

Banner of Truth

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Morals in America at All-Time Low, as Powerful Forces Go All-Out Completely to Secularize Our Society! (No. 2)

There are three evil brothers: Atheism, Humanism, and Materialism, who are working in concert to completely secularize our country and its society. These brothers are children of the devil, the “father of lies,” and the enemy of God, and of all things which are truly good.

In the August issue of Banner of Truth we discussed the above subject, with emphasis primarily upon: **Morals in America at All-Time Low**. It was realized early on that a fair discussion would certainly include: **Powerful Forces go All-Out to Completely Secularize Our Society**.

The correlation between the present low moral condition in our country and the growing efforts to remove the influence of God from society (to secularize) is so powerful and evident that no one should fail to see the connection. However, to inform and to remind ourselves, we shall be giving attention to this most important fact. It is in order to define the word **secularize** as we shall be using it.

Webster defines “secular” as follows: “1. of or pertaining to worldly things or to things not regarded as sacred: temporal. 2. not relating to or concerned with religion...3. concerned with non-religious subjects.” *Vine’s* defines “world” as: “the present condition of human affairs, in alienation from and opposition to God.” This word is used in this sense in the following references: John 7:7; I Cor. 2:12; Gal. 4:3; 6:14; Col. 2:8; James 1:27; I John 4:4-5; 5:19. To note these references is to see how clearly that the **world** or being **worldly** is condemned in the strongest of terms. A fact that so many seem to have forgotten is that a person cannot be **of the world** and **of God** at the same time. And, it is only of God that one can have any true hope for the world that is yet to come. On the basis of the above definitions and scriptural references we consider an important part of our discussion:

THE SECULARIZING OF OUR SOCIETY DEFINED

We are now seeing more and more efforts to completely divorce ourselves from God and His influence upon society. This is what we mean by “Secularizing.” It is almost on a daily basis that we hear of another effort on the part of some in our society to further banish God’s influence. These efforts are occurring in virtually every area of our society. More and more, more people are primarily if not totally concerned with the “here and now.” What comes hereafter has no meaning with so many. It seems that the philosophy of the Epicureans is being adopted on a much wider scale than we would like to believe. That philosophy was to enjoy the pleasures of sin to the fullest, because there was no existence after death. Are we seeing evidence of this philosophy? Who would deny it?

An editorial in *The Paducah Sun*, Oct. 16, 2003, discusses the case of the Pledge of Allegiance,

which is to come before the Supreme Court. An atheist brought a case before the 9th Circuit Court, as to whether or not it was unconstitutional for school children to use the term “one nation under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco decided the phrase “under God” is a violation of the First Amendment. *The Paducah Sun* editorial said it so well in the following:

“A small group of activists is determined to eradicate every trace of religion from public life.

These militant secularists cannot prevail in the voting booth, but they’ve been surprisingly successful in using the courts to impose their minority view of the First Amendment.”

Not only are the atheists finding encouragement in our courts, they are also finding encouragement in a portion of the political arena which goes all out to prevent the appointment of judges who stand for the values upon which our nation was founded.

Perhaps, a good definition (in a nutshell) of secularizing a society would be, “Putting God and His influence out of the picture completely, in the lives we are now living.”

GODLY INFLUENCE, AS I SAW IT MANY YEARS AGO

Those who have seen only thirty or forty years of life, or even less, are unable to see the creeping secularism which has come to be in our society, as those of us who lived before World War II have been able to see it. It must appear, especially to young adults, that things now are not a great deal different than they were forty years or more ago. The change toward a secular society has not come about overnight. But in the past two or three decades the change has accelerated at a more rapid pace. It is a matter of fact that our society is now on a **pleasure ride**, where spiritual things are being pushed out and worldly things are being brought in. A great many love to have it so as they are not inhibited by God’s influence. Unlike Moses, they want to “enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season” (Heb. 11:25). The ultimate price to pay is obviously not considered.

We trust that by pointing out what our society used to be, as I personally experienced it, some might be encouraged to think more seriously with regard to our present lives and what the future holds. It should be understood that for people who have never seen a different society, it is more difficult for them to change to something which they have never been taught is better. People often enjoy the pleasures of sin and are reluctant to adopt a life style which opposes a life of sin.

In mission efforts in India and other places, where people are so poor, I came to realize that the people didn’t miss that which they had never had. In a way it is like that with people who have never seen a society in which God’s influence was a major factor in the lives of people. It is no easy task today to convince younger people that our society could be so much better than it is, because they’ve not seen anything different. They have not been taught the true meaning of life and true values. Temporal things are of the utmost value. This is what happens when God’s influence is banished by a secularized society. From more than a year in Ukraine, where atheism had reigned for the whole life of most people, it was so evident that when God is taken out of the picture, moral standards are scuttled.

My Own Experience. Rural life in southern, Middle Tennessee was quite typical of many areas of the south, when I was born in 1925. I was the fifth child of eight children born to my parents, who lived to see their 70th wedding anniversary. We lived on a small two-horse farm, the tillable land of which had been cleared from the woods by my father.

My family was not religious, in the sense that they belonged to any church or religion. It would be wrong, however, to say that my family had no belief in God. As was typical of many, they practiced no religion but their lives were clearly influenced by belief in God as the Creator. This was evidenced in many ways in the lives of many people.

My father was an honest man, respecting the rights of others. He would not under any circumstance lie or steal. He was law-abiding. Many are times that I can remember when my father would say with regard to certain things which were not right, "The Good Book says. . ." No one could honestly deny that he had a measure of faith in God, even though he never became a Christian. This could have been said of so many people that I knew.

I can well remember the Great Depression of the 1930s. Times were very hard. In more recent times, many have contended that poverty is largely responsible for the great increase in crime which has occurred during the past several years. If poverty is to be blamed, how can it be explained that in the years of that Great Depression crime was very low? If poverty is responsible for crime, not many of us would have escaped crime during those hard years.

In those years before World War II, just about every person had a religious funeral. This could only have been based on the general belief that God does exist and there is a hereafter. On many of the tombstones in the cemeteries there was some mention of God, Christ, heaven, or some other religious expression. I cannot remember seeing a tombstone of an atheist in our country, though I may have unknowingly done so. I cannot imagine any sensible epitaph on an atheist's tombstone, unless put there by someone who believes in God. I cannot imagine what epitaph an ACLU member or some of our judges would request for their tombstone. I can think of some appropriate ones.

In those years, now long ago to many, religion was not blamed for problems in society. To the contrary, the religious people generally took belief in God in a serious way, and that belief affected the way they lived. It is true that there was much error in the religion, in that God's word was not always followed correctly, but belief in God, in whatever measure, was a major factor in the lives of those people and such was evidenced by action.

