

***19th Annual Oklahoma City School of  
Biblical Studies Lectures***

**IN DEFENSE OF...**

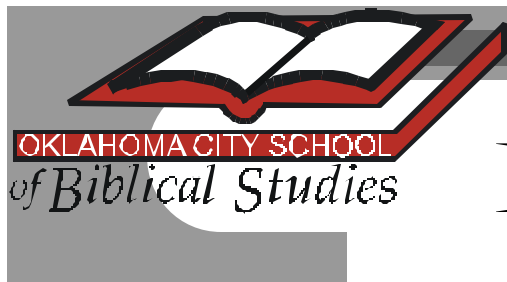
**APRIL 3-6, 2008**



**..set for the defense of the gospel.**

**Philippians 1:17**





# FOREWORD

The theme of this year's lectureship, "**In Defense of ...**" is thrilling to the mind of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. It is true, defending the teaching of Christ, is only part of being a Christian, but it is a most important part.

The lectures covered in the **19th Annual Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies Lectures** are in defense of the teaching of Christ. In the larger context, the lectures are in defense of the whole Bible which is the verbal, plenary inspired word of the One True Living God! Jesus himself defended the Old Testament each time he quoted from its pages. In fact, he said: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify on me" (John 5:39). With those words, he made the Old Testament part of this teaching. The older preachers were often heard to say: "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed, and New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." Thus, it is one book, and the one "golden chain" that runs through both the Old and the New testaments is Christ. In the Old, "he is coming." In the first four books of the New Testament, "he is here." In the last twenty-three books of the New Testament, "he is coming again."

A lectureship by its nature is limited to a small number of lessons, but we at **The Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies** would like the reader of this outline book to know we stand "set for the defense of the whole Bible." Those who believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God must believe what he believed and be prepared to defend what he believed with the best of our abilities. It is our hope that this little outline book will aid the believer in making such a defense. To be set for the defense of the gospel of Christ is to be set for defense of the whole Bible.

**The Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies** believes that all too few of those in the churches of Christ are willing to defend all that is the revealed word of God. The world uses the word "God" in every possible way but in reverence. The world speaks the word "God" in every possible way, but in prayer. America prints on her money "in God we trust," then trusts in everything but God.

We at **The Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies** ask you to join us in elevating God in the eyes of those all about us, in the eyes of those we see each day, and yes, in the eyes of those who are members of the churches of Christ. God, like the sun in the west, is setting in the eyes of those who would disregard the authority of Christ and yield the church to the authority of men. Such men do what seems right in their own eyes! They ask not: "What is pleasing to God" but "What is pleasing to men?" Some churches of Christ are now determining the nature of their teaching and worship after the "itching ears" of men. We are not surprised but we are saddened by every step away from the teaching of Christ.

Frank R. Williams – lectureship director





## **Introduction to the OKLAHOMA CITY SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES**

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The Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies (OKCSBS) began its work in 1991. Presently there are three men laboring in this work: Marion Fox, Frank Williams, and Ben Williams.

Classes have been conducted in various locations in Oklahoma. The work is centered in Oklahoma City with classes being conducted in congregations in the Oklahoma City area. The Barnes building is located in an excellent location for this. Classes have been conducted in Binger, Chandler, Hydro, Maysville, Piedmont, and Tuttle in the recent past. Other congregations have contacted us concerning our conducting classes in their building.

The Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies is designed to prepare men to be leaders in the Lord's church (elders, preachers, deacons, teachers, etc.) and women to serve in the church (teachers, etc.). The curriculum is Bible-centered and is designed to prepare the student to become an independent student of the word of God. It is the intention of the faculty at OKCSBS that our students should not be taught "what to believe" but "how to learn from the Scriptures the will of God."

The full-time curriculum consists of four years of classes, two nights per week. Students seeking advanced options may choose to attend extra courses in Greek and other subjects. Also, part-time or audit students may choose to just take one course or one night of courses each week at their convenience.

By stretching the course-work out into a four-year format there is a greater maturation in the learning process than in two-year programs. In addition, students can take advantage of our night schedule by continuing in secular work without needing to raise support from the church. By offering a schedule that fits people's busy lives, we allow our students to immediately increase their usefulness in local congregations.

Frank Williams and Marion Fox both have experience as preachers, elders, and as faculty members in other preacher training schools. Ben Williams has experience as a gospel preacher.

We believe in the inerrancy and absolute authority of the Scriptures. We invite anyone to check out our school by contacting us and attending our classes. We are available to make presentations about our school to any congregation.

For more information, contact:

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# OUR FACULTY

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## Marion R. Fox, Director

Marion is a graduate of the Elk City School of Preaching and has preached for over 37 years. His college degrees include: an A.S. (1963) from Southwestern Oklahoma State University, a baccalaureate (1965) and doctorate (1991) from Oklahoma State University, and masters (1969) University of Illinois. He has completed upper division Greek courses at Oklahoma Christian College. He has been a college professor (engineering-science division) and a National Science Foundation fellow in engineering, physics, and semiconductor manufacturing. Marion has authored several books and has engaged in several debates on various subjects.



Marion has served as a teacher for the Elk City School of Preaching; Elk City, Oklahoma 1973-76; Westside School of Preaching; Duncan, Oklahoma 1976 (Fall); Oklahoma School of Bible/Preaching; McCloud, Oklahoma 1977-1981; Great Plains School of Bible/Preaching; Elmore City, Oklahoma 1989-91; Rocky Mountain Audio and Video Bible Institute; Selmer, TN: 1999-present; and Online Academy of Biblical Studies; Dyersburg, TN: 2000-2005. Marion has served as Director of the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 1991-present.



