

Hickory Grove church of Christ
1131 Hickory Grove Rd.
Almo, KY 42020-9332

Return Services Requested

Sunday Services:

Bible Classes

9:00 a.m.

Worship

10:00 a.m.

6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Study

7:00 p.m.

Nonprofit org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Almo, KY
Permit No. 10

Continued from P. 13 —

and well planned is of no value until it is given expression by the “answer of the tongue.”

In a way, this reminds us of Jesus promising his apostles that when they would stand and speak before governors and kings, they would not have to worry about “how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you” (Matt 10:19, 20). The “Spirit” does not speak in anyone today in the way to which Jesus specifically referred; but, there is surely a sense in which we ought to apply this principle. As to content, or *what* we think and say, we can “speak” the “words” which the “Holy Spirit teacheth” (1Co 2:13), those words which are “written” and which we “read” (Eph 3:3,4). As *how* we say what we think, we have the perfect example of Jesus and the divinely approved accounts of the apostles and others.

Ordered and arranged thoughts expressed aptly by the tongue: This is from the Lord; it is a “gift.” When you so often talk; when you say what you think; may you rightly say that it is from the Lord? Is your communication His gift, or does it originate from another source? —AA

According to James, what the *bit* is to controlling the *whole body* of a horse, and what the *rudder* is to a *great ship*, so the *tongue* is to man’s *whole body* (James 3:2-4).

If we can control our tongues, then we can control our entire being. The tongue is where discipline starts.

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK

EDITOR’S EMAIL: wpiggbot@myshadetree.com

ELECTRONIC BOT: *Via David Lemmons’ website*

BOT.LemmonsAid.net

DAVID’S LEMMONSAID E-MAIL:

LemmonsAid-Subscribe@YahooGroups.com

EMAIL: dlemmons@netscape.com



Trusting Feelings – A Sure Way to Destruction

To trust in one’s feelings, rather than God’s Word, is a sure way to be lost in the Day of Judgment. Yet, “feelings” are very much a basis for religious faith and practice in our day, as trust in God’s Word as the only basis of faith wanes.

The word “feel” or “feelings” is found several times in the Scriptures. It is also used in a number of senses, but in the broad sense there are two categories: That which is physical, and that which has to do with the mind. In the physical sense we feel cold or heat, soft or hard, smooth or rough, wet or dry, etc. That which has to do with the mind involves thinking or perceiving. It is in this sense that we are using “feelings” in this discussion.

In this sense it used to mean to think or perceive something. One may feel something is true which is not true, or that something is going to happen that may never happen. Feelings may be based on a dislike for a person or the opposite may be true. One may have a feeling based on truth, or on something other than truth.

In the sense of thinking or believing something, one may be “past feeling,” as Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:19. That is, a person may become insensitive to right and wrong. This would be true of the person who engages in things wrong with-

out any feeling of guilt. Paul speaks of those, “Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron” (1 Tim. 4:2). There are a great many people today who seem to be in that category.

FEELINGS CAN BE DECEIVING

Naaman, “captain of the host of the king of Syria,” was angry when Elisha didn’t come out and strike his hand over the leper and cure it. He said, “Behold, I thought...” (2Ki 5:11). In other words, Naaman “felt” that was the way it would be done. He couldn’t have been more wrong, yet his “feelings” that he was right were intense. It is not uncommon for people to feel a sense of anger when what they “feel like” proves to be wrong.

There is no better example of feelings being deceiving than that of Paul. He said, “I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Which thing I also did in Jerusalem...” (Acts 26:9-11). We know the rest of the story: →

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) 767-0625

Editor

Walter W. Pigg (270) 753-3675

164 Coles Campground Rd., Murray, KY 42071

Assistant Editor:

Alan Adams (850) 937-2460

1653 Pine Lane Dr., Cantonment, 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."

Continued from Page 1

Paul was actually persecuting Christians putting them in prison and consenting to their death. Paul's feelings were sincere, but he wrong.

It is a common thing for people in religion to "feel like" they are doing right, when just as wrong as wrong can be. Take for example the Hindu, as well as other pagan religions. I have seen the Hindus engage in "fire walking" and many other activities. It was very apparent that their "feelings" approved their actions. But God hates idolatry. Their feelings were wrong, even if sincere in the same.

What about the Muslim who blows himself up? Even though he may be "feeling" that he will be rewarded with a lot of virgins, we know he has been deceived. But a stronger belief in feelings could hardly be exemplified than that of blowing one's self to smithereens by a bomb. Someone posed the question as to whether there would be enough virgins to go around, since there are so many suicide bombers. What about the women? Are they expecting male virgins?

We shall note more about feelings in religion later, but for now let me relate an example of a person being misled by "feelings" in a secular sense.

When I was growing up in southern middle Tennessee, a man from a mental institution in Oklahoma was released and returned to our neighborhood. At some time this man had become interested in prospecting for gold. He would go about collecting rocks which had a yellow color. He had his pockets full and also paper bags full. I, and my friends, were having fun with him by asking how much gold some of the rocks contained. He would tell us that if the rocks were crushed and assayed they would have a certain amount of gold. They were worthless.

The mother of my close friend was at home by herself when this man came by her house. He saw some yellowish rocks in a ditch near her house. He told the lady, "Lady, you just don't know how rich you are! Those rocks are just full of gold!" This lady, not knowing the man, "had a feeling" that she was indeed very rich. She said she could just feel the rich streaks up and down her back. The rocks were indeed worthless, but she "felt like" she was rich.

WHEN FEELINGS ARE JUSTIFIED

In not all cases are feelings deceiving. People may feel right because they have a valid reason for doing so. When we abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jno. 9) we have a reason to feel that we are right. We can know that we have the approval of the "Father and the Son" because God's word is reliable. On the other hand, if we abide not in the doctrine of Christ, we don't have God's approval, regardless of how much we may "feel" that we do.

In Acts 8, we have the record of Philip and the Ethiopian. The Ethiopian, reading from Isaiah, was asked by Philip, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" The eunuch desired that Philip would come up and sit with him. Philip began at the scripture the eunuch was reading and "preached unto him Jesus" (v. 35). When they came unto a certain water the eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" (v. 36) When Philip and the eunuch both went down into the water and Philip baptized him, "when they were come up out of the water" (v. 39), "he [eunuch] went on his way rejoicing." Obviously the Ethiopian ↓

Quantifiable Love

Could we personify the word *love*, how must she feel? Either empty or elastic. Unmarried people violate theirs and others' bodies (1Co 6:18) calling it "making love." Married people violate vows in the name of "love." We sing proclaiming "how" we love Jesus...because He first loved me." Suppose though Jesus "loved" us how many profess to "love" him?

