Will “Our Schools” Be Our Downfall? (#2)

Already, our schools have had a decided and detrimental impact upon many congregations of God’s people. The prospect for a diminishing of this influence is rather bleak. How many of us are ready and willing to face the challenge to bring about urgently needed change?

Our stated objective in Part 1 was to point out some serious problems in a number of our schools. However, before we engage in that part of our discussion, we want to ... church in many places. [Since this was written more than nine years ago, we will have some even sadder “update” notes. — Editor].

Those who even remotely doubt the potential power of liberal brotherhood schools to wreak destruction upon the Lord’s church need only review the happenings within our schools in the past, what is happening now, and the adverse effect it has had upon the church in many places. [Since this was written more than nine years ago, we will have some even sadder “update” notes. — Editor].

Our long term results of this destruction can still be seen in a vivid way, especially in such northern states as Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. Where the true church once stood strong, the Christian Church (sometimes called Church of Christ) and the Disciples of Christ denomination now hold sway. Their digression is clearly seen in such things as: Instrumental music, observance of Christmas, Easter, and other “holy” days, women preachers, and various other things which are without scriptural justification.

The brethren who continued to walk in “the old paths” when the tide of liberalism swept over the brotherhood in the past century were in a small minority. In many instances they were forced out by the “loving” liberal brethren.

Surely, those who today would see the current dangers of our schools can see. But eyes must be opened in order to see. The danger, some time ago had already appeared and was taking its toll, as it is now with increasing rapidity.
BANNER OF TRUTH
Published by the
Hickory Grove
church of Christ
1131 Hickory Grove Rd., Almo KY 42020
Elders:
Jimmy Lockhart (270) 753-4460
Mike Smith (270) 437-4616
Preacher:
Virgil Hale (270) * * * Editor
Walter P. Pigg (270) 753-3675
144 Coles Campground Rd., Murray, KY 42071
Assistant Editor:
Alan Adams (859) 937-2460
1653 Pine Lane Dr., Cantompton, FL 32533
Published monthly and sent free to interested persons. Made possible by the contributions of congregations and individuals. Our purpose is to: 1) Teach and uphold God’s truth; 2) Encourage mission efforts to seek the lost; 3) Oppose that which is “contrary to sound doctrine” and not in harmony with the “doctrine of Christ.”

UPON THE CHURCH

Continued from Page 1

through the influence upon many congregations. The same pattern of harmful influence by our schools with so adversely affected the church in the past century has now emerged as this century nears its passing. We ask our readers to reflect upon this fact in all seriousness by considering with us:

Ourschools’ influence upon the church

From my personal experience of more than forty years I can attest to the influence of a school upon many congregations, and most especially in the general area where the school is located. This influence has some times been positive, but in recent years it has become increasingly negative. This school, formerly Freed-Hardeman College, is now Freed-Hardeman University. My reason for using this school as an example is due to the fact that I spent about three years in that school. I have lived in proximity to the school for several years and I have kept fairly well informed as to the activities of the school. From what I have seen over the years, it appears that others of our schools have influenced the church in their respective areas in basically the same way. May I hasten to say that not everything every school has done constitutes bad influence. By no means is that the case. But let me also say that the unfavorable influence of schools has increased continually over the past several years and continues to do so in our time.

The hurtful influence of these schools has not been happened overnight, but rather gradually over a period of time. To my knowledge none of our schools has come out under a banner proclaiming an evil intent to subvert congregations. Nevertheless, that various congregations have been led away from the truth by a school’s influence is clearly evident. It is interesting to note:

MEANS BY WHICH SCHOOLS INFLUENCE CONGREGATIONS

Perhaps the greatest means of influence upon congregations is through the students who attend the schools and then become active in congregations in various ways and in various places. Brother Alan Highers stated it so well in a quotation used earlier:

Through their influence on young people, the colleges also have an effect upon the church. It is not a question of whether this should be the case, or whether we approve. It is a fact. Those who attend preacher schools, colleges, and universities operated by Christians, often become elders, deacons, preachers, teachers, and leaders in congregations wherever they go.

Therefore, like it or not, the educational institutions are a force for either good or evil upon the churches—(Spiritual Sword, Vol. 22, 1131 Hickory Grove Rd., Almo KY 42020

Another means of influence by the schools is that their fingers often reach out to various congregations to offer a variety of “services.” If a congregation is in need of a preacher, someone to preach in a gospel meeting, or to do fill-in preaching, the school is eager to supply. This also holds true with regard to a number of other “services” which the school is ready to supply. In this way stronger ties with a congregation are formed, thereby increasing the influence of the school upon the congregation.

You are doing. Please continue to send me your publication or renew it. I’ve included $50.00 to help cover the expense of it. Thank you. – Randy Groenwald – CA. (Thank you; we will see to your request – Editor).

“Please add my name to your mailing list for Banner of Truth...I preached the truth for more than forty years, until I was near eighty one. Now I’m eighty-nine. God bless your efforts – C.V. Alexander.” – FL.

“I pray you and sister Naomi’s health will be better in the coming New Year. We both are pushing the edge of our life here on earth. I pray the Lord each day that it might be possible to turn the church around from its downfall. Sorry I don’t write much. However, I do try to keep up with you inBOT. I cherish.” – TX.

“The Banner of Truth is so encouraging and I thank our heavenly Father that there are still real Christians who worship our God and spirit and in truth. I always look forward to reading the paper each time it comes, and it helps me in explaining the gospel plan and the reasons for our way of worship services. I wish I could send you a large amount of support, but hope this small amount will help with some of the postage, at least. B.O.T. is priceless to me. Thank you so much for staying the course. – Sue McDaniel.” – TX.

“Please add the following to your mailing list to receive Banner of Truth. I gave them my last copy I received and they requested that I send you an email to get them, put on your mailing list. I have been receiving BOT for a good while and feel it one of the best publications in the brotherhood. Thank you for your efforts and work to further the cause of Christ – Tommy D. Booth.” – TX.