I'm thankful for my own experience with reference to belief in God. It has helped me to see what could be in our time, if people only wanted it to be. I saw those times when the courts were almost never "anti God." I saw a time when most politicians subscribed to a moral standard which had evidence of God's influence. No serious and thinking politician would have had a single plank in his political platform which would have indicated in any degree an anti God stance. Had I been born during the last couple of decades my faith in God could have been shaky, or it could have been none. I could have not been a Christian at all. This is due to the fact that the emphasis on God was waned greatly during this time.

THE INFLUENCE OF SECULARISM AS I HAVE SEEN IT IN MORE RECENT YEARS

It appears to me that there is a strong correlation between material prosperity and lack of belief in God and spiritual things. A case in point in God's word is the letter to the Laodiceans (Rev. 3: 14-22). Christ said to the Laodiceans, "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (v. 17). It was clear that in the minds of those people they had need of "nothing," including the Lord. The Lord's rejection of them was severe and to the point. He would "spue [vomit]" them out of His mouth (v. 15). The Lord's will and word have not changed!

From time spent in various countries, some of them very poor and some not so poor, it has become evident to me that where there is greater material prosperity there is less interest in spiritual things. When people's needs and desires are met by material things, there is little need seen for the spiritual.

Since World War II, our country has reached a state of material prosperity that most of us older ones would not have believed possible. Today, nearly everybody is better off financially than they have ever been. Along with this has come the greatest ever trust in secular things. If we, like the Laodieceans, have every thing we need because of our material things, why should we see a need

for God? But our Lord must see us as He saw them: “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” The things we have, now have us.

A Giant Step Away from God. On January 22, 1973 the U.S. Supreme court voted 7-2 in favor of abortion. Even at that date, rebellion against God’s will had grown to the point that of our so-called Christian nation a majority favored the action. Since that infamous date and action of the court, tens of millions of God’s innocent, unwanted, human creatures have been murdered in cold blood.

Children, human offspring, are creatures of God, made in His image. The wanton murder of one of these is the murder of one made in the image of God. How could anyone who claims to believe in God, even in a very small way, favor the murder of children by abortion? The actions of such people speak louder than their words, if they profess faith in God.

A fact which should not be overlooked is that a great many of our politicians have a strong plank in their political platform which is approval of abortion. People like that surely must have “forgotten God” when they use such an ungodly action for their political advantage. How sad it is when people have no more respect for God than to support such people politically. When the secular prevails, what God says makes no difference.

The Prohibition of School Prayer. When prayer in public schools was disallowed by the U.S. Supreme Court in the early 1960s, many saw this as a move against religion. Some concluded that this was evidence of a decline in morality. Their reasoning was not without some evidence. It is a matter of fact that moral standards were declining at that time, and who can deny that the disallowing of prayer was a move against the practice of religion. If prayer had not proved to be a danger in the years past, why so now? I can even remember when the Bible was read in the schools I attended. What harm did it do? None!

Few people that I know would advocate the teaching of a religion by the state, or by the public schools. But to outlaw all religious influence while permitting all manner of anti God influence makes no sense. Why allow considerable religious influence in a variety of governmental activities and outlaw it in public schools?

Some people are want to blame the disallowance of school prayer for much of the sordid moral condition which exists today, but it is fair to place some blame upon those of us who did little or nothing to oppose this encouragement of secularism. A state of indifference has become more intense with the passing of time, and indifference allows evil a free course. Silence often gives consent.

Since we are discussing prayer, it is well to note the timely comments made by the well-known Syndicated Columnist, Cal Thomas:

In recent years, the federal courts — egged on by groups like ACLU and Americans for the Separation of Church and State — have regularly targeted religious expression for removal from public life. Two of the more outrageous rulings have come from the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, which found the “under God” clause in the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional, and the 4th Circuit Court, which ordered an end to a 20-second ecumenical dinner blessing that has been recited at Virginia Military Institute throughout its 162-year history.

The building blocks of our nation and culture are being dismantled by judges who are unaccountable to “we the people.” Can a nation expect the kind of moral purpose it demands of its soldiers if they are sent into battle to defend the stock market or earthly philosophies?

As we see God’s influence ebbing away and being replaced by secularism, how often do we ask ourselves: “What am I doing to change the situation?”

If emphasis upon belief in God is, as some think, a detriment to our country, how is it that our nation has come this far, with the emphasis upon God in governmental functions as has been the case so long? Our currency says “In God We Trust.” Congress has a Chaplin and each session be-

gins with a prayer. Our presidents, in taking their oath of office, include the words, "So help me God." The Supreme Court even begins its sessions with "God save the United States and this honorable court." The Supreme Court building has a frieze including the depiction of Moses as the law-giver. And, would you believe it? Moses is holding tablets with the Ten Commandments!

The Declaration of Independence, 1776, used the word "God" or "Creator" four different times. If that is so evil now, why has it not been evil during a couple of centuries before now?

We should not be led to believe that just because God is mentioned in the above areas that these things will never be challenged by those who don't believe in God. Rumbblings are already being heard. In a brochure I received, "Printed and distributed by Faith and Action," Washington, D.C., it is said that Michael Newdow, the atheist who brought the case before the 9th Circuit Court to have the words "Under God" removed from our Pledge of Allegiance, has filed a suit to have official Chaplains removed from our Congress. Chaplains have been in Congress for well over 200 years. What harm have they done? What would be the reason for banishing them now, unless it be to strike another blow against God? The forces of secularism will keep eating away at God and His influence. The favors they have gained from our courts and some politicians will embolden them to continue their evil pursuits.

The Increased Prevalence of Profanity. This is just one more example of veering toward secularism by our society. The apostle Paul said, "But shun **profane** and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness" (2 Tim. 2:16). *Vine's* says of the word "profane" (Greek **be-belos**), from which we get "profanity": "is that which lacks all relationship or affinity to God." *Webster* says of "profane": "1. showing irreverence toward God or sacred things; irreligious; blasphemous. 2. not devoted to holy purposes; secular (opposed to *sacred*)." The above would certainly include "taking God's name in vain," as well as other things.

The movie, "Gone With The Wind," which appeared in 1939, contained the three-letter word d--. There was considerable criticism of the use of that word in such a public way. Today, that word is much too mild for the lips of a great many people. Why the difference? Is it not that respect for God and sacred things has diminished drastically, and the acceptance of profane things has increased? Who can consistently disagree with this conclusion?