In Luke 7:36-50, we have: 1) a forgiven sinner coming to *show* her love for the One who had forgiven her; 2) the cynical thoughts of a man, Simon; and, 3) a parable from Jesus emphasizing love is indeed a measurable and manifested thing. Out of this backdrop, the Lord concludes: "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little" (v 47). Pay attention to "are forgiven." This lady showered the Lord's feet with her tears, washing them with her hair, anointing them with ointment. She did not do all this hoping the Lord would forgive her, rather as act of love because he already had. First, "are forgiven" is from ἀφέωνται, which being perfect tense means: "have been forgiven." Second, the parable is about debts already forgiven and subsequent manifested and measurable love and appreciation.

Simon got the point of the parable. Two guys were in debt to the same creditor: One owed 500 shillings, and the other 50. A shilling was a workman's average daily wage. Neither could pay the debt and the creditor forgave them both. Jesus asked Simon, "Which of them therefore will love him most?" To which, Simon replied, "I suppose, to whom he forgave the most." The clincher is both men "had not wherewith to pay." So it is with the debt called "sin."

"Loved much" and "loveth little": There is some sad irony in these words. *Much* and *little* tell us that love is quantifiable. Would you say that attending worship services is an act of love? Bible classes? VBS? Gospel meetings? How about coming out for door-knocking? Lending a hand in the kitchen? Outside? And so on? These and many more are surely acts of love. When it comes to these acts do you "love much" or "love little"? Can you reach Heaven on little love? Is the love you show commensurate with your sense of the debt Jesus forgave you? Did he forgive you "little"? —AA

Does a Figure Figure?

It would be an overstatement to say that *no figure figures in my devotion to God*. The Spirit commands, "honor Jehovah" (Pro 3:9). *Honor* is from [Hebrew] *kabed*. It's the same word used in: "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ex 20:12). There is undoubtedly a subjective aspect of this; that is, our sense of the *honorableness* of another person is a "felt" thing. *Felt things*, however, are challenging. People frequently only "feel" things, never linking those feelings measurable actions. There is a particular disconnect between how many Christians "feel" about God, and measuring that feeling in any objective way; particularly in a monetary way.

Does a figure figure in our devotion to God? Yes. Inspiration continues: "Honor Jehovah with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase."

Consider the word, "substance." It is from *hon* which has the basic meaning of: enough, or sufficiency. It is the idea of that which is enough or sufficient to sustain us. We each have our "enough"; not perhaps *enough* to please us, but enough to enable us to live pretty comfortable lives. Our "substance," then, figures in how we "honor" God.

The passage goes on to say, "honor Jehovah...with the first-fruits of all thine increase." First-fruits is from *reshit* which means "first, beginning or best." The primary meaning of this word is "head" or "top." In other words: taking the cream off the top; cream of the crop, and so on.

If the words "substance" and "first-fruits" have any meaning at all, we must then conclude that a figure indeed figures in the matter of our honoring God. An integral part of being a Christian is "giving," particularly as it relates to being a member of a local church. This giving 1] is connected to people giving them "selves to the Lord" (2Co 8:5); 2] it is a joint "collection" (1Co 16:1); 3] it is to occur on every "first day of the week," and, 4] is proportionate to how each may "prosper."

Shall we wait until we have spent our substance on other stuff, and then "honor" God with what's left? or, Shall we bring Him the "first-fruits" of our "substance"? Should it be off the top; or off the bottom? Surely a figure does figure in this matter. —AA

Got Corbans in the Closet?

A “corban” (Mk 7: 11) was a way to bypass a duty bound by the Law of Moses. We plenty of *corbans* by which many excuse duties bound by the Law of Christ. We need a good *corban cleaning*.

Those who declaimed the disciples of Jesus eating without first washing, which was not a Divine commandment, were themselves guilty of “laying aside the commandment of God” (vv 5-8). Jesus quoting Isaiah called them “hypocrites” whose religion was in “their lips” not in “their heart” (v 6). They had more concern for their handwashing “tradition of men” than they did for actual commandments of God. It is interesting to note how they *got out of* a commandment.

Jesus chose as an example of their gerrymandering of the Law their tinkering with the fifth commandment: “honour thy father and thy mother” (v 10; cf. Ex 20.12). Honoring your parents is a duty that lives as long as your parents do; it even involves providing and caring for them in later years. By declaring one’s goods and property “corban,” that is a gift or offering vowed and given to God, one could declare himself to “be free” of such filial duty by saying to his “father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me” (v 11). By this *corban*, Jesus charged, “ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother” (v 12). God forbid that we should ever try to *corban away* our obligation of respect, honor and duty toward our parents.

The New Testament forbids “filthy communication of your mouth” (Col 3.8). Some *corbanize* that one by calling their foul language and offcolor comments: jokes, humor. The NT teaches us to “assemble” (Heb 10.25; 1Co 11:20, 33, 34; 14:23). Some *corbanize* that one in a variety of ways: tired, company came, chance for overtime, ballgame. The NT says we are to weekly lay by in store as God has “prospered” (1Co 16.2). Some *corbanize* that one by saying: the NT doesn’t say I have to give a tenth; so I will give way less. The NT teaches the obligation of parents to rear the children they bring into the world, and the respective roles of husbands and wives (cf. Tit 2:4,5; 1Tim 5.8). Some *corbanize* that one saying, “It takes two incomes to get by these days.” I dare say that when it comes to *corbanizing*, some christians could give the Pharisees and scribes a run for their money. —AA

Attire of an Harlot

The Spirit describes an all-too-typical scene in Proverbs chapter seven. It is a scene so common that most anybody can see it happening anytime merely by going to the “window” and looking “through [the] case-ment (lattice)” (v 6). There he is: one of the “simple ones,” “among the youths,” “a young man void of understanding” (v 7). Being a member of the male of the species, it grieves me to admit that sometimes we, young and old, are not bright about some things.