Marion has held gospel meetings and preached by appointment in fourteen other states. He preached and lectured at two state universities in Russia on scientific evidences for the existence of God and lectured on the existence of God and the work of the Holy Spirit in England.

Marion has authored five books.







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## Frank R. Williams, Instructor

Frank now works full-time with the school and with the congregation at Barnes. He adds 39 years of preaching experience to our staff. Frank attended the Northside School of Preaching in Harrison, AR, graduating in 1972 with a Masters in Sacred Literature. In 1977, Frank made an evangelic trip to India where about 200 people obeyed the gospel. He served as local preacher for churches in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, and Missouri and wrote weekly articles for four local newspapers. He has preached daily on three radio stations. He has preached in gospel meetings and lectureships in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Missouri, Georgia, Iowa and Tennessee and has preached at three congregations in California. He has had articles published in the Gospel Advocate, Firm Foundation, Contending for the Faith, The Gospel Standard, The Gospel Journal, and edited The Spirit of Restoration for three years. He has written a weekly bulletin article for seven years. Also in his experience is three years in the U.S. Army where he served in the Army Security Agency. Frank has taught at the following schools: Northside School of Preaching (Harrison, Arkansas) 1971-1972 & 1975-1977, Wetumka School of Biblical Knowledge (Wetumka, Oklahoma) 1992-1995, and Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) 1995-Present.

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## Benjamin J. Williams, Instructor

Benjamin a graduate of the University of Oklahoma, having obtained a B.S. in Astrophysics. In the Spring of 2005, he became the full-time evangelist for the Barnes congregation where he had previously worked on a part-time basis for four years. He is the Director of the Frog Road Bible Camp session sponsored by that congregation. Benjamin teaches several of the introductory courses in addition to helping with the day-to-day operations of the school. He is responsible for the school's website and for publishing *One Heart*, the school's quarterly journal. He has spoken for lectureships at Sapulpa, Muskogee, McLoud, Cleveland, and Sharpsville (Indiana) as well as the OKCSBS Lectures hosted by the Barnes congregation.







Dear Reader:

The *One Heart* Journal was originally conceived of as a much needed avenue to spread the news about the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies. In the first issue, the eight page, black & white journal went out and was well received. Less than one hundred addresses were sent copies of the first issue.

Almost three years later, the Spring '08 issue of *One Heart* is mailing out to over 300 addresses as well as bundles being to sent to congregations who set them out for the local members to take as desired. The original eight pages has been extended to twelve, and a beautiful color cover has been added. While this is still small compared to many brotherhood papers, we believe things are moving in the right direction.

It has never been our desire to add just one more paper to hundreds already produced by the churches of Christ. I have been told that the churches of Christ have more papers per member than any other religious group! This paper was intended for a specific purpose: to demonstrate the level of teaching and soundness of doctrine taught at OKCSBS. Inside each issue you will read articles by our faculty representing the kind of material that they present in class on a regular basis.

The Journal also allows us an opportunity to keep students, supporters, and area congregations informed about upcoming events and the class schedule for OKCSBS. We intend for the school to be a benefit to the church in Oklahoma, and to do that we need more people to be aware of what we offer.

Just like the school, the *One Heart* Journal is made available at no cost to subscribers. Loving members of the Lord's church contribute to the work and make it possible to publish and mail the journal every quarter so that no subscription fee is ever necessary.

If you would be interested in receiving *One Heart* individually or for your congregation, please let us know so that an appropriate arrangement can be made. More people receiving *One Heart* means more people are learning about the school and potentially participating in its work and growth.

In His Cause,

Benjamin J. Williams

Editor, One Heart Journal



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# IN DEFENSE OF DEFENDING THE TRUTH

*Benjamin J. Williams*

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Benjamin was born in Morrilton, AR, graduated from Seminole High School, and attended both the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies and the University of Oklahoma, receiving a Bachelor Degree in Astrophysics.

He and Selene have been married for four years. He has done all his local work with the Barnes church of Christ where he is the fulltime preacher. He has worked with the Barnes congregation for six years and has been preaching for twelve years, having started preaching at the age of fifteen. He is an instructor in the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies and has written articles appearing in *Gospel Journal* and *One Heart*.

As a note of interest, Benjamin serves as Director of Frog Road Bible Camp during the session sponsored by the Barnes church of Christ.

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## Introduction

- I. Before defending the various concepts that are basic to the Lord's church, we need to know if defending these concepts is a worthwhile venture.
- II. Some would claim that defending most Biblical views is hurtful to the cause of Christ.
  - A. They claim that defending most Biblical truths is counterproductive to evangelism and local church growth.
  - B. They claim that defending most Biblical truths is divisive and disrupts our fellowship together as brethren.
  - C. They claim that defending most Biblical truths is unnecessary.

## Body

- I. Helping Us Grow
  - A. The Objection
    - 1. Those promoting change in the church often tell us that these changes are for the sake of saving lost souls and growing the church.
    - 2. If we believe in God, we must also believe that He knows the best way for the church to grow.

