christ	100.00
Maple Hill church of Christ	200.00
Alhambra church of Christ	50.00
Anonymous	300.00
Robert M. Price	600.00
Robert A. Petrochko	110.00
Anonymous	50.00
Mrs. John H. Brown	75.00
Larry Pennington	30.00
Paper sold to congregation	32.00

Jake Taft	100.00
Jerry Coppinger	400.00
Edward J. Campbell	25.00
Alfred & Mavis Murdock	100.00
Anonymous	100.00
Elmer Scott	<u>50.00</u>
Total Contribution	2,602.00

*That ye may be fellow-helpers
to the truth" (3 John 8)*

We sincerely thank those brethren who make our work possible! You have a part in getting the truth out to thousands, in our country and in other countries of the world. For the June issue of BOT, we ran 7,000 copies. Our work continues to grow slowly. It is comforting to know that our brethren supply the necessary funds. – *Editor*

Banner of Truth Financial Report

April, May, June 2003

Balance on hand April 1, 2003 15,743.45

April — June Contribution 2,602.00

Total Funds Available 18,345.45

April, May, June Expense:

Mailing BOT 1,414.73

Paper 1,600.00

Tape 31.33

Envelopes and labels 88.32

Mailing labels for BOT 51.44

E-mail for one month 21.95

Phone 5.63

Return postage 27.75

Advertising for BOT Lectures 54.78

Total expense for Apr., May, June 3,295.91

Total funds available 18,345.45

Less Apr., May, June expense 3,295.91

Balance on hand June 30, 2003 15,049.54

READERS'S RESPONSE

“I’m writing in regards to your Banner of Truth. I wanted to let you know I change my address...Please can you continue to send the magazine to my new address. Thank you for all of the Banner of Truth – **Antiono Cullen.”** – **MI.** (*Thanks for informing us of your new address. This helps us save on expenses and you will not miss a single issue. Thanks for letting us know! – Editor*).

“Thanks for all your efforts in providing the brotherhood with sound articles and keeping us informed of things in the current digression – **Ed Allard.”** – **GA.**

“Thank you for your work and faithfulness to the truth. Please use this to continue to spread the truth via ‘Banner of Truth’ – **Joe Travis.**” **TX.** (*Thanks for your gift – Ed.*)

“I currently receive your publication, BOT. I was wondering if you have an extra copy of the Dec. 2002 issue, that had the Tragic Fruits of Liberalism. Also, could you add my daughter to your mailing list. Thank you for a sound publication. (*We usually have an extra copy of most of the issues we have published. We'll send you the copy. We'll be happy to add your daughter – Editor.*)

“My wife and I really enjoy and appreciate receiving Banner of Truth. It has helped us a lot. We've shown the Banner to our son, who is also a member of the church of Christ, as well as his wife and children. Our son would like to be added to the list of recipients and is it possible to begin his subscription by sending him the past June issue? I'm certain he'd like to read the front page article...We'll be sending a contribution to help offset the cost of the Banner's publishing – **Allan Jamail.**” – **TX.** (*Thanks for passing BOT on to your son. This helps to have a mailing list of those who enjoy the publication – Editor.*)

“I am delighted by your interesting topics in the Banner of Truth. As a preacher I wish to express my appreciation for the paper and kindly request that the paper is sent to me regularly so that I can build up my faith so that I can teach others. I hope that my request will meet your kind consideration. God bless you – **Ralph Owusu.**” – **Ghana, Africa.** (*We are happy to make the paper available to you and trust it will be helpful to you and others I have known some brethren from Ghana, but never been there. – Ed.*)

“I have been reading some of your articles online and I really enjoy them, much better to read about the truth than trash in *Newsweek*. Also, being a young gospel preacher it is important to seek the knowledge of those who have done so for so many years. I would be interested in receiving the publication you put out in the mail, so that I may make a collection for my son when he is older. Thanks for spreading the truth. – **Robert Lukenbill.**” **MO.** (*Things within the Lord's church are much different than when I began preaching almost 50 years ago. The Truth never changes, but men often do. It is good to be aware of those who would lead people away from the Truth as the N.T. warns several times – Editor.*)

“We enjoy reading ‘Banner of Truth’ each month it appears in the mailbox. I'm writing in regards to our address change. We would love for the paper to follow us to our new address. Thank you so much for your stand for the truth – **David & Mary Ward.**” – **IN.**

“I want to thank you for what you are doing and the financial sacrifice that you and your wife are making in doing the Lord's work. Your work is appreciated....Again, thank you and hope you have a nice Christmas season – **Bob Price.**” – **FL.** (*Thanks for your concern and the encouragement that you have been in our work – Editor.*)

“I trust that all is well since your surgery. It's good to have a periodical I can have for the members here, that teaches rather than just talks. As I read the letter of criticism from Linda Sanders in the last edition, it shows me clearly how people do not want to know God's word. Also it shows how those who preach tolerance so loudly are usually so intolerant. At least maybe you can be encouraged, knowing there are many of us out here who appreciate your efforts. I wish I could attend the lectureship but scheduling problems will not permit. If you make tapes or print a book, I should like to purchase it (them) from you. I know some of the speakers personally and most of the others by reputation. In fact, bro. Hogan's late wife, Blanch, was about my first Bible school teacher...God bless your work. May we all give heed to His Word – **Mac Ballard.**” – **AR.** (*We were well pleased with the quality of the lessons presented at the lectures. We do not print a book (Just don't have enough help) but bro. Jim Green made tapes. His address is in this issue. As for criticism, I expect some. Most of the response we receive is very positive and encouraging. – Editor.*)

Editor's e-mail: <wpiggbot@earthlink.net>

Visit BOT at David Lemmons' web at:

<http://www.hcis.net/users/dlemmons?BOTlist.htm>

Readers may get on David's LemmonsAid e-mail:

LemmonsAid-subscribe@YahooGroups.com