In a great many areas of communication where words are used, profanity is used extensively. Space will not allow us to do an extensive study, but we shall give a few of the many examples available.

Movies. Just how far would a movie get today, which does not employ a great deal of vulgarities and profanities. One report that I noted said that NBC, ABC, and CBS have planned to regain some of their audiences by using more filthy and dirty language in their programs. That tells something about what appeals to much of our current society. Some of the more filthy and profane movies are among the greatest money-makers. Very few are the movies of today which are fit for people of high moral standards to view.

Television. There is much in common with TV and movies, relative to the profanities often used. Just about anything, regardless of how profane and ungodly, can be seen on TV. It is maintained that just about anything anyone wants to do or say in a public way, is made permissible by the First Amendment. Why has this not been so in the many years gone by? Has the Constitution changed, or has there been a change in respect for God?

The Printed Page. There is just about unlimited profanity to be seen in magazines, books, and other printed matters. Some of the trash which is now freely available for public consumption, would have in times I remember, been available only in a back alley or some other shady place. Does this represent progress? If so, by whose warped minds? It could only be on the part of those who have disrespect for God, and the influence for good that He has been.

Video Stores. I have not been in one looking, but I understand that there is available that which

appeals to all sorts of minds. Be they those who feast on profanity and complete ungodliness, or are on the way to becoming such. Pornography which at one time would have been illegal is now readily available legally.

The Internet. Things which can be a great blessing can also be a great curse. There has been much discussion on what is available on the net, but there has not been much action. As is the case in so many instances now, when issues arise having to do with that which involves the standards based upon the reality of God and His standards, the secular often comes out more victorious.

In Everyday Speech. In most public places where speech takes place, almost all manner of profanities, among various ages, may be heard. The time was that much of what is heard today would not have been allowed. The general attitude now is that of indifference, which only encourages profanity.

Have you ever stopped to think that it is now permissible to speak of God in the most blasphemous way publicly, yet we are being more and more limited as to where we can speak of God with the reverence and respect which is due Him? Is this not strong evidence that we are opting for a purely secular society, where God's influence matters not?

OPPOSITION TO GOD IN RELIGION. It used to be that by far the greater portion of religion in our country professed a belief in the one true God, whose influence had so much to do with the building of our nation. In more recent years there has been a great influx of heathen religions into our country. Those, we realize, do not claim to believe in the one True God. But now, it is more and more common for religions which claim to believe in God to give evidence by their beliefs and actions that their belief in the True God is very weak, if not dead.

When people, who claim to be Christians, believe, practice, and teach that which is clearly and completely in opposition to God's word, their faith in God is lacking. One of the clearest examples of this is the upholding of homosexuality by so-called Christian religions. We shall have more to say about this particular subject later.

Within the past few decades there has been a serious watering down of belief in God in most of the denominations. In religious circles it is now not uncommon for those who take a more conservative view of God and His word to be criticized for their stance. Rank liberalism is now holding sway more than ever. Liberalism is seen in the failure to take God at his word.

A Sad Day In Spiritual Israel. It is indeed a sad day in Spiritual Israel, that liberalism is taking a heavy toll within the body of Christ. We are not saying that a great many within the church are **completely** rejecting God. We are saying, however, that when God's clear word is rejected, **God is being rejected**. There are several areas where the rejection of God's word is as evident as could be. To name a few: 1. When there is an affinity for man-made churches, when they are fellowshiped and encouraged, God has been rejected. 2. When people find more than one reason for divorce and remarriage, God's word has been rejected, as has its Author. 3. When brethren make claims for the direct operation of the Holy Spirit, they do so without God's authority. 4. When worship to God is corrupted by man-authorized activities, such as: singing groups, unauthorized participation by women, swaying and clapping, drama teams, "praise teams," and even instrumental music, men are opposing God in order please men. True worship is not entertainment!

One of the very prime examples of rejecting God's word is seen in the stance of F. LaGard Smith, teacher at David Lipscomb. He hopes and believes that some may even be saved without obeying God in baptism. He also doesn't believe in everlasting punishment, as set forth in God's word. Think of the severe implication! If God will go contrary to His own word on baptism, or everlasting punishment, then why wouldn't He reject His own word on all manner of things? I trust that God will be true to His word, not that He will ignore it. Otherwise, if we live a faithful Christian life, we could not be sure that there is a heaven, a home of the soul, awaiting us when we stand before our Lord in judgment.

Another example within the church of rejecting God's word is that of Max Lucado, who says that baptism comes after salvation. This is a flat denial of what Christ said in Mark 16:15, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Lucado has also taught that people can be saved, just praying "the sinners prayer." The "Church of Christ" is being removed from the Oak Hill building in San Antonio, Texas where Lucado preaches. Lucado says that "Church of Christ" is a "barrier" to some. Lucado also says that instrumental music will be used at the Oak Hills congregation soon. How much faith in God can a person like this have? Not much!

The "Religious Right" blamed. That which is referred to as "The Religious Right," and some times "The Radical Religious Right," has been blamed for some of the problems we have seen in society. Other than Hillary Clinton, who blamed her husband's ungodly actions on the Religious Right, others have made critical remarks concerning those of a serious religious persuasion. I would be the first to admit that many things in religion are not in harmony with the teaching of God's word. There are those who are out to get rich, those who teach things which are opposed to God's will, etc. But these religious people, for the most part, have a standard of morality, and do believe that there is a true God. It seems to me that the main basis of the unjust criticism heaped against them, especially by people in political circles, is that they oppose much of the ungodliness which is so prevalent in our society now.

Emphasis Upon the Here and Now. This is the main emphasis of what is known as, "The Social Gospel." This movement came to be almost a hundred years ago, but it has proliferated until elements of it can be seen in the greater part of what is known as the Christian Religion. The prevailing emphasis in God's word is upon preparation in this life for that which is yet to come, in the world that is to come. The Social Gospel puts most emphasis upon what happens here in this life, and how the wants and desires of people may be fulfilled, rather than making preparation for the hereafter. True belief in God looks to that which is heavenly based rather than that which is earthly based, after the minds of men.

State Motto Unconstitutional. One report says the Ohio State Motto, "With God all things are possible," was ruled unconstitutional because it amounts to government endorsement of Christianity.

The Ten Commandments. A prominent news story of recent times was the order by federal U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson to have the stone depiction of the Ten Commandments removed from the rotunda of Alabama Justice Building. Alabama Chief Justice Roy More challenged the order but the five thousand stone was removed. When will the depiction of Moses and the Ten Commandments be removed from the U.S. Supreme Court building? Soon, if some courts and people could have their way. Would a message extolling humanism, secularism, and atheism have been treated in the same way? If so, why? That message would not have been upholding God. The point is, God is **out** and just about anything else is **in**.