This naïve young man is seen “passing the street near her corner,” and going “the way to her house” (v 8). Keep reading to the end of the chapter and you will find out this young man is *accidentally on purpose* arranging to be where a woman, a temptress, lives. You can guess the rest of the story.

Hanging out in this place, “there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart” (v 10). A “harlot” is a prostitute, a “whorish woman” (6:26). What about this harlot’s “attire”? Something about the way she was dressed made it clear to the young man that he had found who he was apparently looking for. Is it true that the way a woman dresses implies things about her?

How would a “whorish woman” dress? Would she carefully cover her breasts, her belly and her thighs? Would she avoid wearing tiny and tight pieces of material (otherwise called swimsuits) designed to just barely cover her private parts? Well, I think we all know the answer to that.

But wait a minute. If a “whorish woman” would *not* carefully cover her breasts, belly, and thighs; if she would delight in wearing *swimsuits* designed to show herself, then are we supposed to conclude that women who do wear things to show their breasts, bellies, thighs; who do wear *swimsuits* are “whorish”?

But wait another minute. If “whorish” women would dress that way; are we supposed to conclude that women, say, in Wal-Mart who wear “attire” which shows their breasts, bellies, thighs and most everything else are “whorish”? What about women who go to restaurants, funerals; *who even come to church* dressed that way? Are they “whorish”? If you meet a woman “with the attire of an harlot,” what are you supposed to conclude? —AA

felt that he was right because he rejoiced. He had a valid reason to “feel right” Jesus has been preached unto him and he had been baptized as Christ commands in order to be saved (Mk. 16:16). If he had felt like rejoicing without having obeyed the teaching of Christ, he would have been rejoicing in deceit. Many do that very thing, believing they are right when they have not obeyed the teachings of Christ.

The great apostle Paul felt he would be rewarded by Christ. He expressed that when he said, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (I Tim. 1:12). Paul gives a reason why he had that feeling, as he stated in the second letter to Timothy. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (4:8).

When people live as did Paul, they have reason to feel that there is a “crown of righteousness” awaiting them. So it is, that when we live in harmony with God’s will, we have a valid reason to “feel” right with God. This principle is emphasized throughout God’s word.

AMISUNDERSTANDING OF FEELINGS

As we have noted above, there are two categories of “feelings” that we are dealing with, feelings which are physical and feelings having to do with the mind. That is, what we think or believe about something. This misunderstanding of feelings is often demonstrated by those who believe that when the Bible talks about the heart and feelings, that there is some sensation in the physical heart itself.

The word heart is used more than 900 times in the Bible to mean the figurative or spiritual heart, in nearly all those times. A few examples of this is seen in such expressions as: “Imagining heart, rejoicing heart, deceived heart, hard heart, wise heart, foolish heart, sound heart, wicked heart, and many, many others.

The word heart is used in the physical sense in a couple of instances. Joab thrust three darts through the heart of Absalom (2 Sam. 18:14). Jehu smote Jehoram. The arrow went out at his heart (2 Kings 9:24). The word “bowels” is used (Col. 3:12; Phm 1:12, 20) to translate the Greek word for heart.

The reason that references are made to the “heart” or “bowels” is that early on people thought of the heart, or sometimes the bowels, as the seat of emo-

tions. This is because of the physical sensations which occur when we are under intense feelings. But when used in this figurative sense, the “heart,” or “bowels” has to do with our minds, what we feel and think, etc.

ERRONEOUS FEELINGS IN RELIGION

We have noted the deceiving nature of “feelings” in the secular realm. But, in some instances one may have a reason to feel right in the secular realm. But our concern in this discussion is primarily dealing with feelings in the area of religious or spiritual things. This is of much more importance since it deals with the souls of men, and the future state of existence. In some situations we have a right to feel right in the area of spiritual things, but we want to zero in on Erroneous Feelings in Religion, since there are multitudes of millions who feel right but are wrong in God’s sight.

Feelings are often greatly emphasized in religious activities. People feel like shouting and testifying as to what they feel the Lord has done for them. In my earlier yeas of growing up I witnessed many examples of the display of feelings in the “Big Meetings” which usually occurred in the summer, after “crops were laid by.” In testimonies it was rather common to use the term of “feeling light” to describe their feelings, as if they were ready to go on up to heaven.

I must relate this one example, which occurred when I was not yet a teenager. A preacher had come into the community and was quite effective in getting people stirred up religiously speaking. More than one bootlegger “got religion,” and some who had previously had little interest in religion.

One night at the meeting, a person who had not been religious at all before this meeting was testifying. He said words to this effect, “I just feel so light tonight! I feel just like going on up!” Following this man’s “testimony,” an unlearned man who often attended meetings, though he could neither read nor write, got up to testify. The night before the preacher had encouraged everyone to “fast” the following day. Well, the unlearned man, Willis, was in the habit of going to the place where the preacher was eating, though uninvited. Everyone “understood.” He did this because whoever kept the preacher for a meal usually had a better-than-regular meal.

The meaning of “fasting” did not register →

with Willis; so naturally he neither understood nor appreciated why they had not had any supper that evening at the place the preacher was staying. Later at the meeting, Willis got up to testify, and said something like: “Well, I feel light tonight too, and I can tell you the reason why. I ain’t had no supper.” His feelings were based on the physical, but it registered with him mentally. He felt hungry.

In our day emotions, or feelings, have a great part to play in much of the so-called Christian religion. People actually get on an emotional high, based on their “feelings.” When one does God’s will, that one has a right to feel right, but when one “feels right” apart from having done God’s will, that one is dead wrong, and deceived by feelings.

A person may put his hand over his heart and talk about what he “feels” in his heart. What he “feels” in his “heart” is often greater in importance to him than what God’s word says. People have said, “I wouldn’t take what I feel in my heart for a stack of Bibles as high as my head.” Though one who says such a thing may not realize the implication of what he is saying, he is saying in effect that his “feelings” are a more reliable source for pleasing God than God’s own word. Yet, this person may claim to believe God’s word. But how can one really believe God’s word to be true in what it says and at the same time believe the “feelings” are more authoritative? But many are they who do this. This we will endeavor to point out.