“Greetings in the precious name of Christ our Savior. I enjoyed reading your publication ‘Banner of Truth.’ A copy was sent to me by bro. James D. Cos and it was inspiring. Thank you for the great work. I am a preacher of the gospel that works at church of Christ, No 12 MCC Road, Abayi Aba-Nigeria. The membership of the congregation is about four hundred persons. Most members speak English. I am therefore applying for copies to the BOT to be used in the youth class on Tuesdays...Earnestly waiting to hear from you, remain blessed in the Lord – Christian C. Nwachukwu.” – Nigeria. (We are sending a bundle of 15. Please give me as many copies as you wish, if you have means to do such – Editor).

“We appreciate your excellent work with Banner of Truth. I distribute the copies you send to me to each family unit who meets with the Murfreesboro church of Christ. Please change the mailing address...Also, we have enclosed a check to assist you in your efforts. Keep fighting you good faith!” – Steve Vuets – TN. (Thanks Steve, for your generous contribution to help in our work. We trust that your schedule might allow you to participate in our BOT lectures, June 5-8, 2006. – Editor).

“I enjoy your bulletin so much. Please send one to my grand daughter. Her address is... – Pat Brumbelow.” – TN.

“Thank you, to all the men and women that stand firm and proud in the Love of God. Many are without the truth and I thank the team working to produce B.O.T., for all their hard work. Thank God for your desire and passion for the truth... (a reader. Sorry that I lost the name – Editor).

“I received the article from Alan and see it in the January BOT. I really appreciate the effort that you and Alan put into this for me. I have read the article you published in December 2005, ‘Urgent questions Which Elders should Consider’. I find this to be one of the best written articles I’ve ever read and it was followed by a great article, ‘Where is the Church Headed?’ by Bill King. These two articles really cover the problems within the church of Christ. Again I want to say thank you for what you are doing for the Lord. You have been blessed with the ability to touch through the written word and I have been blessed by my association with you and your family. For that I’m grateful. I am very grateful that you have allowed me to be a part of your efforts in publishing Banner of Truth. You are often in my prayers and I thank the Lord for your talent and your desire to teach the true gospel of Christ. I shudder to think of the day when men of your knowledge and desire to reach people with the truth are gone – Bob Price.” – FL. (Thank you for your generous support and encouragement. – Editor).

“Greetings from the Hopkins Rd., church of Christ, in Richmond, VA. I just finished reading the January issue concerning God’s Plan for Elders in the church. This is the best explanation I have seen and should wake a lot of people up when they really apply it to their own congregations. Please subscribe me. Thank you very much. – Robert E. Lysen, Sr.” – VA. (God’s plan will work, but it must be applied – Editor).

“Hello dear brother. This is Ken Butterworth and I need any info you might have...Thanks for your excellent work with BOT. I am sincerely thankful for this fine publication. How we need more like it! Thank you for your every effort to equip the pure one church for which our Lord did; the church of Christ. You are an encouragement to me and I will be a pray for you each day...I am so appreciative of your firm stand for the eternal truths of God – Ken Butterworth.” – AL.

“I am rejoicing over the soundness of the truth being delivered by your publication. Praise God! There are surely not many who stand for the truth today, but your publication surely holds true to its name. I thank God for your courage and boldness in proclaiming the...
gracious spirit of the new, is to ignore utterly the context and the clear reasoning of the Apostle. Place men with all their imperfections under a mere legal system embracing those high moral demands that reflect the infinite perfections of God himself, and what must be the result? Condemnation. Paul says, “when the commandment came, sin revived and I died”—thus the “letter kills.” On the other hand, the Gospel “gives life” by bringing poor sinnerstosee their needs and of grace in Christ by which theyaresaved from the guilt and consequences of transgression, thus, the new covenant is the “spirit that gives life” [Commentary on Romans, p. 94].

Amen. Let us speak “as the oracles,” not chitlin corner Scriptures — AA

Continued from P. 11

characteristic of the Lord’s church is that it was established on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 33 as promised in Holy Scripture. Any “church” that comes into existence after A.D. 33 cannot be the Lord’s church. The term “church of Christ” is a Scriptural term (Rom. 16:16). It does not honor and glorify some man. It shows ownership and gives glory and honor to the one whose blood purchased it – Christ (Acts 20:28).

No, the “attend the church of your choice” slogan is not found in the Bible. It is the product of man’s thinking and man’s wisdom. All roads do not lead to heaven, as many believe. Jesus is very clear in declaring, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (Jno. 14:6). There are not many “ways” and eternal life is found only by following the Savior.

Why not be a member of the Lord’s church which He promised to build? Obey the gospel of Christ so the Lord can add you to His church (Acts 2:47).

— 5810 Liberty Grove Rd., Rowlett, TX 75030

The supplying of literature through school bookstores is also a means of some influence. And, as has been the case, literature by unsound brethren and even false teachers of denominations, is pushed for sale without any warnings of its danger. To some, whatever is offered by their favorite school must be all right, otherwise it would not be pushed for sale. Then there are the “PR men” from the schools, whose job it is to promote their particular schools. These men look for opportunities to speak to congregations, whereby loyalty to the school may be encouraged and strengthened. It should not be overlooked that in some instances Preacher’s Meetings are used by the schools to extol the schools’ virtues. It is the case that some preachers, who are starving for some of the crumbs which may fall from the table of notoriety and acclaim, will be influenced to go along without asking serious questions or registering disapproval of things which are wrong.

It is a sad fact that a number of our schools are serving as the breeding ground for false teachings, as their tentacles reach out in all directions, using a variety of means to captivate brethren upon whom they may depend for financial support and a supply of students. Whereas a few decades ago the schools were almost totally dependent upon individual support for their existence, now there is an intense effort to get support for the schools included in the budget of congregations across the country.

Liberalism in our schools could be virtually stopped, if the financial supporters had a mind to do so. There is no question but that those who supply the financial support of a school can in large measure demand certain conditions within the school. This, however, can create a problem when a majority of the major supporters opt for a course which is not in keeping with the teaching of God’s word, nor of the course intended by the schools founder.