It's hard to understand as to why our courts have become so anti God. Are they afraid to stand for what our courts have stood for, for more than two centuries? Are they trying to appease the false religions of the world? Are they ashamed to stand for their convictions, or do they have any convictions? Whatever it is, things are sure changing from support of belief in God to disapproval of belief in the True God. If people don't believe in God, they believe in some false god, or in some form of secularism if they believe anything.

A Postage Stamp. The "Faith and Action" organization submitted a "Moses and the Ten Commandments" stamp for approval by the Post Office. The request was denied on the basis that it had a "religious theme." However, the U.S. Post Office has commissioned stamps celebrating the Muslim holiday of Ramadan and the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. Is this a double standard, or what? Is not Islam a "religious theme"? Of course it is, but the difference is that its religion is not based on the true God who is revealed in the Bible.

The Approval of Homosexuality. Although we have not by any means exhausted the evidence of opposition to God and approval of the secular, we are closing this section of our discussion by considering The Approval of Homosexuality by a growing number of people, even by those who claim to be Christians and serving God.

It's hard to think of anything more blatantly offensive to God, than to try to make His own words uphold that which He so strongly opposes, or to contend that God is leading people in some other way to do that which He opposes. Homosexuality is a timely example of that. Pro-homosexual amounts to anti God. How could it be otherwise?

First, let us briefly consider God's condemnation of the sin of homosexuality. Under Moses' Law, the penalty for homosexuality was **death** (Lev. 20:13). In the New Testament we find the sin of homosexuality strongly condemned in no uncertain terms. In Romans 1:18-32 the condemnation is set forth. In verse 32 Paul say, "they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." The sin is also condemned in I Cor. 6:9. Anyone who wants to learn what God's word teaches on this sinful subject can easily find that teaching if he desires.

Let us not forget to consider how God dealt with the homosexual people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and how that example is used many times to show how God deals with wickedness in general.

That more evidence should be forthcoming to show that God condemns the sin of homosexuality would be a joke, if it were not so serious. Surely, no honest person, with any understanding at all, would deny all the available evidence on the subject.

The above being the case, let us consider just how far some are going to find approval for this sin. We shall consider the case of the U.S. Episcopal Church in the confirming of "Rev. V. Gene Robinson as the bishop of New Hampshire." The controversy that has arisen within the Episcopal Church is due to the fact that Robinson is an admitted homosexual, having left his wife and two children to take up with a man for 13 years. Holy? Godly? Hardly!

This has been vigorously contested by the more conservative members of the Episcopal Church, but to some it must be another step of progress. A decade ago the Episcopal Church allowed women, gays and lesbians to serves as priests. If they would disregard God's word in this, why would they hesitate to have a homosexual bishop? Why would they hesitate to have anything the people want? Columnist Cal Thomas made this very sensible observation:

"If God is not God and if man says God didn't say what he has said, then what standard is to be used to judge anything? It is more than a slippery slope. It is slippery theology with potential consequences that are eternal. Who gets to decide, God or man? If man, then man becomes God and God is diminished, at least in man's eyes."

In an article by George Will, of Washington Post Writers Group, "Episcopal Church in turmoil," Will points out some things said by "Rt. Rev. Gethin B. Hughes," Episcopal bishop of San Diego. Hughes does not believe it is wrong to be homosexual. Hughes makes a statement with strong and serious implications for those who believe in God. Hughes said, "Maybe,"... "God is leading us to a new understanding that is more compassionate. I am open to that." A good question is: "Is God now leading people to a 'new understanding' which is diametrically opposed to what God has provided for man in His written word"? If this is the case, what good is God's word as a guide in religion?

Robinson, the homosexual adulterer, bishop elect of New Hampshire, has stated repeatedly that he will not back down in taking the post. Relative to this Robinson said, "I do have this sense I'm to go forward, and I do feel that's coming from God and not my own ego. But I don't know." Robinson, now 56, should have learned that it is not wise to rely one one's "feelings." This would be even more so when one's feelings says that God is leading one to do something which is completely in opposition to God's word, as is the practice of homosexuality and that of unscriptural divorce.

Involved in the homosexual issue is not only the sin itself, “same-sex marriage” is also involved. The Episcopal Church believes in “blessing” such unions. It also needs to be pointed out that the Episcopal Church is not the only one upholding homosexuality and same-sex unions. This is becoming more widespread all the time.

A recent decision of our Supreme Court will add to the prevalence of homosexual activity and same-sex marriages. This decision of the court struck down state sodomy laws as demeaning to homosexuals. Justice Antonin Scalia said the majority opinion of the court “effectively decrees the end of all moral legislation” and threatens a “massive disruption of the current social order.” Scalia also argued that the decision of the court “could pave the way for same-sex marriages and undercut laws banning bigamy, adult incest, prostitution and other sexual acts.”

Lack Of Space. Due to our lack of space we’ve had to leave out so much of what could have been said on this subject of secularizing our society. There are efforts to achieve this ungodly goal in so many areas of society. More space could have been used to further describe the activities of ACLU, and other forces of like-mind. There is also the widespread efforts on the part of some politicians and some of our courts. It is not the majority of people who are so forceful in promoting this evil cause, but rather a minority which has influence much greater than its size would suggest. We now turn our attention to a very important part of our discussion:

WHAT CAN WE DO TO COMBAT THE SPEEDING RISE OF SECULARISM IN OUR SOCIETY?

An excellent starting point is to Stand Up for belief in God in all situations, never being apologetic or fearful! We’ve allowed a relatively few opposers of God to rally much opposition while we have been silent and inactive.

We can let ourselves be heard through our political influence. We can support those who come nearest to standing up for what we believe relative to God. We should oppose all laws which curb or take away God’s influence.

As preachers and teachers, and other citizens, we need to preach and teach, and communicate to others the fact that believers in God will ultimately be victorious. Not only in this life, but in the world to come. Things in this life are temporal, and we can be blessed by them for only a very limited time.

We have avenues to speak out in favor of God. We can write letters to “the editor.” We can commend editorials which speak out for the values we’ve known in the past, which have God in the picture, not secularism. Someone suggested stamping or writing “In God We Trust” on all our mail. We can put window or bumper stickers on our automobiles.

We can do a lot of studying of God’s word to strengthen our faith, and a lot of praying that we may be victorious for His cause here on earth.