**B. Biblical Examples**

1. Churches are commanded to defend the truth, 1 John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
  - a. “Trying the spirits” involved the first century, miraculous ability to determine who spoke by inspiration and who was faking it. See “discerning spirits,” I Cor. 12:10.
  - b. The early church had the obligation to defend the truth against all fraudulent prophets.
2. Churches are commended for defending the truth, Rev. 2:2-3 I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted.
  - a. “Trying of apostles” involved examining the qualifications of so-called apostles. This was one of the reasons Paul make such frequent defense of his apostleship.
  - b. The early church had the obligation to defend the truth against all fraudulent apostles.
3. When these churches were commanded to defend the truth and praised for doing the same, was God hindering their growth?
4. What would be the result in terms of growth of NOT doing what God had said?
  - a. Rev. 2:20-23 ... thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. ... Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; ... and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.
    - 1) By not defending the truth, they allowed heinous false doctrine to be taught in their local congregation.
    - 2) God’s certain judgment on them could not possibly be considered growth, regardless of what their attendance and contribution reflected!
  - b. 1 John 2:18-19 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we

know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

- 1) By defending the truth, this congregation lost members, but the members lost had not been faithful to Christ in the first place.
- 2) Having more “members” whose loyalty is to Satan above Christ does not equal true growth.

## II. Uniting Us

### A. Objection

1. Those promoting change in the church often tell us that these changes are for the sake of church unity.
2. If we believe in God, we must also believe that He knows the best way for the church to be united.

### B. Biblical Principles

1. John 17:19-21 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
  - a. Sanctified people are set aside together as one for the Lord’s service.
  - b. Truth sanctifies us. Defending the truth is defending unity.
2. Eph. 4:4-6 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
  - a. These truths are the platform of the unity of Christians.
  - b. By compromising these truths, we compromise the unity of believers.
3. Will we be one if these truths are not defended?
  - a. One body: then don’t act like a denomination!
    - 1) Why would the one body fellowship denominations?
      - a] Denominations do not save souls and are therefore unfruitful, Eph.



5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

- b] Denominations are modern alternatives to the ancient pagan religions and ought to be treated as such, II Cor. 6:15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

2) Why would the one body imitate denominations?

- a] The church is comprised of people changed from worldliness to godliness, Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
- b] The church is the unique possession and people of Christ and ought to imitate him instead of the world, I Pet. 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:

b. One Spirit: then preach what He delivered!

1) Did the Spirit know what doctrines were necessary?

- a] First, the Holy Spirit taught the things that Christ had already taught, John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.
- b] Second, the Holy Spirit revealed all truth that God wanted revealed, John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.
- c] Which of these two categories of doctrine would we consider unnecessary?

2) Why would the Spirit give us divisive doctrine?

- a] Christ sent the Spirit with gifts to produce unity in the church, Eph. 4:11-13 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:
- b] The doctrine that the Spirit taught the apostles and prophets was to build us together into one habitation of God, Eph. 2:20-22 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly

framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

- c. One hope: then live for that hope!
  - 1) How will people find hope without forgiveness?
    - a] God's salvation is our only true hope, Lam. 3:26 It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.
    - b] God's forgiveness is the only hope of eternal life, Titus 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
  - 2) How will people be forgiven without the truth?
    - a] Salvation and hope have always been found in God's word, Psalms 119:81 My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word.
    - b] Freedom from sin and despair is found in the truth, John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
- d. One Lord: then obey!
  - 1) Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?
  - 2) How can He be Lord without a Law?
    - a] Thayer defines the Greek word translated "Lord" (KURIOS – κύριος) as: "1) he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord 1a) the possessor and disposer of a thing 1a1) the owner; one who has control of the person, the master 1a2) in the state: the sovereign, prince, chief, the Roman emperor 1b) is a title of honour expressive of respect and reverence, with which servants greet their master 1c) this title is given to: God, the Messiah."
    - b] Thayer defines the Greek word translated "kingdom" (BASILEIA - βασιλεία) as: "1) royal power, kingship, dominion, rule 1a) not to be confused with an actual kingdom but rather the right or authority to rule over a kingdom 1b) of the royal power of Jesus as the triumphant Messiah 1c) of the royal power and dignity conferred on Christians in the Messiah's kingdom 2) a kingdom, the territory subject to the rule of a king 3) used in the N.T. to refer to the reign of the Messiah."
    - c] The Bible tells us to live under Christ's law, James 2:12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.
- e. One faith: then do not alter it!

- 1) Jude 1:3 ... it was needful for me to ... exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.
  - 2) What good is “a faith” if it is not “the faith”?
    - a] Our personal faith is to be from the faith, Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith.
    - b] The Bible teaches that not only is faith necessary, but that faith must be in the truth, Heb. 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
- f. One baptism: then preach it!
- 1) Baptism did not shame Christ, Matt. 3:13-17.
  - 2) Why would it shame us to preach it?
    - a] Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel, Rom. 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
    - b] Christ had taught the Apostles that baptism was part of the Gospel they were to preach, Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
- g. One God: then submit to Him as children!
- 1) Will we be united as unruly children?
    - a] Foolish, unruly children follow human wisdom and are tossed from doctrine to doctrine, Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;
    - b] Following human wisdom leads to division, James 3:14-16 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
  - 2) When all are God’s children, what could possibly divide us?
    - a] Following God’s will as children makes us brethren, and brethren always love each other, I John 2:10-11 He that loveth his brother

abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

- b] That bond of love will unite us and overcome adversity, I Cor. 13:4-8 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: ...