When asked why one feels he is saved, the response is quite often, “I just feel that I am.” When asked why they feel they are saved, they often just come back with the statement, “I just feel like I am.” It is generally a vain effort to get a feel/like/I am/saved person to cite the basis of his feeling. Many depart this life in that condition. It is even worse with a person who is nearing death and knows it. So often when you try to press such a person with God’s conditions for salvation asking whether he has obeyed the gospel, he will simply respond, “I just feel like I’m alright.” What a way to go; rather, what a way not to go.

WHY SO MANY ERRONEOUS FEELINGS IN THE REALM OF RELIGION?

Many factors are involved but we will mention only a few. There are reasons why people so persistently and

sincerely proceed on the basis of feelings in their religious lives. These reasons are typically based on the following items, or combinations of several.

Ignorance of the Truth. Since God’s truth is the only basis of true faith in God – Paul says faith comes by the hearing of God’s Word (Rom. 10:17) – when one is ignorant of that truth, there is no way of knowing God’s will for man. In spite of the fact that a great portion of Americans claim to believe the Bible, most know only very little of it. Some religious groups go so far today as to uphold homosexuality, when this sin is so clearly and forcefully condemned in God’s word a number of times. Other sins are also in some instances upheld in the name of religion. But if an honest person knew the Truth, that one could not engage in or uphold that which God so clearly condemns.

Lack of Respect for the Truth. There are those who know the truth, or at least some of it, and they lack respect for it. People will some times say with regard to what the Bible teaches, “I know it says that, but I just don’t believe it.” Their thoughts or feelings take precedence over what Truth says. I’ve often wondered why those who have little or no respect for God’s word even pretend to be religious. I’ve never seen so much lack of respect for God’s word, even among religious people, as I’m seeing in so many instances today.

Lack of Love for the Truth. It is a matter of fact that some people don’t love the truth. This includes some who are within the church. People will some times feel bitter against those who speak the truth. Paul reminds us of this when he asks the Galatian brethren, “Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16). I have, on more than one occasion, had people to feel bitter toward me because of what I said from God’s word. Instead of venting their fury against the Author of the word, they vented it against me as the speaker of the word. Ask any gospel preacher who declares the whole counsel of God, if they have not had the same experience.

The world in general does not love the truth. They love darkness rather than light. Christ said, “...men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). This can happen to those who are Christians when they love evil deeds and don’t want those deeds condemned by God’s word. →

speaking by inspiration says, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid...” (Rom. 6:1-2).

The message for Walling, Christian Universities, and all who are “not of us” (I John 2:19) is simple: “let God be true, but every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4). Neither are faithful members of the Lord’s church in error because “if we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth” (I John 1:6).

—1272 Bonham St., Paris, TX 75460

Editor’s Note: The above is just another one of the many examples which show conclusively that many of our brethren no longer believe in the distinctiveness of the blood-purchase church. If it were only the leaders in this apostasy that were selling their souls it would be most tragic. But brethren, that is only part of the sad story. Think of the multitudes who are now following such apostates. They are forfeiting their souls as well.

It is no less than an abomination for Walling to claim that “God helped him to grow to understand that grace, not perfect doctrine, saves Christians.” God’s grace gave us the gospel of Christ, by which we can be saved. Does the Gospel of Christ involve “doctrine”? Of course it does! It is wickedness at its height to claim that God leads people to believe and practice things which are clearly contradictory to His will, but many, including Walling, do that very thing. Some us know by what we have read what happened within the Lord’s church more than a century ago. The greater portion of the members left the Old Paths and went into apostasy. It is my firm conviction, based on what I have seen happen within the past 50 years that what we are facing now is far more tragic what happened then. The signs I see are all around me and all across the country.

In view of all that is said in the New Testament about departures from the faith, this should come as no surprise to us, though tragic as it is. But no power can overcome us unless we allow it to do so. Our faith can bring us through to victory, if we allow it.

A Gift Enjoyed by Too Few

The Spirit says that “every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights” (Jam 1:17); He also says, “the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord” (Pr 16:1). The heart and the tongue, for good or ill, work in tandem. When people mess up with their tongues, it is sometimes because they, in their hearts, did not first think things through; sometimes it is because they did not express their thoughts well. When the heart conceives, plans, arranges a good thought, plan or idea, and then the tongue expresses it well; now that is a gift from the Lord. It is sadly a gift rarely known and enjoyed by too few.

Preparations (plans, ASV) is from a word, *maarak*, which has the basic idea of “arranging” or “ordering” something. Abraham set in order the firewood for the offering of Isaac (Gen 22:9). Shewbread was arranged in rows on a special table in the tabernacle (Lev 24:8). Soldiers and weapons were arranged for battle (Gen 14:8; Jer 46:3). We should view thinking and talking the same way generals viewed going to battle; we should view them as life and death matters. The “preparations of the heart” is a way of describing the process by which we *should* think about and carefully arrange our thoughts, ideas, and plans. We would all be so much better off if we arranged and tidied up our minds before we speak. That would prevent our saying things that are not true, things that are unreasonable, and things which have no profit to them.

Thinking the right thing, however, is only part of the process. In addition to God’s having given us hearts and minds with which to think, plan and prepare, He has given us tongues by which to express what we think, plan, and prepare. Something well thought out and

—Continued on P. 16

The “We Are All In Error” Aptly Describes Walling’s Followers

Marvin L. Weir

One can depend on *The Christian Chronicle* (a misnomer if there ever was one) to carry as a “top story” every nauseating attack by modernists and liberals upon the Lord’s church. A June 29, 2006 article by Bobby Ross Jr. favorably reports on the “dramatic exchange of Bibles” between churches of Christ and instrumental Christian Churches at the North American Christian Convention (the annual meeting of instrumental Christian churches). One can also depend upon Jeff Walling (an influential full-blown apostate) and our so-called Christian Universities to endorse willful error and then have the audacity to proclaim that God will forgive presumptuous violations of His commandment.

Walling pleads with about 7,000 people to go home and follow his example. He does not tell the audience that his example is in direct opposition to the example of Christ. One cannot be a follower of Walling and a follower of Christ as Walling travels the wide road that fellowships and praises those who spurn God’s word while Christ only traveled the narrow road that honors, respects, and abides in the Word of God (cf. Matt.7:13-14).