CONCLUSION

It’s urgent that we face the reality of the threat of secularism and its goal of banishing virtually every vestige of Godly influence from our society. Our children and grand children will be involved. We are faced with many “foolish” people in our day (. Cf. Ps. 14:1). We are going the way of a heathen nation. When God is banished from a society heathenism is likely to reign. “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34).

We have enjoyed religious freedom in our country all of our lives. I guess we just sort of take that for granted. But we are now seeing serious efforts put forth to relieve us of that freedom. In some circles it is even now illegal to speak out against some sins, especially that of homosexuality. At the rate things are going our religious freedom will be supplanted by some form of secularism in due time. When cannot declare the “whole counsel of God,” our freedom is in jeopardy.

Such times as we are now seeing should come as no surprise to us, in view of all the warnings in the New Testament. It is indeed “perilous times” in which we are now living. People’s thoughts are much like those in the days of Noah before the flood. “And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). But there is no reason to give up. Victory can be hours if we maintain our faith (I Jno. 5:4).

If the Christians of the first century were able to live faithful lives, in the midst of paganism and ungodliness of every sort, then so can we! But there must be a willingness and a resolve to do so. The church in Smyrna faced great difficulties, that of being imprisoned, and perhaps even death. Christ said to this church (and to us), “be thou faithful unto death,” that is, to the point of giving up physical life, “and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). Paul looked forward to a “Crown of Righteousness.” Our goal should be to receive that “Crown.” No power can keep us from winning, if that’s our goal.

- - Walter W. Pigg, Editor

ET Phone Home (VIII)

Alan Adams, Assistant Editor

One of the cutest lines in the movie, ET, was when he was learning some basic vocabulary. Having learned the word ‘phone,’ he pointed to the stars and said, “ET phone home.” He was out of place, lonely.

I, too, would like to be back in the time when there was a commonality amongst brethren. They used the same language, had the same goals, were involved in the same struggle. There’s a new generation now; they say and do things that are flatly alien to me, and I believe, alien to the Scriptures. A recent quotation from a member of this generation: “The church of Foy Wallace and Gus Nichols is **not** the church of my generation.” Of course, there was not then, nor has there ever been “a church of” either of these brethren. However, let’s ask, “Were Foy Wallace and Gus Nichols members of the church Jesus built”? They both obeyed and taught, in the same way that the Apostles did: The Plan of Salvation; The One Body (church); The Christian Life; Christian Worship. What precisely, then, is the difference between the “church” of which Foy Wallace and Gus Nichols were members and devotees, and the “church” of this Know-It-All’s “generation”? It must be that he, and his “generation,” just do not feel quite so compelled to be bound to such a pattern of things as brethren Wallace and Nichols were.

One element of the pattern, which many of the aforementioned “generation” feel stifled by and determined to cast off, is that of The Assembly. I was recently handed an article written by brother Calvin Warpula; it appeared in a paper called *Image* (no date on my copy). Among many strange things said by him is the remark that “The New Testament speaks of Christians ‘coming together’ but not of ‘worship services.’ The idea that ‘worship services’ have special rules not binding on other Christian assemblies is a human tradition without warrant in the Scriptures.” He can’t possibly have read I Corinthians 11:17 through 16:9. There for the whole world, and Calvin Warpula, to see is The Assembly; the “whole church...come together in one place” (I Cor. 14:23) for the express purpose of engaging in *five* distinct activities by which they “paid reverence to God”; in other words, they came together to worship. If that’s not a Worship Assembly, or Worship Service; then,

what is it? If there is no such thing as “special rules” for the “worship service” that don’t necessarily apply in other gatherings; how then, would Warpula explain 1 Cor. 14:35-35? May the women “ask” questions in the Bible Classes? Yes. Are Bible Classes and the Worship Assembly (Service) the same? No.

Let me also emphasize: As this is the “whole church come together” for worship, it is clear that each activity of worship, involves the **participation** of each member of The Assembly. Only the brothers are allowed to lead The Assembly in these activities; the sisters, as regards leading The Assembly, are to “keep silence in the assembly” (I Cor. 14:34-35). But, the fact remains: Every Member in The Assembly is to be a **participant** in each of the *five* activities of The Assembly. When one brother Preaches or Teaches, he is in reality leading The Assembly (including himself) in “hear[ing] the word of the Lord” (Isa. 28:14), which is to say hearing the “voice” of the Lord (Cf. 28:23). It’s *not*: the preacher who worships and the Spectators get some kind of benefit from it; rather, The Assembly worships God.

Please allow me a brief excursus here: Because of some preachers’ antics and theatrics, this Act of Worship (Hearing God) has been perverted into a bizarre spectator sport. Back to that solemn assembly in Nehemiah 8: Ezra stood at his “pulpit”; he “opened the book in the sight of the people”; “all the people stood up...bowed their heads and worshipped Jehovah.” I just cannot imagine any of those people coming out of the assembly and saying: “Boy, that Ezra is a dynamic speaker;” “He didn’t look at his notes one time”; He just kept me on the edge of my seat!” Brethren, we have to get back to the idea of “open[ing] the book in the sight of all the people” so that in The Assembly we may “hear the word of the Lord.” As to **who** opens the book,” or with panache: **That is of absolutely no significance.** Please read and think about the following passages: Acts 18:24; I Corinthians 2:1-2; 3:4-6).

When brethren lead us in the Lord’s Supper; it is, again, and act that the “whole assembly” participates in. The flair of smoothness with which a brother (or, brethren) lead the assembly in the Supper should not even be a remote consideration. I know what you’re thinking: I, too, have seen brethren leading The Assembly in the Supper and using it as a platform for personal theatrics. Nothing should be said or done that detracts from Him whom we gather to remember.

We have discussed two “acts of reverence paid to God”: Preaching/Hearing, and The Lord’s Supper. We have demonstrated that these two “acts” are part of The Assembly, they are Acts of Worship. [Please, reread former articles, especially No. VII]. They are “acts of worship” engaged in by The Assembly, not by a part of The Assembly

A third Act of Worship is that of singing. Brother Warpula says that “Solo singing was approved at Corinth.” He bases this on Paul’s statement that “When ye come together each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation” (I Cor. 14:26). He says (quoting scholars) that the psalms here “describe an individual spontaneously using a special gift in the congregation.” Scholar or no: The main point of I Cor. 14 is to **forbid** anybody doing anything “spontaneously.” That was their whole problem; making a sham of The Assembly. Thus, Paul told those with the Tongue Gift that only two or three of them might speak in a given Assembly, but only “in turn” (v. 27). This doesn’t connote spontaneity. He caps the whole chapter off with the command that “all things be done decently and in order” (v. 40). Brother Warpula (and his scholars) has failed to grasp the significance of the *source* of the “psalm... teaching... revelation...tongue...interpretation” in this passage. Each of these came by way of the miraculous Spiritual Gifts (I Cor. 12). At least two of the scholars say that the individual with the psalm “composed” it himself; one of the scholars says that he “obviously composed it.” Nobody “composed” anything here, any more than the “prophets” who spoke to The Assembly prepared sermon outlines. These were people converted out of rank heathenism; people without New Testaments, Songbooks, Tracts. The Holy Spirit, through such “gifts” as “revelation, knowledge, teaching” directed them in every

Act of Worship. As we have long since had the “perfect (complete)” New Testament in our hands, these gifts have likewise long since “failed, ceased, and been done away.”