### III. Promoting a Lie

#### A. Objection

1. Those promoting change in the church often tell us defending the truth is unnecessary.
2. They encourage us to take a more open approach to our faith.
3. If we believe in God, we must also believe that any way contrary to his is a lie.

#### B. Examples

1. Doctrine: "All are guilty of sin."
  - a. Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
  - b. Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
  - c. What is the alternative doctrine?
  - d. 1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.
  - e. Teaching any other doctrine than the Biblical doctrine on this matter makes one a liar.
2. Doctrine: "Knowing God means keeping His commandments."
  - a. 1 John 2:3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.
  - b. What is the alternative doctrine?

- c. 1 John 2:4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.
  - d. Teaching any other doctrine than the Biblical doctrine on this matter makes one a liar.
- 3. Doctrine: “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.”
  - a. 1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.
  - b. What is the alternative doctrine?
  - c. 1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.
  - d. Teaching any other doctrine than the Biblical doctrine on this matter makes one a liar.
- 4. When we teach something other than the Bible Truth, we are liars.
  - a. When we lie, we are neither serving nor imitating Christ.
  - b. John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.
- 5. Truth and lies are polar opposites.
  - a. 1 John 2:21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.
  - b. We must choose to defend one or the other

## **Conclusion**

- I. In Summary, Eph. 4:14-16 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of

the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

A. Lies lead us away from Christ.

B. The Truth helps us to grow as individuals and as congregations.

C. The Truth leads us towards Christ.

D. The Truth makes us one unified body that can increase in strength and love.

II. Why wouldn't we defend the truth?



# IN DEFENSE OF THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

## *D. Norman Easter*

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Norman Easter was born in St. Louis, MO, and is married to Lois E. (Emily) Easter. Their children are Mrs. Chrys Watson (Leedey, OK), Mrs. Kim Mardis (Oklahoma City, OK), and Mr. D. Norman Easter II (Edmond City, OK).

He attended Tulsa University and Cameron University, where he received training in religion, philosophy, speech and counseling.

Norman began preaching in May, 1950, in Sullivan, MO. He preached his first Gospel meeting at age fifteen and has continued in meetings (in numerous states, Russia and the Ukraine) and local work from that time. He has done local work in Missouri, Oklahoma, and Kansas. Norman retired from local work in 2006 and now holds gospel meetings, speaks at lectureships and fill-ins preaching.

As a note of interest, Norman is "Listed in 'Who's Who' of Outstanding Men of Oklahoma." Norman owns and operates a clock repair shop at 3937 College in Bethany, OK. He now resides at 7908 NW 5th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73127.

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### ***Matthew 28:18-20***

#### Introduction

A. It is my purpose to point out the authority of Christ.

B. J E S U S:

1. Is eternal, yet treated as mortal.
  - a. Created all things, yet was rejected by his creatures.
  - b. Is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, was executed as a criminal of state.
  - c. Had no servants, yet they called Him M a s t e r.
  - d. Had no degree, yet they called Him T e a c h e r.
  - e. Had no medicines, yet they called Him H e a l e r.
  - f. He had no army, yet kings feared Him.
  - g. He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.
  - h. He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.
  - i. He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.
  - j. He was crucified by the authority of men, yet reigns above all sovereignties today.
  - k. He was judged by His creatures, yet will Judge all creation.
2. I feel honored to serve such a Lord who has all knowledge, has all power, and yet who loves us, redeemed us, sanctified us and saves us!
3. ***John 20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my***



***God.***

C. With a multitude of approaches at my disposal, I shall choose the following.

1. Although endless proofs and discourses could be offered at each juncture of the fact of Christ' authority,
2. I shall choose only a few of the passages that give loud proclamation to the sovereign authority of Christ.
3. Of those "few passages" in the manuscript, I shall hastily use a "few passages" to establish the proposition of Christ's authority.
4. Others I shall leave for the consideration of the reader.

D. I shall declare Christ' authority:

- 1, by the fact of his co-existence and eternal nature in the Godhead before time had its accounting.
2. by the right of Christ as the Creator of all things.
3. by His role in the Old Testament dispensations,
4. by the sovereignty of
  - a. the nature of His ruling as Prophet, Priest and King of His Kingdom.
  - b. His rule of the nations
  - c. the authoritative nature of His Word
  - d. His final judgment and eternal reward or punishment of all souls in eternity.

E. I should like to conclude with a brief, but urgent application of the principle of the authority of Christ for the individual, the family and the church.

I. THE FACT OF CHRIST'S CO-EXISTENCE AND ETERNAL NATURE IN THE GODHEAD BEFORE TIME HAD ITS ACCOUNTING.

A. Co-Equal In The Godhead:

1. ***John 1:1; John 17:5; Revelation 13:8; Hebrews 1:4***
2. Before the foundation of the World. ***John 17:24*** Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of

the world.