Listen now to keynote speaker Jeff Walling’s advice to a large crowd gathered in Louisville, Kentucky:

Are you willing to go home and shape the future of our brotherhood for our children by reaching out because of grace to say, “I love you in the name of Jesus Christ, brother?” ...And if somebody says, ‘Well, he’s a brother in error...that’s why we come every Sunday to say, “God, forgive us.”

The *Chronicle* continues the report in stating:

Almost everyone in the audience — which convention organizers said included as many as 1,000 members of a cappella congregations — stood and accepted the challenge....Thursday night’s session mixed instrumental and a cappella hymns as

praise teams from Richland Hills, Texas and the Southside Christian Church in North Richland Hills, Texas and the Southside Christian Church in Orlando, Fla. performed together.

Keith Lancaster from the group Acappella led a non-instrumental rendition of “Awesome God,” followed by both praise teams singing a modern-day “Rock of Ages,” accompanied by a piano, drums, electric guitars, a trombone, a trumpet and tambourines.

In a message titled “Together in God’s grace,” Walling said he, too, once believe that a cappella singing was the only way to worship. But he said God helped him grow and understand that grace, not perfect doctrine, saves Christians. Members of both fellowships have suffered, he said, from “we’ve got it right” disease and “legalism deep in our veins.”

...Among a cappella church members who participated in the Bible exchange were ministers Marvin Phillips and Jerry Taylor as well as Abilene Christian President Royce Money and Rochester College President Mike Westerfield....Also exchanging Bibles were praise teams from the Richland Hills Church of Christ and the Southside Christian Church.

First, let it be known that instrumental music is only one of numerous errors that exist in the independent Christian churches. Second, I pray that the Word God once again instead of the word of man will “shape the brotherhood for our children.” Third, God’s grace will not reach out to one who is not His child. One who refuses to obey the gospel and is not “walking in the light” (I John 1:7) of God’s truth. Fourth, I detest the liberal ploy of suggesting, “We are all in error...That’s why we come every Sunday to say, ‘God forgive us.’” Can one know truth? Absolutely (John 8:32)! Must one be pleasing to God in worship in spirit and truth? Yes (John 4:24). Can one cling to man-made doctrine while ignoring or rejecting the authority of God and worship acceptably? If so, Jesus and the prophets were liars (Matt. 15:7-9). Sin is transgression of God’s law (I Jno. 3:4). Can one be in error (transgression) in matters of doctrine and expect God’s grace to cover such error? In spite of what Walling says the answer is “No.” Paul, †

When people depart from the faith or become doers of evil deeds, they no longer love the truth, which is essential to salvation. Paul speaks of those that perish, “because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thess. 2:10). Again, Paul speaks of those who “mind earthly things.” “(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, they are the enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3:18). When those who know the truth but do not abide in the truth, instead of having a love for the truth, they have a feeling of animosity toward it to some degree.

Personal Experience. Some base their feelings of being saved on some personal experience. Some have a dream or see something that is somewhat unusual, and take that as a sign God has saved them. Some even go so far as to claim that God has talked to them in a personal and direct way. Some of the Baptist Churches, and perhaps other churches, require a person to have had “an experience” before accepting them. We can understand that a person who believes something like that, which the bible does not teach, would feel like they were saved.

False Teaching. A great many of the churches of today teach that one is saved by “faith only,” that is, all that is necessary is “just believe.” Never mind the fact that the inspired James said, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (Jas. 2:24). Having been taught that “faith only” is all that is necessary to please God, it is easy to understand how that one who has accepted that erroneous teaching would “feel” like he is saved

Time and time again one will hear radio and TV preachers, as well as those in religious services, telling people that they can be saved by just asking Jesus to save them. “Just ask Jesus to save you right where you are, and He will save you,” is heard, as some people, who do not search the scriptures to see if this is so (Acts 17:11), will trust your souls on something which is nowhere taught in God’s word. They “feel like” they are saved, and will not know the truth of the matter until the Day of Judgment, when it will be forever too late.

How often will one hear from religious teachers what is necessary to be saved from sins, as set forth in the Bible? One will not hear from any man-made religion

how to be saved, according to God’s word. It is easy to learn from the New Testament conversions how people were saved from their sins. The process of conversion involves: 1) Faith in God (Heb. 11:6). 2) Repentance of sins (Acts 11:30; Lk. 13:3). 3) Confession of faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10), and 4) Baptism into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

One will hear religious preachers and teachers mention faith in God, repentance, and confession of faith in Christ, but the mention of “baptism” will almost never be heard. Yet, baptism is the last step in conversion, and is found that way in every conversion recorded in the Book of Acts. It is no wonder that people “feel” like they are saved, even though they are not even “in Christ,” only where salvation is found. Consequently, multitudes “feel” they are saved, though they are in a lost condition.

Entertainment and Feelings. The big rage with many religious people today is to be entertained in what may be called a religious service. Entertainment has to do with one’s feelings, and people like that feeling. Religious teaching is even cast in terms of people feeling good about themselves. It seems to me that there is a link between satisfying one’s feelings with entertainment, feeling good about one’s spiritual condition, and “feeling” one is saved.

Other things which are factors in causing people to “feel” like they are saved, when they aren’t, could be mentioned, but we want to move on to another aspect of relying upon feelings, rather than relying upon what God says to us through His word. I’ve noticed over the past fifty years that the Bible is not being emphasized in religion as it used to be. When this occurs, all manner of things which are not in harmony with God’s will is the result.

RELYING ON FEELINGS WITHIN THE LORD’S CHURCH

We criticize religious people for relying upon their “feelings” rather than what God’s word teaches, and this is justified since it is a fact. Yet, when we do the same thing on important matters we are being inconsistent. If we are going to criticize the errors of other religious people, which the New Testament teaches us to do in contending for the faith, let us by all means not be guilty of the same error for which we †

criticize them. Christians who would walk upright must be consistent. Brother Emerson J. Estes, on his popular radio program many years ago, would often ask: “Consistency, where are thou?” There is much more inconsistency among us now than there used to be years ago.

For our consideration, let us examine a few instances of inconsistency amongst us, with regard to relying upon our “feelings” rather than what the Word teaches. We begin by considering:

Lack of Bible Study. Those of us who teach a Bible class, which involves more than the most elementary things, can readily see that many of those we are teaching have studied very little, if any at all. Some protest Bible study which includes “meat.” The desire is often for “milk.” Some even complain if words above a fourth grade level are used. The Bereans were said to be “more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). Some remain spiritual dwarfs because they don’t “desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2).