Though brother Willard Collins might be asked some timely questions as to what part he has played in the direction that David Lipscomb University has taken, the former president did make an excellent comment relative to the financial support of a school and the direction the school takes when he wrote:

“Brethren, I would like to get your publication, Banner of Truth. This helps us to know and to understand certain things that are affecting the Lord’s church. We have been receiving it for many years and we want to receive it continuously without missing any copy. Every year we have been missing one or two copies. BOT is certainly scriptural and appropriate for all to read. It has helped me immensely. Through reading your articles we come to know that the church of Christ is different from every other religious institution on the face of the earth. We are looking forward to receive regularly in the new year of 2006. May the Lord’s blessings be in abundance over all your endeavors. May God continue to prosper in your great work – T. Ngakhopao, church of Christ.” – Namipur, India

“Thank you for publishing such an informing publication, Banner of Truth. This helps us to know and to understand how certain things are affecting the Lord’s church. We have been receiving it for many years and we want to receive it continuously without missing any copy. Every year we have been missing one or two copies. BOT is certainly scriptural and appropriate for all to read. It has helped me immensely. Through reading your articles we come to know that the church of Christ is different from every other religious institution on the face of the earth. We are looking forward to receive regularly in the new year of 2006. May the Lord’s blessings be in abundance over all your endeavors. May God continue to prosper in your great work – T. Ngakhopao, church of Christ.” – Namipur, India

———

“Blessing to you if the other offers do not materialize. Since we live in Obion County it would not require much effort to get it there. My wife and I are long time members of the Berea congregation near Rives. The congregation receives a bundle of BOT and it is distributed to the membership. I receive a copy here at the law office so I usually get a head start on reading it before the congregation does. I cannot express to you how much I appreciate the work you are doing. Anyone who has attempted to write for publication understands how much time and effort goes into literary production. You have been blessed with the talent of writing and are using it powerfully... — Roger T. Fisher.” – TN.

“Dear friends,” — Tennessee Valley News

“BROTHERS,” — FL.

“Hope this finds you and sis. Pigg feeling as well as possible. I enjoy B.O.T. very much, and want to help….You might have the worst job in the world, but just remember, Paul didn’t live on easy street. Keep up the good work – Gary Price.” – KY.

Why are we starting with Pepperdine University? Several years ago I could have explained it by saying, “We are starting with the worst first.” But with the error which has been espoused by some other schools in more recent years that might not now be appropriate. It seems that a number are vying for the “worst” first place. Since it was necessary to start with some school, I have started in the far west and will move eastward,
though space does not allow me to deal with all our schools by any means.

As far back as the 1950s distressing questions were being raised about Pepperdine. As a new Christian in 1953, I soon began to hear faithful brethren talk about the liberalism in then Pepperdine Christian College. Certain efforts were supposedly put forth to change the direction of Pepperdine. But with the passing of years it was evident that conditions had only worsened rather than improved.

Reproach came upon the church in 1976, due to a tragic sinful action by brother M. Norvel Young, Chancellor of Pepperdine. Nationally known Newsweek carried the story. Brother Young had plowed into the rear of a car, waiting at a traffic light, causing the death to two innocent passengers. Norvel Young, who had been arrested for driving while drunk once before this accident, had a blood content of .23 percent alcohol, which is more than twice legally drunk in most states. The public reaction was unfavorable, due to the fact that Young received virtually no punishment for his crime, with no jail time at all. But Newsweek had something to say about Young’s spiritual beliefs.

Even before the tragedy, Young was having doubts about his religion and his role as a spiritual leader. In recent years, serious financial strains and infighting at the school had torn Young’s confidence. He says he took his first drink at 54, after recovering from a mild heart attack…Meantime, he began to doubt his church. “For years,” he told the judge, “it has been increasingly difficult for me to accept the simplistic assumptions of the hell-fire and brimstone fundamentalism which most preachers in this church teach.”

From this, it is easy to see that Pepperdine had gone far into liberalism back in 1976, by allowing a person with such problems to hold a high place of leadership within the school.

It has been common knowledge for several years now that Pepperdine has had teachers who were not even members of the church, and that activities took place on the campus which were a disgrace to the Lord’s church. In more recent years there have been other happenings which show just how liberal Pepperdine has become, and the speed at which they are going into complete apostasy. The Nashville Banner reported on March 22, 1992 that the apostate Pat Boone had been appointed chairman of Pepperdine University’s Advisory Board. It is a matter of public record that Pat Boone has been an apostate for years repudiating New Testament Christianity in no uncertain terms.

Another revealing action at Pepperdine was noted in the Nov. 1992 issue of the Christian Chronicle. The article, “First Prayer,” contained the following: MALIBU, Calif.—D’Esta Love, dean of students at Pepperdine University, gave the first prayer by a woman in a convocation ceremony on Aug. 31. According to Pepperdine student newspaper, the university decided earlier this year to utilize women fully in all the institution’s assemblies. This action clearly shows Pepperdine’s total disregard for God’s word. With such disregard for authority, there is no stopping place, as time is showing.

Wayne Jackson, in the July 1991 Spiritual Sword says: “Pepperdine University has secured the services of Edward Fudge, author of the book, The Fire That Consumes, to propagate his dogma in a series of classes during their 1991 lecturership program” (p. 16). Fudge contends that the wicked are annihilated. This may sound good to those in error, but it is not true. In what sense, also, is the New Testament called “circumcision is that of the heart” (Rom 2:28, 29)?

The true Jew, Paul affirms, is — and has always been — one who is a Jew “ inwardly,” and one whose “circumcision is that of the heart” (Rom 2:28-30). The true Jews, then, is one whose “inwardness”…is in the spirit” (v. 29), which is to say through his obedience to the Gospel, the New Testament of Jesus (cf. Col 2:11-14); as opposed to one whose “circumcision is in the letter,” that is according solely to the Law of Moses (v. 29).