3. **Matthew 25:34** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
4. **1 Peter 1:20** Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

B. The unity of the Godhead.

1. **John 10:30** I and my Father are one. **John 17:5,21**

C. Christ's authority can be seen in the fact that He is and always has been God.

## II. THE RIGHT OF CHRIST AS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS.

A. A brief consideration of three passages:

### 1. **John 1:1-4**

- a. In the beginning was the Word— of all time and created existence, for this Word gave it being , “before the world was” or, from all eternity. was the Word. (**John 17:5, John 17:24**)
- b. The Word was with God — having a conscious personal existence distinct from God (as one is from the person he is “with”), but inseparable from Him and associated with Him (**John 1:18; John 17:5; 1 John 1:2**), where “THE FATHER” is used in the same sense as “God” here.
- c. The Word was God —“in substance and essence God”; or was possessed of essential or proper divinity. Thus, each of these brief but pregnant statements is the complement of the other, correcting any misapprehensions which the others might occasion. Was the Word eternal? It was not the eternity of “the Father,” but of a conscious personal existence distinct from Him and associated with Him. Was the Word thus “with God?” It was not the distinctness and the fellowship of another being, as if there were more Gods than one, but of One who was Himself God - in such sense that the absolute unity of the God head, the great principle of all religion, is only transferred from the region of shadowy abstraction to the region of essential life and love. But why all this definition? Not to give us any abstract information about certain mysterious distinctions in the Godhead, but solely to let the reader know who it was that in the fullness of time “was made flesh.”

### 2. **Hebrews 1:1-14**

- a. God speaks to us by His Son, who is the heir of all things, and by whom

He made the worlds.

- b. He is the express image of the Father and upholds all things by the word of His power.
- c. But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:
- d. He is anointed above His fellows
- c. He laid the foundation of the earth and the Heavens are the work of His hands
- e. Though He is the same and His years shall not fail – He shall fold the heavens as an old garment.
- f. Only to Him has God said, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

3. ***Col. 1:15-22***

- a. The Book of Colossians presents Christ as preeminent.
- b. Paul lists at least ten points of Christ's supremacy.
  - 1). Image of the invisible God (Eikon: perfect likeness/manifestation).
  - 2). Firstborn over all creation (supremacy in rank).
  - 3). Before all things (preexistence).
  - 4). In Him all things consist (sustainer).
  - 5). He is the head of the body, the church (ruler).
  - 6). He is the beginning (originator/source).
  - 7). He is the firstborn from the dead that in all things He might have the preeminence.
  - 8). In Him all the fulness dwells.
  - 9). He reconciles all things to Himself.
  - 10). He presents us holy, blameless and irreproachable in His sight.

4. Two profound statements are made:

- a. (Vs. 16) All things were created through Him and for Him.
- b. (Vs. 18) That in all things He might have the preeminence.

5. These passages speak to Christ's authority.

6. ***1 Cor. 15:27*** For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (Note ***1 Tim. 2:4,5***)

B. The Fact That Christ Is The Creator And Sustainer Of All Things Gives Him Authority Over All Things.

### III. HIS ROLE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT DISPENSATIONS.

- A. There are many statements and happenings in the O.T. which appear to refer to Christ and His direct dealings with people in the Old Testament. (I have often wondered about Abraham, his knowledge, and by whom it was revealed to him. ***John 8:56*** Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. In Romans, it is said that Abraham knew of faith, obedience, justification, the coming of Christ and eternal life.)
- B. Concerning the Law: ***Gal 3:19*** Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. There is one mediator. Between man and God. ***1 Tim. 2:5***
- C. The reality of His Authority is understood in the fact of His partnership, inauguration, and prophecies in the Old Testament. ***Gen. 1:26; 11:7; 18, 19***

### IV THE SOVEREIGNTY OF HIS RULE AND KINGDOM

- A. God spoke to Moses of the coming Prophet with authority. ***Deut. 18:18***
  - 1. Peter declared this to be a prophesy of Christ. ***Acts 3:22,23***
- B. The point of ***Php. 2:5-11*** is the submissive, obedient Christ Jesus exalted to a name above every name, to whom every knee should bow, in Heaven and earth and to whom every tongue should Confess that He is Lord. Cf. ***Heb. 5:6-10***
- C. The authority of Christ is seen in the preparation and order of His kingdom.
  - 1. ***Isa.9:6; Dan.7:13,14***
    - a. The King and His Kingdom is both prophesied and realized. Dan 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
    - b. ***Lk. 22:29*** And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
    - c. ***Col. 1:13; 1 Tim. 6:15*** For He in His own time will reveal who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,
    - d. ***Matthew 16:18; Heb. 12:28;***

- e. **Rev. 19:16** And He has on His garment, and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
- f. Prophet, Priest and King
- g. **Matthew 16:18; Heb. 12:28**

D. The authority of Christ is seen in His authority over the nations of the world.

- 1. **Rom. 13; 1 Pet. 2:13**
- 2. **Rev. 17:14** These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them. For He is Lord of lords and King of kings. And those with Him are the called and elect and faithful ones.

#### V. THE AUTHORITATIVE NATURE OF HIS WORD

A. **Matthew 7:29; Matthew 5, 6; Col. 3:16; Matthew 7:21-28; John 16:13-17; John 14:26; Gal. 1:12; Gal. 1:6-10; 2 John 9-11; 2 Th. 7-9; Rom. 2:17; 1 Cor. 14:37**

B. **John 12:48**

#### VI. HIS FINAL JUDGMENT ADMINISTERING ETERNAL REWARD OR PUNISHMENT OF ALL SOULS FOR ETERNITY.

A. **John 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:10,11; Matthew 25:31ff**

B. **John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:15ff**

#### VII. APPLICATION: **LK 6:46** "AND WHY CALL YE ME, LORD, LORD, AND DO NOT THE THINGS WHICH I SAY?"

A. Individual

- 1. The Christian life should reflect the authority of Christ.
- 2. In godly living – Col.3:1ff
- 3. Husbands, wives children, servants.  
His authority is to be observed in all things pertaining to life and godliness was anticipated long ago. Deut. 18:18,19; Acts 3:22,23; So many "Christian homes" are so devoid of real Christianity in attitude, speech, and conduct that it is difficult to define them as "Christian" or a "home".
- 4. Many are "religious but not righteous"