No: In the absence of songbooks, or common knowledge of the lyrics being sung; a brother (*only* a brother), inspired by the Holy Spirit, would have to “sing” it for The Assembly, **but** only in the sense of teaching them that they might join in. I do this almost every Sunday evening during our Little People’s class. Many of the songs I know are not commonly known and are not in any books. So I “have a psalm” and I teach it to them that they might join in. Remember: We’re talking about “the whole church come together.” We are not an audience which has come out to watch or hear others worship. One leads by: “discoursing” (Acts 20:7), but it is The Whole Assembly (including the one leading) that “hears the word of the Lord.” One or more lead in taking the Supper, but it is the Whole Assembly that “eats the Lord’s Supper.” One leads in singing, but it is the Whole Assembly that has gathered to “sing and make melody in [their] hearts to the Lord” (Eph. 5:19). The same is true with prayer and offering. Certainly someone has to lead The Assembly, but it is still The Assembly that worships God. This is just as it was in Nehemiah 8: “All the people gathered themselves together as one man...all the people *were attentive* unto the book of the law...And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people...and when he opened it, all the people stood up; And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground” (Neh. 8:1-5).

Brother Warpula is flat wrong. There is a thing in the New Testament called The Assembly. It is the “whole church come together” (“as one man”) and worshipping God in the *five* ways prescribed by Him. Nowhere does the New Testament authorize our having in The Assembly *Doers* and *Spectators*. One cannot worship by *proxy*. The Assembly (of necessity, each person in it) worships by: Hearing, Eating the Supper, Praying, Singing, and Giving. That I might be “edified” by what another does is beside the point. My being “edified” by another, and my “worshipping” are two different things. [There will be more detailed analysis of brother Warpula’s error to come; this deals with the most glaring]. – Alan

Address changing??? You can help us by sending a change!

Don’t miss an issue of *Banner of Truth!*

Do You Have the Characteristics of Your Father?

Roger A. Scully, Jr.

A child typically has some of the characteristics of his parents. It may be physical characteristics, such as facial features, etc. It may be behavioral characteristics such as kindness, etc. Whatever the characteristics may be, there is something which causes a child to be distinct and noticeable as the child of a particular person or couple.

As it is in the temporal world, so it should be in the spiritual realm. There should be observable characteristics that a child of God has, which would identify him as a child of God. Sadly, it has been my experience that in many cases there is little or no difference between the children of the world and those who are supposed to be children of God.

Throughout time those who have been committed to God have had identifiable marks. We read

of Enoch who “walked with God” (Gen. 5:22). The idea of “walked with God” is not the idea of literally walking beside God. It portrays the idea of a lifestyle. Similar language was used by Paul when he wrote, “As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him” (Col. 2:6). “Walk” is the idea of conduct of living. It also shows continual action. But, as pertaining to our subject of discussion, it is something that is observable. Therefore, it would follow that Enoch had the characteristics of his Father, God, with whom he walked.

The Book of Leviticus has rightly been called the code or ordinance regulating how God is to be approached, and how after He is approached, fellowship is to be maintained. After reading the many laws and regulations placed on the children of Israel, one may walk away “scratching his head.” However, when we consider the reasons for the laws of cleanness and uncleanness it all begins to make sense. “For I am Jehovah your God: sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am holy” (Lev. 11:44). Here we learn that God is clean and set apart; therefore if any one is to come to God he must be the same — he must bear God’s characteristics. We later find this quoted by Peter and applied to the Christian life (I Pet. 1:16).

Just as it was with Israel, that there was to be distinctiveness and observable marks which showed them to be children of God, so it should be with Christians today. However, as has been noted, there are not enough “Christians” who bear any sort of identifiable marks that would associate them with God, but rather marks that associate them with the world. For this reason we will observe some things from the Book of I John that are to be a part of the characteristics of a Christian. It is our hope that children of God will always be the distinctive people that we are to be, and those who fail to possess this distinctiveness will make need changes.

John sets forth the idea that we are observing: “As He is, even so are we in this world” (I John 4:17). In other words, as God is holy, etc., we are to be in this life. We are to bear distinct marks of character that identify us with our heavenly Father. We shall note a few things.

First. We note that God’s children are to “walk in the light.” From the beginning “light” is used in a symbolic way to show godliness and righteousness. “Darkness” is used to show ungodliness and wickedness. John writes, “God is light and in Him is not darkness at all” (I Jno. 1:5). That is to say that God is righteous and clean, there is in him no sort of uncleanness. John says further, “If we say we are in him and walk in darkness we lie” (v. 6). It is impossible for a child of God to walk in darkness, and still bear the characteristics of God. John also says, “If we walk in the light as he is in the light...” (v. 7). This means that for a person to be a faithful child of God he must continually be striving to live in a way that harmonizes with God’s word.

Second. A child of God is not to “love the world.” Peter describes Christians as “sojourners of the dispersion” (I Pet. 1:1). “Sojourners” is translated from a word that means to dwell alongside those of a strange land. It is the idea that “This world is not my home, I am just passing through.” In one sense Christians should never get too comfortable in this life, knowing that we are not yet at home.

John wrote that children of God, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (I Jno. 2:15-17). The sin of this world should be shocking and sickening to a child of God, as it was to Joseph (Gen. 39:8-9). Joseph was shocked that Mrs. Poti-phar would even suggest that he sin against God. However, many Christians have been put into the mold of the world (Cf. Rom. 12:1-2). What used to shock us may now simply amuse us.

Third. God’s children are told to “love in deed and in truth” (I Jno. 3:18). This is greatly lacking in the church today; maybe more than ever in our time. Many brethren are as Cain. They are full of pride and jealousy, or selfishness and not willing to put the needs of the church first (I Jno. 3:12-16). These are not the marks which are to characterize a child of God, but rather “loving in deed and in truth.”