Once again, the lie is given to the idea that Divine Law has, or has ever had, a “spirit” level and a “letter” level. The terms are used to contrast two covenants. I. B. Grubbs, commenting on “newness of spirit” and oldness of letter in Romans six, also brings in II Corinthians 3:5-6 and says, The legal covenant, as written and engraved on stones, is the “letter,” and , as it is the “ministration of death,” it is rightly called the “letter that killeth.” By contrast, “the ministration of the spirit,” previously called “the spirit” that “giveth life,” is the new covenant, mentioned in verse 6, of which the Apostle says that he and his apostolic associates were “sufficient ministers.” To suppose, as did Origen, that the contrast between the “letter” and the “spirit” is a contrast between the literal sense of the Scriptures and some mystical meaning, or to suppose with many of our own time that it is a contrast between the written word itself and the Holy Spirit that gave it, or even to suppose, as some [and they’re still with us—AA], that it is a contrast between the legalistic spirit of the old dispensation and the...
**Spirited of the Law Versus Letter of the Law (V)**

Some think Divine Law has two levels of meaning and application, that is, a "spirit" level and a "letter" level. The "spirit" level is held to be the actual intent of God's Law, and therefore superior to the "letter" level, which is what the Law says in so many words. We have shown — A) This view is false because the so-called "spirit" of the Law winds up being whatever whoever says it is. Such subjectivity renders the Bible contradictory and meaningless. B) Closely akin to this point, this view is false because there is no rule given by which to distinguish between what in the Bible is "spirit" and what is "letter." C) This view is false, because the terminology — "spirit," "letter," and "law" — has been wrested from passages, which when accurately interpreted, are in reality drawing a contrast between the New and Old Testaments with no reference at all to the old "spirit-of-the-law-versus-letter-of-the-law" idea. The whole thing has been fabricated from a misinterpretation; it's a "chimney corner Scripture." The Constitution of the United States of America for some time has been subjected to the same kind of Spirit-versus-Letter-of-the-Law sophistry as that foisted upon the Bible. A liberal cultural war is being waged between those who believe in "strict constitutionalism" and "original intent," and those who view the Constitution as a "growing" document. In other words, it's a battle between the "Spirit" people and the "Letter" people. It doesn't bode well for the future of our society that the "Spirit" people have had the upperhand for over fifty years.

This is why liberal Supreme Court Justices can declare organized prayer in public schools and other institutions a violation of the First Amendment. This is why the very general statement in the Preamble, "to...promote the general welfare," is used "in upholding much recent social legislation, for which no warrant could be found in the enumerated powers of Congress" [Columbia Encyclopedia, p. 490]. There are other things like: homosexuality and abortion are protected under the "right to privacy"; and capital punishment, in my lifetime, has been declared both constitutional and unconstitutional. Liberal brethren, like the liberal Justices, want to treat the Bible as a "growing" document. When what they view as the "letter" of the Law doesn't suit them, they set out to find the "spirit" of the Law; which "spirit," of course, is whatever they determine it to be. Like their soul mates in the Supreme Court, liberal brethren figuratively don black robes and just declare "just what things, as it were, "promote the general welfare." They are the brethren who declare "love," "unity," and "evangelism" to be "Spirit stuff," but such ordinances as, "singing only in worship," and "only one cause for divorce and remarriage," they say, are "Letter stuff." Actually, this is all just a bunch of stuff.

We've examined the three places in the Bible where these key terms, spirit, letter, and law, are brought together; and we have seen that in each case, that "spirit" has reference to the New Testament, whereas "letter" and "law" have reference to the Old Testament. It is so hard to purge common, yet non-Biblical, uses of Bible terms from our thinking; but this we must do.

**THE "NEW" IS CALLED SPIRIT AND THE "OLD" IS CALLED LETTER** is both a fair and interesting question. Starting with "letter," we note that it comes from the [Greek] word γραμμα which means "that which has been written; writing, document, record" [Thayer's, p. 120]. Jesus said of Moses, "But if ye believe not his writings [gramma], how shall ye believe my words" (Jno 5:47). And Paul to Timothy, "from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings [gramma]..." (2Tim 3:15). "Writings," in each passage, refers to the Law of Moses. It won't do, however, to just say that the Old Testament is a document, and the New Testament something else. The New Testament is equally written in "letters"; it is no less a "writing." Paul spoke of the "large letters" [grammata] with which "I write" (Gal 6:11). As to "revelation" given Paul of the "dispensation of that grace of God," he said, "I wrote before in few words" (Eph 3:2-3). This etymology of letter for the law lies in the nature of the circumstances. Paul described the Old Testament as the "letter which was a...ministration of death, written, and engraven on stone" (Co 2:17). This image takes the Jewish mind back to that gloriously terrible day when "Jehovah came down upon mount... when He deems it to exist. (From an article by Dennis Gulledge, East End News, June 16, 1996; a review of Smith's Baptism: The Believer's Wedding Ceremony, pp. 17-18).

This sounds very much like Rubel Shelly. Long after his apostasy, Rubel has been used at Pepperdine. George Pepperdine, the brother who made Pepperdine possible, surely had nothing like the present Pepperdine in mind when the school was started. As we have heard the expression so many times, George Pepperdine, along with the founders of most of our schools, would "Turn over in their graves," if they knew the present condition of the schools which they founded.

**UPDATE NOTE:** If conditions have improved at Pepperdine, such has not come to my attention. If the conditions described above do not convince one that this school is an enemy of the cause of Christ, then it is unlikely that any condition would.

---

**II. ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

Abilene Christian College (now Abilene Christian University, prospered under the influence of such men as Jessie P. Sewell, C.R. Nichol, R.L. Whiteside. Those days are no more. If space permitted, we could say so much relative to the error which has been...espoused by ACU. We begin with a most serious matter:

**Teaching of Evolution at ACU**

As recently as 1972, ACU claimed that one her functions was to "Exalt the Bible as the Word of God." How shocking then that this same school, in 1985, would have two professors, Kenneth Williams and Archie Manis, teaching evolution. Wayne Jackson wrote:

> It is now known that at least two professors have flagrantly taught the dogma of evolution. Moreover, there is ample proof that this subversion of our youth's faith has been propagated at ACU for more than a decade, and that complaints relative to this matter have been ignored, denied, and concealed... (Christian Courier, Jan. 1986).

In January 1986, Bert Thompson, a graduate of ACU, came out with a 200 page book, Is Genesis Myth? In it the facts of evolution being taught at ACU are laid bare. The evidence is so extensive that it cannot be refuted, notwithstanding the attempted cover-up by ACU officials. The nine-page "Investigative Report" issued by ACU, dated Feb. 13, 1986, fell far short of any semblance of escalation. Thompson’s charges stood and stand.