- a. Speech – slang is so prevalent in the use of the name of divinity in the church that it is a disgrace to the name Christian.
  - b. Dress – modesty seems to be a lost concern. Christians dress like the world from the slouchy unbecoming to the down-sight to the up-sight and tight sight as vulgar, indecent, unbecoming fashion, totally void of shame-faced sobriety, and godliness that reflects respect to the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, by both men and women.
  - c. Conduct – The Lack of holiness, “without which no man shall see the Lord,” reminds me of the statements of Vance Havner at the Southern Baptist Convention. After much boasting of the number of members, Vance was called on to speak. He said, “Yes, we are many, but not much. It is so bad in some places that in order for the average worldling to place membership he has to back-slide”.
  - d. Many treat the New Covenant much like the Jews treated the Law of Moses in the Mishna. Here is the Law of God, and here are twenty-five loop-holes to get around it. If you don’t believe it talk to members and elders about marriage, divorce and re-marriage, gambling, social drinking, forsaking the assemblies, instrumental music, women in leadership, etc.
- B. The Church – the church is no more the New Testament church than it follows the New Testament.
- 1. The need of spiritual, Bible knowing leaders is the greatest need in the church today. Read, Hebrews 13:7,17 “who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their life they watch for your souls, as they that must give account,...” and ask the average member if that sounds like an elder or a faithful preacher.
    - a. Who is it that feeds, teaches and exemplifies? When elders confess, “I don’t know much about the Bible, the authority of Christ is ignored. When a little girl comes crying that an elder – school teacher, took the name of the Lord in vain in his anger – the authority of Christ is ignored.
    - b. When congregations appoint un-qualified men as elders and deacons – the authority of Christ is ignored.
    - c. When elders will allow a “fair speech” “anti” or “liberal” preachers in the pulpit for the second sermon, the authority of Christ is ignored.
    - d. When sermons are little moral platitudes, little warm fuzzys, little grey squirrels, baby rabbits and little yellow duckies, the authority of Christ is ignored. Little moral lessons, good and poor, are often drawn from texts that are taken completely out of context..
    - e. When the “whole council of God” is ignored for “self-help,” makes me feel good, “sin is not so bad,” sermons, the authority of Christ is ignored.
    - f. When preachers and congregations demand shallow non-doctrinal sermons, the authority of Christ is ignored.
  - 2. Remember, “liberalism” dissolves the church into nothingness and anti-ism

splinters the church into nothingness.

3. When innovations in government, worship and the work of the church go unchallenged by elderships, the authority of Christ is ignored.
4. Where so called “youth ministries” with unlimited budgets by boys that have little or no Bible knowledge are glorified baby sitters that take kids on expensive trips.
5. One generation of godly elders prohibiting “change agents,” “anti” or “liberal” preachers in the pulpit would bring the church back to the “Old Paths” where the authority of Christ is respected and adhered to.

C. Praise be to God where God-fearing, Bible knowing elders shepherd the flock.

1. Praise God for elders who sponsor mission and benevolent programs that are faithful to the Word of God.
2. Praise be to God where women, including elders’ wives, are in submission as godly women.
3. Praise God where deacons serve in dedicated service to the congregation.
4. Praise be to God for preachers who study and present the text in context.
  - a. Where preachers call the sinner to repentance, encourage the faint-hearted and live as an example in faith, life and love.
  - b. Praise God when preachers expose error, establish truth and proclaim the doctrines found in the everlasting Gospel of Christ. **Mk. 16:15,16; 2 Tim. 4:1-4**
5. Remember “sound” (healthy) doctrine will keep the body of Christ healthy when the viruses of false teachers and the germs and evil bacteria of the world are spread.
  - a. **Ti. 1:9**, Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers....
  - b. **13** This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith...
  - c. **2:1** But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

**CONCLUSION:**

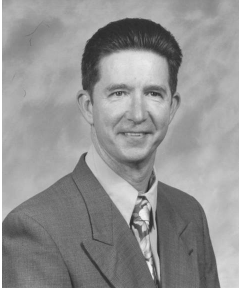
A. ***Matthew 28:18-20***

B. ***Isa. 9:6***

# IN DEFENSE OF NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM

*David Brassfield*

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David Brassfield was born in Cushing, Ok. and attended Oklahoma Christian from 1972-1976 and 1987-1990, receiving the following Degrees: Bachelor of Arts in Bible (1976) and Master of Arts in Ministry (1990). His wife's name is Carol and they have two children.

He has done local work in Kansas and Oklahoma and has written articles appearing in the following papers: *One Body*, *Firm Foundation*, *Family* (Harding Univ.), *Image Magazine*, *Forthright Magazine*. He has preached for 34 years and has worked with the Newalla church of Christ for 21 years.

His daughter and her husband and son are with the Waynesboro, VA church of Christ where he serves as the involvement minister. David's son-in-law (Michael Jones) is the grandson to Dr. Bill Jones, (retired) O.C. professor of Old Testament and Bible. David's son graduated last December from Oklahoma Christian with a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and currently preaches part time with the church of Christ in Cement, OK. He and his wife currently live in Oklahoma City while she completes her degree at Oklahoma Christian.