Where do feelings come in relative to Bible study? People must “feel” that they are alright, or they would study more. Those who feel that way are asking for trouble. They are not prepared for meeting and overcoming the foes one meets in living a Christian life. A sure way to destruction is to feel that it is not needful to study God’s word.

Absence from Assemblies. A failure to participate in church services has been a problem, to some degree, in every congregation with which I have worked over the years. Reference is made by just about every preacher and Bible class teacher that I’ve heard, to Hebrews 10:25. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” Not only are we commanded to assemble, the very fact that God intended for us to grow spiritually, suggests the necessity of service participation. How many faithful and well grounded Christians have you known who were not faithful in attending services.

Where do feelings come in? It could hardly be more evident that that many of our brethren feel alright,

even though they may be very haphazard in participating in church services. Those who prefer to stay at home and watch a ball game must feel they are alright. Yet, they may know that Christ said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...” (Matt. 6:33). What about those who go to visit Uncle George or Aunt Sally? Do they not feel alright? They must not be troubled, or they would not enjoy the visit, or more importantly, they would not have gone visiting in the first place and forsake the assembly. Do you think those who know we are members of the church, and claim to be living a faithful life, think we are inconsistent when we put the Lord second place, or even worse?

Fellowshipping Error. We know that God has a law with regard to fellowship. Paul speaks of that law when he said, “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17). Paul wrote the Ephesians, saying “And have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11). Other passages relate to God’s law on fellowship, but if the above doesn’t suffice, neither would others. There are different areas in which fellowship is affected by feeling.

Take for example, the preacher who participated in a Catholic Revival. He “he felt” that some might be converted by his doing so. But there is the serious question. Can we override and ignore God’s clear law on fellowship because of our “feelings”? This is a common thing among religious folk. They do all sorts of things because they feel like it will work or that it is alright. But we are seeing much more of this thing within the church.

It is no longer a surprise to hear of brethren fellowshipping man-made churches. We could give many examples. Those who do this must feel that it is alright, notwithstanding the fact to do so is to deny the distinctiveness of the “one body” purchased by the blood of Christ.

Another way that God’s law on fellowship is ignored is that of advertising preachers and congregations which are known to be in error. Brethren must feel that this is alright, for if they claim to be a Christian, they wouldn’t do such without authority from the Lord. John tells us that if we bid God speed →

CHIEF PRIESTS AND SCRIBES

Alton W. Fonville

Seeing the title above suggests a class of people who are of the “elite” and most educated people of the time. You would even think of them as the most dedicated to the cause which they represented. They are the very ones who should know and understand what the Old Testament scriptures taught regarding the coming of Christ and his mission. But, there is another side to this sad equation.

Who was responsible for the biggest part of the trouble which Jesus had in teaching while he was on earth? Who was it that tried every trick in the book to entrap our Lord, proving that he was teaching a doctrine which was contrary to the Law of Moses? Who was it that plotted and even paid the 30 pieces of silver to identify Christ so that they could put him on trial and kill him? Who were the “bad guys” who prompted Luke to write, “Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him, for they feared the people”? (Lk. 22:1-2). Or, for Matthew to write, “From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt 16:21)?

Yes, the answer to each of the above is the same—the chief priests and scribes, along with the elders in Israel who were supposed to know the Book. It becomes a little clearer why Jesus kept asking the people so many times, “have ye not read?” Education, with a lot of “letters” after one’s name, does not guarantee faithfulness to God. It didn’t back then and it doesn’t today. Many, who should know better, are the very ones who are loudly boasting their “soundness and faithfulness,” while at the same time, having fellowship with those who are clearly in error—both in the church and in denominations.

Certainly, the chief priests, scribes and elders

could have known and should have acted differently had they not been influenced by other things which came first in their lives. They were looking for a “position” in an earthly kingdom which was not to be. Old Testament scripture had been twisted to their own destruction. And, our priorities are clearly seen today also. Who gets the glory for the work we do means more to us that seeing that the glory goes to God, who deserves it. Our actions speak louder than our words.

Because of ignorance and envy, those “elite leaders in Israel” dragged Jesus to Pilate and after mock worship to him, pleaded for His crucifixion and the release of a known murderer. Abundant evidence was available, but it was being ignored. They went on their way to try to rid the world of this man who was teaching a “new doctrine.” It did not work. God’s will had to be accomplished. Scripture had to be fulfilled, and it was. Even today, much of the world is still looking in vain for promises to be fulfilled, which were made two thousand years ago. The innocent are still being crucified and the guilty are going free for now.

If we would only read and study God’s word and rightly divide it, as we are commanded, we would understand that when Jesus died, it set us free from that Jewish law and its obligations which had to be accomplished annually. Jesus is now our High Priest forever. He went through the veil once for all time, and established his perfect priesthood. We don’t need to look for a new priest today.

— *Continued from page 10*

which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 7:11).

Brethren, in view of the value of your soul (Matt. 16:26), why choose to trust in men’s “lying words”? One who proves and tests what he believes by the Bible (I John 4:1) will heed the warning and “trust not in lying words.”

— 815 SW 42nd St., Paris, TX 75460

Trust Not In Lying Words *Marvin L. Weir*

One can learn from the things that were written in the Old Testament (Rom. 15:4). Some of our brethren today shun Old Testament examples as if they were a plague. I think I know why. The examples and principles from Old Testament incidents are too clear to miss God's point. The lesson learned from Nadab and Abihu is that God will not accept acts of worship He has not authorized (Lev. 10:1-2). True worshippers will seek to please God – not man. Uzzah thought the Ark of the Covenant might fall and took hold of it with his hand (2 Sam. 6:6-7). The lesson learned from Uzzah is that the situation or circumstances do not negate God's commandments. Naaman did not believe dipping in the Jordan River seven times was necessary to cure his leprosy. He thought that his cure would surely come about in a way that he approved, but he was wrong (2 Kings 5:1-14). The people of Noah's day did not believe it was necessary to enter into the ark to be saved. Except for eight people, the entire world was drowned in the universal flood (Gen. 7:23). To side with the majority who refuse to comply with God's will is disastrous.

Jeremiah said to his people, *“Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these”* (Jer. 7:14). These were God's people in God's house, and thus they concluded that all was well with their souls. Not so. They had trusted in *“lying words”* and they were lost.