It is not enough to say that we wish the needy well. If we are able, we need to help provide for their needs, which is “loving in deed.” It is a manifestation of love shown by action. However, this should not be done to be seen of men, but it should be done because we are sincere; such is the meaning of loving “in truth.”

Fourth. A child of God should be able and willing to “prove” or try false teachers. John says, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (I Jno. 4:1).

Without knowledge of God’s word and a willingness to identify false teachers the above command cannot be carried out. Just as the noble Bereans “searched the scriptures daily” to see if what they were being taught was true, so should we. A child of God should want a “thus saith the Lord” as demanded by Colossians 3:17.

There are more than a few who desire not to be in any confrontation. Brethren, the implication of I John 4 is, that there will be confrontation. This is so because there will be those who will not stand the test. It is the responsibility of God’s children to uphold, and defend the truth against all those who teach contrary to God’s will, but many to the contrary notwithstanding.

God’s children are to be distinct. Just as He is, so should we be in this life. Let us work hard to have and maintain the **Characteristics of our Father.**

Editor’s note: Roger Scully, Jr. is a recent graduate of the Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies.

Did You Know. . . .

Editor’s Note: The following was received by e-mail from someone. It is something to think about.

As you walk up the steps of the Capitol Building which houses the Supreme Court you can see near the top of the building a row of the world’s law givers and each one is facing one in the middle who is facing forward with a full frontal view – It is Moses and the Ten Commandments.

As you enter the Supreme Court courtroom, the two huge oak doors have the Ten Commandments engraved on the lower portion of each door.

As you sit inside the courtroom, you can see the wall right above where the Supreme Court judges sit a display of the Ten Commandments!

There are Bible verses etched in stone all over the Federal Buildings and monuments in Washington, D.C.

James Madison, the fourth president, known as “The Father of Our Constitution” made the following statement, “We have staked the whole of all our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government, upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God.”

Patrick Henry, that patriot and Founding Father of our country said, “It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded not by religionists but by Christians; not on religions but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Every session of Congress begins with a prayer by a paid preacher, whose salary has been paid by the taxpayers since 1777.

The very first Supreme Court Justice, John Jay, said, “Americans should select and prefer Christians as their rulers.”

Fifty-two of the 55 founders of the Constitution were members of the established orthodox churches in the colonies.

How then, have we gotten to the point that everything we have done for 200 years in this country is now suddenly wrong and unconstitutional?

Editor: Is this not proof that there are powerful forces working to do away with Godly influence in our society? We must not allow this to happen in the absence of our greatest possible efforts to stop it!

Sundry Notes and Comments

The YWCA Goes Left. The YWCA has hired the former head of the National Organization for Women, Patricia Ireland, as its new chief executive. Ms. Ireland, a rabid feminist and advocate of abortion on demand, promises to turn YWCA into an aggressive lobbying force and to increase its advocacy for the “empowerment of women.” To facilitate these new lobbying activities, the organization is moving its headquarters to Washington from New York. Under Ms. Ireland, the YWCA will become yet another radical feminist lobbying group. Pro-family and pro-life Americans who support the YWCA financially should re-consider such support. (Washington Update, 5/1/03)

Episcopal Homosexual Bishop. Bringing to the minds of Bible-believing people, the evils of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Episcopal homosexual bishop, V. Gene Robinson, is determined to promote his sinful homosexuality. That a number of Anglican leaders have asked Robinson to step down, and that great problems will result, he is **determined** to go ahead!

Robinson is quoted as saying, “God and I have been about this for quite a while now and I would really be surprised if God were to want me to stop now.” From the clear teaching of God’s word on the subject of homosexuality, I know that it is not a matter of “God and I” being about the matter. It has to be “I” and not God. To even suggest that God would lead or tell someone to be and practice that which He has strongly condemned is nothing less than outright hypocrisy and evil-doing. – *Editor.*

A Man of Sin for Twenty-Five Years. A great deal of news coverage has been devoted to the present Pope and his 25 years as such. So much pomp has been exhibited with regard to this feeble man who erroneously claims to be the “Vicar of Christ.” How sad it is to see people bow-down to this mere man who claims to be taking the place of Christ on earth. And, he is not about to step aside. If all the miracles which the Catholic Church claims to have taken place were true, why don’t they perform at least one more on the Pope to cure him? We know why this hasn’t happened! Their claims are false.

SOUND PREACHER WANTED

The church at Evening Shade, AR, is in need of a Sound Preacher. Evening Shade is about 35 miles north of Batesville, Arkansas.

To get more information, contact Jeff Eddy at: jeddy@prodentec.com or by phone at: (870) 266-3067, Home. (870) 698-2300, Work.

“Just Too Negative.” A gospel preacher writes that the elders at the congregation where he preaches have stopped him from passing out *Banner of Truth*, their reason being, It is **Just Too Negative**. This is not a first and I don’t expect it to be a last. I’ve known of instances where the BOT was trashed without the members of the church knowing it. When people cry “Too Negative” some

questions come to mind: 1) Just what is Too Negative? 2) How negative must something be for it to be Too Negative? 3). Who decides what is Too Negative? 4) Was “all the counsel of God” which Paul preached (Ac. 20:27) Too Negative? 5) Were the Ten Commandments Too Negative? 6) Were Christ, Paul, Peter and John Too Negative in what they spoke? It is often the case that people who are liberally inclined do not like to hear error condemned. That is Too Negative to them. –*Ed.*

Fourth Annual *Banner of Truth* Lectures
June 17 – 21, 2004
Place: Murray, KY, at the Curris Center
Twenty-Eight Lessons to be Delivered
Why not be making plans and arrange
your schedule to enable you to attend?