**Methodist Preacher Appointed Editor of Optimist**

When it was reported that a Methodist preacher, 39 year old Michael O’Connor, was appointed editor of ACU’s student newspaper, the Optimist, some may have thought that it was a joke; it wasn’t. The June 4, 1992 issue of the Optimist reported the sad fact in an article by Keith Alewine. “Michael, who serves as the pastor of the Trent Methodist Church, wrote that...”

---

**False Teachers Used at ACU**

Starting with “letter,” we note that it comes from the [Greek] word γραμμα which means "that which has been written; writing, document, record" [Thayer’s, p. 120]. Jesus said of Moses, “But if ye believe not his writings [gramma], how shall ye believe my words” (Jno 5:47). And Paul to Timothy, “from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings [gramma]...” (2Tim 3:15). “Writings,” in each passage, refers to the Law of Moses. It won’t do, however, to just say that the Old Testament is a document, and the New Testament is something else. The New Testament is equally written in “letters”; it is no less a “writing.” Paul spoke of the “large letters” [grammata] with which “I write” (Gal 6:11). As to “revelation” given Paul of the “dispensation of that grace of God,” he said, “I wrote before in few words” (Eph 3:2-3).

**UPDATE NOTE:** If conditions have improved at Pepperdine, such has not come to my attention. If the conditions described above do not convince one that this school is an enemy of the cause of Christ, then it is unlikely that any condition would.

---

**Subjects of the Law**

In it

---

**Letter** of the Law doesn’t suit them, they set out to find the “spirit” of the Law; which “spirit,” of course, is whatever they determine it to be. Like their soul mates in the Supreme Court, liberal brethren figuratively don black robes and just declare "just what things, as it were, "promote the general welfare." They are the brethren who declare "love," "unity," and "evangelism" to be "Spirit stuff," but such ordinances as, "singing only in worship," and "only one cause for divorce and remarriage," they say, are "Letter stuff." Actually, this is all just a bunch of stuff.

We’ve examined the three places in the Bible where these key terms, spirit, letter, and law, are brought together; and we have seen that in each case, that “spirit” has reference to the New Testament, whereas “letter” and “law” have reference to the Old Testament. It is so hard to purge common, yet non-Biblical, uses of Bible terms from our thinking; but this we must do.

**THE “NEW” IS CALLED SPIRIT AND THE “OLD” IS CALLED LETTER** is both a fair and interesting question. Starting with “letter,” we note that it comes from the [Greek] word γραμμα which means "that which has been written; writing, document, record" [Thayer’s, p. 120]. Jesus said of Moses, “But if ye believe not his writings [gramma], how shall ye believe my words” (Jno 5:47). And Paul to Timothy, “from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings [gramma],...” (2Tim 3:15). “Writings,” in each passage, refers to the Law of Moses. It won’t do, however, to just say that the Old Testament is a document, and the New Testament is something else. The New Testament is equally written in “letters”; it is no less a “writing.” Paul spoke of the “large letters” [grammata] with which “I write” (Gal 6:11). As to “revelation” given Paul of the “dispensation of that grace of God,” he said, “I wrote before in few words” (Eph 3:2-3).

This etymology of letter for the law lies in the nature of the circumstances. Paul described the Old Testament as the “letter which was a...ministration of death, written, and engraven on stone” (Co 2:17). This image takes the Jewish mind back to that gloriously terrible day when “Jehovah came down upon mount...
Continued on P 14

The Feb. 1993 issue of Christian Chronicle carried a story about the “Abilene Mission Church.” Though said to be planted by the Minter Lane church, Kent Smith, a “specialist in domestic missions at Abilene Christian University,” is said to be “one of the leaders” of the new church. Rex Cox, “graduate student and part-time counselor at ACU,” is active in the leadership and is said to be the “announcer.” The article says, “One of the innovations in the church concerns the use of women. The five-member group song leaders is made up of three men and two women. The teacher of the children’s class system is a woman. Smith believes that in North America in the 20th century for women to read Scripture or help with the singing is “not usurping authority.” At what point do you suppose Smith would that usurping authority begins? Is there something else which should be noted with regard to this new church. The designation of “church of Christ,” or “Christ’s church” is not used. Could it be that these people have been influenced by the apostate member of the church, Max Tipton, who started himself a church, called “Abilene Community Church?”

“People with a Purpose”

In a full-page ad in the 1992 Jubilee publication, ACU says the university is “People with a Purpose.” We sincerely ask, What Purpose? Is it the destruction of the faith of young men and women through the teaching of error? That is what is being done.

At this point I must mention the professor of Preaching and Theology at ACU, Andre Resner. This man has an article in the Nov. 1992 issue of Wineskins, entitled “Christians at Matthew’s House.” I have never read an article by any of my brethren which was more blasphemous than this one. In it, this doctor from Princeton, pictures Mary, the mother of Jesus, as a “scientist, believe creation is the result of a non-intelligent cause. But “science” is supposed to mean knowledge. Where is the evidence, knowledge, that the things which are, are the result of non-intelligence? Even the scientist who doesn’t believe in God, is evidence of an intelligent designer, who gave man the ability to believe or disbelieve.

Dr. Royce Money’s ACU 1993 Lectureship Sermon

The sermon, “On This Rock I Will Build My Church,” contains 14 points. Under the first point he says, “We must stop being influenced by radical voices on either side.” He avers that ACU “…stands where it has always stood – squarely in the broad middle of our movement to restore New Testament Christianity.” In all fairness, if one is not able to believe that outrageous statement, then anything said in the remaining 13 points will certainly be accepted. How could brother Money make such a statement when men like Rubel Shelly, Jim Woodruff, Max Lucado, Mike Cope, Carroll Osburn, Marvin Phillips, and Randy Mayeux are speakers of the campus of ACU? One wonders about his conscience — is it “soured?” His second point, “We must realize that unity does not mean uniformity of belief,” is followed by the statement, “It never has, it never will.” It is clear when the sermon is considered in its completeness that brother Royce Money holds to the “unity in diversity” doctrine. This is further confirmed by the following: At the close of Steve Flatt’s lecture on “Leadership” during the 1992 ACU Lectureship, Dr. Royce Money, the President of ACU, said: “I want to encourage you toward unity in the body of Christ. The last and longest prayer of Jesus before he went to the cross haunts me. Surely the unity cannot come out of uniformity. We have tried that. It will have to come out of diversity, and out of other virtues.” From “An Open Letter to Abilene Christian University, by Thomas Warren and Roy Deaver.