A true parallel today is members of the Lord's church (God's people) who assemble together (as commanded) on the Lord's Day and then conclude that God is pleased with their worship. The truth is that far too many brethren today are listening to *“lying words”* from the classroom and the pulpit.

Let us learn from Jeremiah that sin that must be repented of and attitudes must be corrected before one can please God. The prophet said to the people, *“For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly executed justice between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave*

to your fathers, from of old even for evermore Behold, ye trust in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods that ye have not known, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered; that ye may do all these abominations? Is this house, which called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah” (Jer. 7:5:11).

First, to please God one's “ways” and “doings” must be “thoroughly” amended. Not many want to change or improve the way they have chosen to live. Brethren want to wallow in worldliness and be told that they are on their way to heaven. There is an abundant supply of those who call themselves “gospel preachers” who will strive to coddle brethren with *“lying words.”* Souls will be lost, but the buildings will be full.

Second, to please God one must understand that some things are always right and some things are always wrong. Justice, not oppressing your fellowman, protecting (instead of murdering) innocent blood, and refraining from serving false gods is **always** good. Lying words, stealing, murder, adultery, and worshipping something other than the true and living God is **always** wrong. What a pity that so many believe “right” to be whatever society chooses it to be. The passage of time or the approval of society will never make a wrong thing right. Brethren, do not be deceived and trust in lying words that cannot profit (Jer. 7:8).

Third, to please God one cannot mix innovations and entertainment in with prayer and the Lord's Supper and then sing that all is well with his soul. Many brethren today are no different than the people of Jeremiah's day. So, many pervert the true gospel by proclaiming another gospel (Gal. 1:6-7) and by incorporating denominational gimmicks into the worship. They then scream long and loud that they *“have been delivered”* by the Lord (cf. Jer. 7:10). Not so.

Fourth, whatever God has not authorized in worship is an abomination (Jer. 7:10). If God were speaking today to faithful gospel preachers as He did the prophets, He would surely say about many congregations, *“Is this house,*

to one in error, we are partakers of “his evil deeds” (2 John 9-11).

Love of Entertainment. Entertainment is the rage in many places today. Yes, among our brethren. People who are crying to be entertained, instead of worshipping God in accordance with His will (Jno. 4:24), must feel it is alright, since they often engage with much gusto. People are looking to their own devices to make them feel good, rather than rejoicing in acceptable service and adoration of the only true God. We have seen the religious people around us go lock, stock and barrel for entertainment, and to our shame some brethren are not far behind.

The Sweep/It/Under/The/Rug Philosophy. I have heard it said by brethren that if we *“Don't mention it; people are not as likely to do it.”* Take for example, the sin of homosexuality which is so common today. Their philosophy is that if we don't mention this sin, people are not as likely to engage in it. This is an example of people “feeling” that their thinking [feeling] is better than abiding by what God's word teaches. There are many areas where people have this tragic feeling. Another manifestation of this philosophy is that despite the fact Scripture demands that we deal with problems in specific ways, many nonetheless prefer the “rug” hoping it will somehow just go away.

Feelings Due to Another's Influence. It is quite often the case that a person will feel a certain way, not because of what he learns from the Bible, but because another person feels that way. In such a case, the individual may refuse to say why he feels a certain way. In a way, this is not being completely honest. But when asked why a person feels a certain way, he may come back with that trite saying, *“I just feel like it.”* This type of feelings can bring about many problems, because people put their trust in the way someone else feels, rather than what the Truth teaches.

Problems Based On Feelings. Some matters are more significant than others. But some major things are done on the basis of feeling. More than once I have known of preachers being fired just on the basis that, *“I feel like we need a change.”* No reasons are given, except, *“I feel like we need a change.”* Other major things are done solely on the basis that brethren “feel like” doing it. In reality, this is simply a cop-

out. The real reasons are not given. This is not actually playing fair or being entirely honest. But such are the ways of people some times.

ASURE WAY TO DESTRUCTION

Trusting in our feelings when our feelings are not based on the Truth is certain to lead to destruction. Due to this great danger, it is needful that we give serious attention to dependence upon our feelings as a basis of our actions. We need to do some serious thinking about the matter. For example, what causes people to think a certain way? We have touched upon some influences, but we need to go a little further. Do we have feelings without any cause? Are our feelings something that we cannot control? Am I responsible for my feelings? Saul, later, Paul, felt that he should persecute the Christians, by putting them into prison, even giving his voice against them when they were put to death (Acts 26:10-11). Paul was dead wrong in his feelings, but he was able, and did, change his feelings to do God's will instead of opposing it. Yes, we do have control over our feelings, and therefore we have a responsibility to have feelings which are in harmony with God's will.

We've only touched the hem of the garment with regard to our inconsistencies relative to trusting in our feelings, when those feelings are at variance with God's will. We've seen the church drifting, and now with a frightening speed. Yet, in spite of this, believe it or not, some still “feel” that everything is alright. Truth makes people free from sin (Jno. 8:32), but feelings never will. Can't we understand that we are going to be judged by the words of Christ? (Jno. 12:48). The church at Laodicea felt good in their material prosperity, but Christ would spew [vomit] them out unless they repented. Those who feel good though not right with God will feel differently on the Day of Judgment, when it will be too late. A sure way to experience eternal destruction is to leave this life, feeling that we are right with God when we aren't right with Him. On the contrary, a sure way to enjoy the blessings of the home of the soul in eternity is to leave this life and face judgment, having felt good because we have lived a life of faithful service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All. —*Editor*

THE “BORING WORSHIP” OF THE CHURCH

Roger Campbell via *The Reminder*

Let’s face it. some members of the church think that the worship in which we engage on the first day of the week is boring. While there are both younger and older members alike that roll their eyes at the thought of the same acts of worship (“the same old stuff”) being repeated week in and week out, it appears that young Christians and their Baby Boomer parents especially struggle with the idea of participating in the identical worship acts time after time.

So much of life in the 21st century is geared to speed, instant satisfaction, fun, and activities that keep us on the go. Fast food restaurants encourage you to buy a specific drink or meal in order to see if you can be “an instant winner.” Candy bars are now sold in the “fun size.” Getting on the internet allows you to quickly watch a music video, send or receive a message by e-mail, check the latest sports news, look up the price of a new pair of shoes, and see what movies are playing your area. and, you can do all this in just a few minutes, with marvelous colors flashing on the screen, accompanied by background music that can keep you rockin’.