A Personal Note: My wife and I were in Grand Blanc, Michigan, where I preached in a Gospel meeting Oct. 5 – 9. The preacher at Grand Blanc is Michael Golwitzer, who has been with the congregation about five years. The elders are: Charles Marchbanks and Don Pierson. The congregation stands as a beacon of truth in that area, in that they are striving to walk in “The Old Paths” of Jeremiah 6:16. We were encouraged to have visitors from several other places in that part of the country. A good number of people in that area are readers of *Banner of Truth*. Unfortunately, I brought a Michigan cold back with me, and it is still clinging on two weeks later! If I were old, it might serve as a real problem, but I think I’m gonna win out. - - *Editor*

Banner of Truth Financial Report. Our next issue of BOT (October) will carry the Financial Report for July through September. We do not yet have the expenses for the month of September. - - *Editor*

READERS’ RESPONSE

“Sure would like to get Banner of Truth. I picked up a copy at the Lectureship at Eastgate church of Christ in Pensacola. Thanks – **Norman Slate.**” – **TN.**

“Please take my name off your mailing list. Thank you – **Kenny Knuckles.**” – **MO.** (*Thanks for letting us know.*)

“Just a quick note to tell you again how much we appreciate your good work in spreading the Gospel of Christ by the printed page. We look forward to each issue of Banner of Truth. Also, our heartfelt thanks for printing some of my articles from time to time....This last issue with the information about Mormonism is very good and instructive....I will enclose a check to help with the expenses and we thank you very much – **Alton Fonville.**” – **AR.** (*Thanks for your encouragement and support. – Ed.*)

“How are you? Hope you are well! Please continue to stand for the truth of God’s Holy Word! The question must be asked, if we, as God’s faithful children, will not stand, then who will? I pray that all who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will STAND FOR THE TRUTH. He needs it more today than at any other time. Please change my address....I do not want to miss an issue of BOT. Thank you for all that you and those that help you do. May we ALL continue to work for the Lord and His body, the One True Church – **Greg Barnett.**” (*Your question is indeed a timely one. In my almost 50 years of preaching I have never seen such “perilous times” as these – Editor.*)

“Please add me to the mailing list. I really enjoy the Banner of Truth. It is so refreshing to read the truth of God’s word plainly spoken and told as it should be. Keep up the good work. I know God will bless you in your efforts. In Christian love, –**Rita Terrill.**” – **AR.**

I would like to receive your monthly publication: 'Banner of Truth.' My wife and I attend the church of Christ in Cedar City, Utah. We have been going there the past four year. I have only seen several issues, but I really like your articles. I just got done reading your 'Information About the Church of Christ' in your June 2003 issue – **Ron & Diane Reynolds.**" – **UT.** (*If you know of others there who would profit by BOT, send their names – Ed.*).

"The Banner of Truth is a good work. Keep it up –**Shirley M. Taylor.**" – **OH.**

"Remove from mailing list please – **Cherry Grove church of Christ.**" – **KY.** (*When people do not want to receive Banner of Truth, we appreciate it when they let us know. That enables us to send it to someone else – Editor.*).

"I have enjoyed/appreciated your work in 'Banner of Truth' for several years. I like to read, hear and see good scriptural lessons. The last one I received, Dec. 03, was especially good. I read it twice, then read it again and underlined much of it with red. I gave it to one of our elders. I would like a dozen or so to give to other elders, preachers and Bible class teachers. Here is a little to help pay your expenses – **Sam Evans.**" –**OK.** (*We appreciate it when our readers pass on BOT to others who may be interested in receiving it. At your age (88) you are to be commended in continuing your support of the truth. Thanks for your help to pay expenses – Editor.*).

"I haven't read all of your Banner of Truth publications but what I have read is great. I want to thank you so much for this work. I cannot say enough nor express in words my appreciation. As you know the church is going through perilous times and needs a big wakeup call. As I'm sure you know, for members who don't study much, or for themselves, one or two sermons a week is not good enough. But perhaps handing them this publication can make a difference. Thank you so much. May God bless you all to prosper in all your good works. I hope this little bits helps – **Dale Steele.**" – **OH.** (*We are seeing the effects of failure to study God's word as we should. Those who take little spiritual food are not going to have a strong faith. Thanks for your help. Those individuals and congregations which contribute to our work makes Banner of Truth possible. They are partners in our work – Editor.*).

"A good sister gave me a copy of Aug. 03 issue of Banner of Truth. I was glad to get it. It spoke the truth about what has happened and what could happen if America doesn't turn back to God. I have a granddaughter that lives in Calif. with two small children, that I want to send this copy to...Maybe she will want more copies. I hope so. I do want to start getting your paper every month, starting with the Sept. issue, please. God bless you and the church there in defending the truth. Thank God for men who still hold His Banner High – **Thelma Clark.**" – **MS.** (*You will start receiving Banner of Truth with the Sept. issue. I'm late getting it out, due to various things, but trust we will get in the mail in early November – Editor.*).

"We would like to THANK YOU for B.O.T....and for publishing a good sound paper that sends the truth to all that would accept it. Your paper is very helpful in many ways. Sometimes it is easier to hand someone a copy of one of the publications than to try and tell them something. I'm glad you use God's word to back up everything you print. Keep up the good work ... Our congregation here at Deer is small but strong. We pray it will always be this way. Thank you – **Mr. & Mrs. David Heyderreich.**" –**AR.** (*We believe the printed page is still one of the most effective means of communication. If we only hear we may soon forget, but we can read over and over- Editor.*).

Readers' Response Continued

"I received my Vol. 12, No. 6, Banner of Truth today. Tears came to my eyes when I read such wonderful truths. Someone that's not afraid to stand up and tell it like it is. If you have any extra cones of Vol. 12, No. 6, I would be very happy to get them. If you have two dozen of them I'll take them and get them in the hands of, especially Elders, Deacons, Ministers and others. It's time to wake. Stand for something or they'll fall for everything. I have been giving the ones that are sound

where maybe some of them will wake up and maybe they can have influence in waking others. It's no time to soft pedal, afraid to hurt someone's feelings and they'll leave. I say I had rather know they left from hearing truth, than leave because they have been lulled to sleep, thinking everything is o.k. and land in hell.

You can ask an elder a question that needs a real truth answer and all you get is circling and soft soap, never plain out. I was called a person from the Old School by a person. I thanked them. I felt it was a compliment. Of course they meant it different. My feelings were not hurt in the least bit. I'm not too popular but the apostles and Christ weren't either. You are not popular when you put the truth out. My feelings aren't easily hurt in that way. I'm the old lady that handed out Banner of Truth once before. I'll have my 92nd birthday 9th day of May if the Lord is willing. I need your prayers daily to keep me able to keep going. I'll appreciate the extra copies if you have them. Wish I had the money to pay you for sending them. God bless, take care, and keep up the good work – **Mrs. Ica Savage.**” – **OK.** *(Sis. Savage, we have printed your entire letter because we believe it needs to be read by many of us. You serve as a great example of one who has reached those Golden Years, and has not slackened your efforts in behalf of the cause of our Lord. I, too, count it as a compliment when I'm labeled as being of "The Old School." I don't every want to be of the New School, which does not take God's word with all seriousness. May the Lord bless you with more years in which to serve Him, and to be an example to others. Don't worry about not having money to pay for sending BOT. We are thankful for those who are able financially to make Banner of Truth possible, and are willing to do so – Editor).*

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Visit BOT at David Lemmons' web at:

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

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

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