Point 10 says, “We must realize that the enemy is Satan and not each other.” Satan is the supporter of evil, there is no doubt.

Marvin L. Weir... Those who deny. If the design is not intelligent, then it must be accepted as non-intelligent. It amounts to taking the position that: 1) All the things which exist, the creation with all its complex and intelligent design are the result of a higher power, a Designer, or 2) all things that exist are the result of a non-intelligent cause. Little wonder the Spirit says, “The fool hath said in his heart, There is not God” (Ps 14:1).

In most newspapers that advertise the worship services of churches in that community you will these words of encouragement: “Attend The Church Of Your Choice.” These words please most people. It is the “democratic” thing to do. The majority of people believe such a statement brings glory and honor to Christ. But does it? This is the question for us to consider as we turn to the only book that can give us a truthful answer – The Bible.

Long before the birth of Christ it was prophesied that “in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be let to another people: but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44).

If one is truly interested in the salvation of his soul purchased with man’s money? Would the Lord attend a church of which a man or group of men serve as its head or the one of which He is its head? Do you believe that Jesus Christ would attend a church governed by the creeds and votes of men that continually change or the church that is governed by His Word which has long been settled in heaven (Ps. 119:99)? Does or does not the Lord’s choice in a church matter? Which church would He choose to attend? Would Christ choose the church that wears his name and this gives Him the honor and glory rightly His, or would He choose some church wearing the man-made name that honors a human being? These are questions that cannot be ignored and they deserve an answer.

Most people today choose a “church” for the wrong reason. Some choose a particular church because of its beautiful architecture. We are not commanded to worship the building this is not a valid reason. Others choose a “church” solely because of what it can offer their children. They have in mind fun and games, pizza parties, ski trips, camping trips, volleyball, softball, and an appealing chauffeur (oops, youth minister) to shuttle the young folks to and from their entertainment appointments. The Lord’s church is not in the entertainment and recreation business. Parents should be the “youth directors” and they are the ones responsible for all recreation and entertainment engaged in by the young people. Some choose a “church” because of its size if large numbers are to be equated with spiritual success. The truth is that only a few were saved in the ark (I Pet. 3:20) and a few, not many, will be in heaven (Mk. 7:13-14).

If one is truly interested in the salvation of his soul does it not make sense to choose to attend the Lord’s church? One distinguishing...
THE DISCUSSION OF OUR SCHOOLS WILL CONTINUE

I don’t know of a single one of our schools which has-been characterized by a liberal course during the past several years, including Harding, that has shown any noticeable improvement. Quite to the contrary, the liberalism has only worsened. Why should brethren continue to hold on to and support a school where there is virtually no evidence that it will change? But as we have seen from the past, some will continue to support their favorite school regardless of the course it takes.

When I began this article, “Will Our Schools Be Our Downfall?” I did not anticipate that it would be necessary to have “Part 3.” Though I had not intended to discuss all our schools, I did plan to discuss some of what we have not considered. “Part 3” will include: Freed-Hardeman University, David Lipscomb University, Faulkner University, Michigan Christian University, IBC, with some general discussion of preacher training schools.

Some of the material used in this part of the article is reproduced from an article by me in Banner of Truth more than three years ago, entitled, “Cause for Concern — Our Schools.” The material is still timely and has not been read by more than two thousand of our present readers. The dangerous influence upon congregations by our schools has not diminished during the past three years, it has increased.

UPDATE NOTE: Due to the lack of space, I have not included an update with regard to Harding. There is much that could be said, but if anything has occurred which indicates any turning back from the course of liberalism I’m not aware of it. But how good it would be if we could say “Our Schools” are turning back to get on the right track. This could happen if those who support the schools demanded it and withheld their financial support until a change was evident. But at this point, I see no evidence that this is likely to happen.

ID — Intelligent Design

In increasing circles of today, including a number of judges, anything which even hints at the existence of God is OUT. That which in virtually any way opposes the existence of God is IN. Fifty years ago such a time as this almost never crossed my mind. This was also true of the people I knew.

A matter which has been in the news in recent times is the discussion of what has been coined “Intelligent Design,” or “ID.” In an article in the Murray Ledger & Times, Dec 20, 2005, entitled “School Awaits ‘Intelligent Design’ Ruling,” a forthcoming decision by U.S. District Judge John E. Jones III is discussed. That ruling by the above judge has now been made.

What is Intelligent Design? The following definition is given in the article: “Intelligent design is the theory that life on Earth was produced by an unidentified intelligent cause.” This is what the Dover Area School Board, in Pennsylvania, required its biology curriculum to include. A number of school boards in other places have been considering the same thing. The above view does not mention God. It only states that life was produced by an “intelligent cause.” It is hard to imagine any normal person opposing this explanation of life. Of course those who truly believe in God know, based on mountains of credible evidence, the intelligent cause is God.

Of those eight families which brought a suit against the school board to have Intelligent Design removed from the curriculum, it is said: “The plaintiffs argued that intelligent design amounts to a secular repackage- ing of creationism, which the courts have already ruled cannot be taught in public schools.” That there is a move in our country to completely secularize our society is an inescapable conclusion, if reality is to be recognized.

The Federal Judge did rule against Intelligent Design being taught in the public school. No doubt but that this was a great disappointment to those who thought Intelligent Design might escape the bias of judges who do not believe in God.

To my knowledge, there is not anyone who would deny that there is “design” in the creation. It is hard to imagine anyone who would deny that this design involves the greatest of intelligence. But there are which take place at ACU. There are also a number of dangerous statements as well. We do not have space to cover them.