Who cannot see that what goes on within a worship assembly is far different from the above scenario? Because scriptural worship does not offer the type of thrills, excitement, eye-catching or ear-catching entertainment that goes on in the world, some disciples of Jesus consider worship about as exciting and attention-retaining as watching pain dry. To them, worship is b-o-r-i-n-g/ *Webster’s 9th New Collegiate Dictionary* defines “bore” or “boring” as “to make weary and restless by being uninteresting.”> That’s it. That is exactly how some members of the Lord’s body look at worship: it makes them weary and restless because it is so uninteresting.

When I hear grumbings about “our worship” being “so boring,” I always wonder “What part of the worship makes it so boring?” Could the culprit be our prayers? Is it really the case that when we pour out our hearts in prayer to our heavenly Father, giving Him thanks and making our requests known to Him (Philippians 4:6), is that what is so boring? Surely not.

Could it be that the fault lies with the Lord’s Supper? When we read Scriptures about the death of Jesus,

then go back to the cross in our minds as we remember His sacrifice for us (I Corinthians 11:24-25), is that really a boring activity? Surely not.

Maybe the culprit is the preaching/study of God’s word. To preach “*the word of reconciliation*” (2 Cor. 5:19), the message that sinners can be reconciled to God through Jesus and have an eternal inheritance awaiting them in heaven (I Pet. 1:3-4), is that really boring? Surely not.

Perhaps the contribution is what is so uninteresting. But, if I understand that the contributed funds will help preach the gospel to lost souls, strengthen the church, and assist those that stand in need (I Cor. 16:1-2), then surely I will look at giving as an act of cheer, not drudgery (2 Co.r 9:7).

If it is not boring to pray, study the word, partake of the Lord’s Supper, or give, then what does that leave? It must be the singing that bores some out of their minds. Yet, when singing spiritual songs, what are we doing? Are we not offering a praise of joy to the Almighty? (Eph. 5:19; James 5:13). How can it be “a drag” to praise the Creator?

Who prescribed the worship of the New Testament church? Does He not know what is best for us? If I am bored by *scriptural worship* of the Almighty, it is not God’s fault. It is also not the fault of the worship leaders, the elders, or preacher. My boredom is not because the worship is lacking something. Hmm. What could it be? If I count scriptural worship as boring, then what needs to be changed is not the acts of worship or the order in which we engage in them, but rather, my attitude.—*4865 Bates Pike, SE, Cleveland, TN 37323*

Are You Moving? With each issue of Banner of Truth we mail about 3,700 to individuals or congregations. Some times we have as many as 30 returned because people have not sent us a change of address. Each piece returned costs us 39 cents. Some times the post office does not return a piece until another one has been mailed. Our readers could help us in this.

Three Things to Think About

1. Cows

2. The Constitution

3. The Ten Commandments

Cows: Is it just me, or does anyone else find it amazing that our government can track a cow born in Canada almost three years ago right to the stall where she sleeps in the state of Washington? And, they tracked her calves to their stalls. But, they are unable to locate 11 million illegals wandering around our country. Maybe, we should give them all a cow. **The Constitution:** They keep talking about drafting a Constitution for Iraq. Why don’t we give them ours? It was written by a lot of really smart guys. It’s worked for over 200 years and we’re not using it much anymore.

The Ten Commandments: The real reason we can’t have the Ten Commandments in a courthouse... You cannot post “Thou Shalt not Lie” in a building full of lawyers, judges, and politicians...it creates a hostile work environment.

We have printed this from *The Informer*, the mail-out of the Powell Grove church of Christ. Their preacher is Lloyd Gale.

We have run the above humorous note, not because we intend for Banner of Truth to be a “Funny Paper.” but rather because there is a lesson in it for us. The Civil Powers in our country have much to do with the body of Christ. In an increasing number of cases our Civil Powers are acting ways to hinder the cause of Christ. They condone and uphold things which are contrary to the principles of Christianity.

Romans 13 clearly teaches that we are to be in submission to the Civil Powers, but the extent of this is limited. When the civil powers ordered the apostles not to teach in the name of Christ (Acts 5), the following response was given: “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (v. 29).

We must not think it is right to do something because “the law allows it,” when the same is condemned by God’s word

.—*Editor*

Israel and Islam

Everyone who is aware of what is happening today (Aug. 10) knows of the raging conflict between Israel and Islamic terrorists. This is the primary topic of discussion on the national news. The Islamic terrorist, which makes no bones about it, that they want Israel destroyed, are called “Hezbollah.” That means “Army of god.” I have used the lower case for “god” because there has never and never shall be a true God that upholds what Islam teaches and practices. Hezbollah is not the only Islamic terrorist organization, but it is the one of the stronger ones, and the one which is now most active in an effort to wipe Israel off the map.

Some times I hear my brethren say things which indicate that they know little about the conflict between Israel and Islam. Before going further let me clearly make one point: I do not believe the Jews are right in their religion, nor that they continue to have some “covenant right” to the land of Palestine. My point has nothing to do with either of these. Let me give an example to prove my point.

Some brethren express strong dislike for Israel, even that Israel should be punished. What does this imply? It implies more than some realize, I think. To suggest that Israel is the culprit in the current conflict is to imply that Islam is preferable to Israel. There is no question but that both Judaism and Islam are not approved by God. But is one worse than the other?

If we know anything to speak of about Islam, we know that they are opposed to all other people. It is not “Radical Islam” that hold this view. All true Muslims are taught to oppose, even kill, those whom they call “unbelievers” or “infidels.” I know this to be a fact because I read it from their so-called holy book, the Koran, of which I have a copy.

The Jews, in no sense of the term, are out to eliminate all other people, as are the Muslims. Israel is now trying to defend itself against the most wicked, yet religious, people on earth. Brethren should put forth some effort to learn the facts about Islam. Islam poses a threat to our own country, and Israel is no threat to our country at all. In fact, Israel is in a sense fighting a war for us. If Israel is destroyed, as the Muslims intend to do, the eyes of Islam will be focused on us, as “infidels” and “unbelievers.”

.—*Editor*