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## Introduction:

- A. The new leader of the Ford Corporation asked a question no one could answer. "Why does an automobile maker that is struggling to survive stop making the best selling car in the world?" After the meeting marked by their silence ended, Ford started manufacturing the Taurus again and its sales have improved markedly.
- B. The question as to why so many in the religious world either deny the validity of baptism or try to distort its meaning and method is a little clearer than the Ford Taurus question. If Satan can disrupt one link of the chain that connects God with his creation, he can separate man from God's favor. In the garden, the serpent only desired that the woman take one bite from the forbidden fruit. In the newly divided kingdom, Jeroboam only asked that the Israelites under his leadership not go to Jerusalem for worship, but to stay closer for the sake of convenience. Lines are drawn to keep one from being baptized into Christ. Eckstein noted in his journey "From Sinai to Calvary" that baptism into Christ is the one thing Jews will not permit. A Jewish man may marry a Christian, become an active participant and contributor to her church and be fine with the family, but the moment he is baptized he is rejected. A funeral will be held by his own family in which he is pronounced dead. To be baptized into Christ for a Jew is to forsake the nation that rejected the Messiah and cling to Him as the Savior for whom his people still wait in vain. Barriers are erected to keep one from true obedience to the gospel. Delays are commonplace in some denominations. Alternatives to immersion are suggested in others. Preachers declare baptism to be an insincere way of trying to earn one's own salvation.



This evening, we intend to present the Bible's own defense for the necessity and form of faith-based immersion into Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

I. In Defense of the Authority for Baptism

A. **Luke 20:4**: The baptism of John

1. Jesus asked the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people if John's baptism was from heaven or men.
2. As they reasoned among themselves, they realized that if they said, "From Heaven" they would be asked why they did not BELIEVE him.
3. **Luke 7:30** tells us that the Jewish leaders rejected God's purpose for them. How does Luke know that? Because they would not be baptized by John.
4. **Mark 16:16** tells us that the one who believes and is baptized shall be saved. If John's baptism is from heaven, can the baptism taught by the one for whom John prepared the way be anything short of divine?

Conclusion: Belief and baptism were clearly linked together even in John's baptism. The Jews knew that if you believed in what John said and who he said he was you would be baptized by him. Those who were not baptized knew they invited a just and public accusation that they did not believe God sent John. To reject the baptism of Jesus is to reject His authority.

B. The baptism of the Ephesian dozen.

1. Paul finds men who had been immersed under John's teaching and taught them about Jesus. He convinced them that their baptism was invalid, therefore they needed proper baptism. It is of interest to note that when Paul wrote that there is "one baptism," it was in a letter addressed to the disciples in Ephesus!
2. Paul is the apostle who rejects anything not necessary for salvation. In Galatians, Paul feels that the addition of circumcision or any other part of the Old Law was an effort to teach a different gospel other than that which saved the Galatian Christians. To emphasize the fact that the gospel needs no outside help to save, Paul cites his own apostolic authority as coming not from any man, but from God.

Paul also refused to allow the circumcision of Titus (**Gal. 2:3**) by those brethren in Jerusalem who were of high reputation. Paul would allow no blurring of the line between sin and salvation. It was only by the power of the gospel that men were saved (**Rom. 1:16**)

Conclusion: To “rebaptize” these twelve men in *Acts 19* is an extreme departure from Paul’s normal actions and principles unless that baptism he brought them to was an absolute necessity to their salvation.

C. The baptism of Cornelius and his household (*Acts 10*)

1. Cornelius was a righteous, God-fearing man (*Acts 10:22*). He would be already considered saved by a majority of today’s denominations even before the arrival of Peter. But, Cornelius lacked two things: First, a knowledge and faith in Jesus Christ; and Second, an obedience to the gospel of Jesus.
2. Peter was still hung up on the matters of the Old Law, but at this time he is at least open to more thinking on the subject after God thoroughly confused him by a thrice repeated vision on a rooftop. Peter’s opening comments to the household of Cornelius are civil, but far from cordial or polite. He makes it clear he does not think he should really be there and puts the onus of his presence on God.
3. It is only after God’s obvious acceptance of these uncircumcised Gentiles that Peter realizes God does not share his present prejudices. After making certain that his fellows are also convinced (“can any refuse water for these to be baptized?” v. 47), Cornelius and those with him are COMMANDED to be baptized. No where else will you find such a command unless it be in the accusing question of Ananias in *Acts 22:16* when Paul was told, “And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.”

Conclusion: If God had accepted Cornelius without circumcision or any other adherence to the Law of Moses, is it logical or consistent to argue that Peter would COMMAND another act if God does not require it?

II. In Defense of the Mode of Baptism

We use the term “mode of baptism” only in an accommodative sense tonight. Just as we know the sun does not “rise” or “set”, but that it only appears to do so from our perspective, yet we know that God accommodates Himself to our understanding when he uses those terms in *Mal. 1:11*, “For from the rising of the sun, even to its setting, My name will be great among the nations. . . “

- A. Some in the religious world have determined that sprinkling, pouring, or immersion are accepted modes, or forms, of baptism. In fact, only one truly is faithful to the Greek word *baptidzo*. The Greek word for “I pour out” is *ekcheo*. The word for “I sprinkle” is *rantidzo*. In *Leviticus 4:6-7* the Septuagint (LXX - the Greek version of the Old Testament) has all three words as it describes the duties of the priest. In verse 6 he is to DIP his finger and SPRINKLE some of the

blood. In verse 7 he is to POUR OUT the bull's blood at the base of the altar. The LXX uses baptidzo for DIP, rantidzo for SPRINKLE, and ekcheo for POUR OUT.