Dr. James Dobson to Speak at ACU

The following excerpts are from an article in the Abilene Reporter-News, Oct. 3, 1995.

Admission to the 7:30 P.M. meeting in Abilene Christian University’s Moody Coliseum will be free; however, tickets must be obtained in advance to aid in crowd control….

ACU will award Dobson and honorary doctor of humanities degree before his speech….

“In our lifetime no one in Christian circles has had a greater influence for the good of families as James Dobson,” said Dr. Royce Money, ACU President. “He is an outstanding educator, author and psychologist. It is out of gratitude for his great influence that we will honor him.”

It should be noted that Dr. Dobson is included in the “Christian circles” of which brother Money speaks. It is my understanding that James Dobson has never been a New Testament Christian, but rather a member of the Nazarene Church. Yet, brother Money claims him to be a part of those seeking to be the church which belongs to Christ.”

UPDATE NOTE: Nov., 2005: Several things have transpired at Abilene since this was first written more than nine years ago. We begin by noting some things written by Chuck Pearson of events when he was a student at ACU. The following excerpts are from The Pan of Truth, which brother Pearson edited.

Dr. Royce Money, President of ACU.

In the Fall 1997 issue of ACU Today, Dr. Money wrote an article entitled “A Letter To Parents From President Money: What Every Parent Should Know About Christian Education.” In this article, he writes: “ACU was founded in 1876 to serve primarily students affiliated with the churches of Christ… But ACU always has welcomed students of other Christian faiths, as well as some who were not sure if they were believers at all. We have learned to be inclusive without forfeiting our distinctive heritage” (p. 2). What does Dr. Money mean by “other...
Biblical Studies Building at Abilene Christian University.

Another interesting note in the above article was the following: “The youth leaders who planned the weekend event said they met no resistance from parents, who sometimes aren’t so open to new ideas as their children.”

Much more could be said about ACU which evidences the further departures from God’s word.

III. HARDING UNIVERSITY

With regard to spiritual problems, Harding had some quite a number of years ago, which resulted in a teacher firing. Though that was a step in the right direction, the school would be plagued by a number of false teachers in the years ahead who would be allowed to teach their error to young men and women who were students of the school. We have had a son, a daughter and daughter-in-law who received degrees from Harding in the 1970s. There were danger signals appearing then, which would become more pronounced in more recent years.

A school’s convictions can be easily seen by the teachers it employs and the speakers invited to the campus. Therefore, our primary discussion of Harding University will deal primarily with these two groups of individuals.

Teachers of Error Used at Harding

James D. Bales. The late brother Bales did much writing while he was at Harding. Much of his material was excellent, though this cannot be said of everything he wrote and/or taught. He created and propagated a doctrine on the subject of marriage and divorce, which became known as the “Bales Doctrine.” This doctrine caused many problems within the church, and sadly, its influence is still being felt in many places today.

James Woodruff, a teacher at Harding for a number of years, wrote a book which teaches what we might call a form of the Bales Doctrine. Later he published a book, The Church in Transition, which was clearly designed to change the church, doing away with much of its distinctiveness. Woodruff’s book is full of error.

Jerry Jones, some time head of the Bible department at Harding, became involved in the Crossroads Movement while at Harding. He is no longer at Harding.

Teachers of Error on HU Campus

Mike Cope. When Mike was preaching for the College church in Searcy, where many of the people from Harding worshipped, he mentioned in the church bulletin, “...some things which have encouraged me lately.” Listed were: Rubel Shelly’s book, I Just Want To Be A Christian. Monroe Hawley’s book, The Focus of Faith, IMAGE and the Christian Chronicle. He also referred to a letter saying that the NIV had provided edification for many Christian homes.” Those acquainted with these books know what a gross misrepresentation Mike Cope made. In 1968 Mike wrote in the church bulletin: “Diversity is one of the blessings of the College church. ... We hold doctrinal views that represent the whole gamut of brotherhood thinking…. We are ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal.’ With the apparent acceptance of Cope’s liberal leanings that long ago, it is no surprise that Harding would be using him now.

(For Insight ‘92, at Harding, Mike Cope was billed as the featured speaker, giving him the opportunity to influence hundreds of impressionable young people with his liberal philosophy. Just in case anyone has any doubts as to the liberalism of Mike Cope, let him explain the action which transpired the year before when the ungodly publication Wineskins was commenced, with Rubel Shelly, Mike Cope, and Phillip Morrison as editors. The most outrageous and degrading article to appear in that paper of apostasy was an article by Andre Resner, entitled “Christmas at Matthew’s House,” in the November issue. The virgin birth is called in question, as it is implied that Mary gave birth to a child fathered by some man and fooled Joseph with her cover-up story. Mike Cope and the other editors are not without guilt in this scandalous piece of writing. A school which would uphold a preacher who is party to such ungodliness and liberalism, has fallen far short of its founder’s intentions, and is not worthy of support by faithful brethren.)

Jeff Walling. This young man from Mission Viejo, CA has gained great popularity in some circles, including Harding University. Yet his very liberal stance is a matter of fact. Though there is extensive information as to the teaching and practice of Walling, the quotations in the following paragraph will be from brother Goebel Music’s book, Behold the Pattern.

We now go back to Feb. 1987 and a convention of the Ozark Christian College (Christian Church school) at which Jeff Walling participated as a speaker. The far-out group of singers known as Acapella were also participants, and Walling spoke highly of them. In Walling’s speech he spoke of the Christian Church people as “My family” and “brothers,” saying he loved being there. In the course of his speech he also said, “...doing all the right things,...punching all the right buttons,...following the rules,...is a miserable way to live. And, besides, following all the rules is not why you’re going to heaven.” While relegating instrumental music to the area of things which “aren’t really very important” in the Ozark speech, he did later attempt to say that he did not believe it should be used in worship.

He is simply saying that the use of instrumental music in worship is largely a subjective question. If one believes that instrumental music is designed to change the church, doing away with much of its distinctiveness. Woodruff is not now at Harding. Several of us wrote the President to voice our opposition to him; whether this had anything to do with his leaving Harding I do not know. Woodruff’s book is full of error.

Jerry Jones, some time head of the Bible department at Harding, became involved in the Crossroads Movement while at Harding. He is no longer at Harding.

Teachers of Error on HU Campus

Mike Cope. When Mike was preaching for the College church in Searcy, where many of the people from Harding worshipped, he mentioned in the church bulletin, “...some things which have encouraged me lately.” Listed were: Rubel Shelly’s book, I Just Want To Be A Christian. Monroe Hawley’s book, The Focus of Faith, IMAGE and the Christian Chronicle. He also referred to a letter saying that the NIV had provided edification for many Christian homes.” Those acquainted with these books know what a gross misrepresentation Mike Cope made. In 1968 Mike wrote in the church bulletin: “Diversity is one of the blessings of the College church. ... We hold doctrinal views that represent the whole gamut of brotherhood thinking…. We are ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal.’ With the apparent acceptance of Cope’s liberal leanings that long ago, it is no surprise that Harding would be using him now.

(For Insight ‘92, at Harding, Mike Cope was billed as the featured speaker, giving him the opportunity to influence hundreds of impressionable young people with his liberal philosophy. Just in case anyone has any doubts as to the liberalism of Mike Cope, let him explain the action which transpired the year before when the ungodly publication Wineskins was commenced, with Rubel Shelly, Mike Cope, and Phillip Morrison as editors. The most outrageous and degrading article to appear in that paper of apostasy was an article by Andre Resner, entitled “Christmas at Matthew’s House,” in the November issue. The virgin birth is called in question, as it is implied that Mary gave birth to a child fathered by some man and fooled Joseph with her cover-up story. Mike Cope and the other editors are not without guilt in this scandalous piece of writing. A school which would uphold a preacher who is party to such ungodliness and liberalism, has fallen far short of its founder’s intentions, and is not worthy of support by faithful brethren.)

Jeff Walling. This young man from Mission Viejo, CA has gained great popularity in some circles, including Harding University. Yet his very liberal stance is a matter of fact. Though there is extensive information as to the teaching and practice of Walling, the quotations in the following paragraph will be from brother Goebel Music’s book, Behold the Pattern.

We now go back to Feb. 1987 and a convention of the Ozark Christian College (Christian Church school) at which Jeff Walling participated as a speaker. The far-out group of singers known as Acapella were also participants, and Walling spoke highly of them. In Walling’s speech he spoke of the Christian Church people as “My family” and “brothers,” saying he loved being there. In the course of his speech he also said, “...doing all the right things,...punching all the right buttons,...following the rules,...is a miserable way to live. And, besides, following all the rules is not why you’re going to heaven.” While relegating instrumental music to the area of things which “aren’t really very important” in the Ozark speech, he did later attempt to say that he did not believe it should be used in worship.

He is simply saying that the use of instrumental music in worship is largely a subjective question. If one believes that instrumental music is designed to change the church, doing away with much of its distinctiveness. Woodruff is not now at Harding. Several of us wrote the President to voice our opposition to him; whether this had anything to do with his leaving Harding I do not know. Woodruff’s book is full of error.

Jerry Jones, some time head of the Bible department at Harding, became involved in the Crossroads Movement while at Harding. He is no longer at Harding.

Teachers of Error on HU Campus

Mike Cope. When Mike was preaching for the College church in Searcy, where many of the people from Harding worshipped, he mentioned in the church bulletin, “...some things which have encouraged me lately.” Listed were: Rubel Shelly’s book, I Just Want To Be A Christian. Monroe Hawley’s book, The Focus of Faith, IMAGE and the Christian Chronicle. He also referred to a letter saying that the NIV had provided edification for many Christian homes.” Those acquainted with these books know what a gross misrepresentation Mike Cope made. In 1968 Mike wrote in the church bulletin: “Diversity is one of the blessings of the College church. ... We hold doctrinal views that represent the whole gamut of brotherhood thinking…. We are ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal.’ With the apparent acceptance of Cope’s liberal leanings that long ago, it is no surprise that Harding would be using him now.

(For Insight ‘92, at Harding, Mike Cope was billed as the featured speaker, giving him the opportunity to influence hundreds of impressionable young people with his liberal philosophy. Just in case anyone has any doubts as to the liberalism of Mike Cope, let him explain the action which transpired the year before when the ungodly publication Wineskins was commenced, with Rubel Shelly, Mike Cope, and Phillip Morrison as editors. The most outrageous and degrading article to appear in that paper of apostasy was an article by Andre Resner, entitled “Christmas at Matthew’s House,” in the November issue. The virgin birth is called in question, as it is implied that Mary gave birth to a child fathered by some man and fooled Joseph with her cover-up story. Mike Cope and the other editors are not without guilt in this scandalous piece of writing. A school which would uphold a preacher who is party to such ungodliness and liberalism, has fallen far short of its founder’s intentions, and is not worthy of support by faithful brethren.)

Jeff Walling. This young man from Mission Viejo, CA has gained great popularity in some circles, including Harding University. Yet his very liberal stance is a matter of fact. Though there is extensive information as to the teaching and practice of Walling, the quotations in the following paragraph will be from brother Goebel Music’s book, Behold the Pattern.

We now go back to Feb. 1987 and a convention of the Ozark Christian College (Christian Church school) at which Jeff Walling participated as a speaker. The far-out group of singers known as Acapella were also participants, and Walling spoke highly of them. In Walling’s speech he spoke of the Christian Church people as “My family” and “brothers,” saying he loved being there. In the course of his speech he also said, “...doing all the right things,...punching all the right buttons,...following the rules,...is a miserable way to live. And, besides, following all the rules is not why you’re going to heaven.” While relegating instrumental music to the area of things which “aren’t really very important” in the Ozark speech, he did later attempt to say that he did not believe it should be used in worship.

He is simply saying that the use of instrumental music in worship is largely a subjective question. If one believes that instrumental music is designed to change the church, doing away with much of its distinctiveness. Woodruff is not now at Harding. Several of us wrote the President to voice our opposition to him; whether this had anything to do with his leaving Harding I do not know. Woodruff’s book is full of error.

Jerry Jones, some time head of the Bible department at Harding, became involved in the Crossroads Movement while at Harding. He is no longer at Harding.