- B. Fee and Stuart, in their book "How to Read The Bible For All Its Worth" refer to it as a basic rule that "*a text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its authors or his readers*". If that is accepted, then it is not possible for the Greek speaking people of the days of Jesus and the Apostles to read the word baptism and conclude it was anything other than a dipping or immersion, since there were distinctly separate words for the actions depicting pouring and sprinkling. If that rule is rejected, one may as well throw away all laws, constitutions, contracts, and religious writings for the reader, not the authors become the final judge of their meanings. Such would bring about chaos in the political and social world just as badly as its rejection has brought about a Babel of confusion in the world of denominationalism!
- C. One does not have to be a Greek expert to see that the use of baptism in the New Testament is properly a complete immersion. Consider the following passages that describe baptism.

**John 3:23**, "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and they were coming, and were being baptized."

You do not have to have much water to sprinkle or pour, but you do if you intend to immerse.

**Acts 8:38-39**, "And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing."

Again, only immersion: not sprinkling and not pouring, would require both the one baptizing and the one being baptized to go into the water.

**Rom. 6:3-4**, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Now, tell me this: If the funeral home were to take your dear, departed loved one and place the casket in the cemetery and pour a little dirt on it would you consider your loved one buried? If they sprinkled a little dirt on the casket and said it technically qualified as a burial, would you agree?

The story goes that a little boy heard his daddy preach that when we sprinkle a convert, we have buried him with Christ. The next day the family awoke to find that their goose had been killed by an animal during the night. The father told his son to take the goose out behind the barn and bury it. A few days later the father was behind the barn and was greeted by a very foul odor (no pun intended). He

found the dead goose with just a handful of dirt on it. He proceeded to get his son and start marching him to the woodshed. When his son asked why he was to be punished the father said, "Because I told you to bury that goose and all you did was throw dirt on it."

"But, father," said the boy. "I did just as you preached. If you can sprinkle a person to bury him in Christ, can I not sprinkle a goose to bury him?"

### III. In Defense of the Results of Baptism

Of all the actions involved in the conversion of a lost person to Christ, there is not one that finds a place in every conversion account in Acts nor has as many implications as does baptism.

- A. Baptism saves: **1 Pet. 3:21**, "And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you--not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience---through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

**Mark 16:16**, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned."

- B. Baptism washes away and remits sins: **Acts 22:16**, "And now why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name."

**Acts 2:38**, "And Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

It is worthy of note that the Philippian jailer washed the wounds of Paul & Silas before allowing baptism to wash away his own sins (**Acts 16:33**).

- C. Baptism clothes one with Christ. **Gal. 3:27**, "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

- D. Baptism buries us with Christ and unites us with Him. **Rom 6:3-4**, "Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized in the Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."

- E. Baptism frees us from sin. **Rom. 6:7**, "for he who has died is freed from sin."

- F. Baptism adds us to the church. After being baptized in response to Peter's statement, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" we are also told that "the Lord was adding to their number (KJV-the church) those who were being saved (Acts 2:40, 47).

- G. Baptism is how one is made a disciple of Christ. **Matt. 28:19**, "Go therefore and

make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

- H. Baptism is the very obedience of the gospel. Follow me on this one. **2 Thess. 1:7b-8**, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.” I understand how one believes the gospel. What is the gospel (apart from its literal definition of “good news”)?

**1 Cor. 15:1,3-4**, “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand. . . For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” I can believe that. How can I obey it?

**Rom. 6:4-5**, “Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” My obedience to the gospel is to do as Christ did. I die. I am buried. I rise in a newness of life. Only baptism properly depicts all of that.

#### IV Unexpected Defendants of Baptism

A. G. R. Beasley-Murray

Long acknowledged as perhaps the foremost Baptist on the subject of baptism, Beasley-Murray writes in Baptism In The New Testament “since the New Testament epistles do not appear to reckon with the phenomenon of an unbaptized disciple, how can one become a disciple and then be baptized?” (p. 88)

And, “A baptism without the Word is a defective baptism, even as the Word is not truly heard, confessed, and obeyed without baptism.” (p. 204)

B. Teachers of preachers

Loren Gieger recalled this particular time in a class at Baylor University. In a room of Baptist preachers, the professor asked him to explain to the class what same-hour baptism is and why churches of Christ practice it. After standing and giving his best accounting of our understanding of baptism and its purpose, brother Gieger sat down, expecting the professor to explain to the class where he was in error. What happened next was unexpected.

The professor simply leaned back and asked, “I wonder if we Baptists would have ever separated baptism from salvation had we not first separated baptism from the time of one’s conversion?”

Further study on my part found that the practice of delaying baptism after one had

professed a belief in Christ originated in the mission field where baptismal sites were infrequent or remote. As a practical matter, it made sense to missionaries to consolidate their baptismal trips and make one instead of many. No doubt the question was raised by someone there as to the eternal fate of one who died during that arbitrary delay. It would appear that the roots of the present Baptist doctrine of salvation saw convenience preceding conviction. It was a case where doctrine was made to fit practice instead of practice being made to conform to doctrine.

C. H. Cremer (German writer and theologian)

“One receives nothing from his baptism without faith and one receives nothing from his faith without baptism.”

D W. Mundle (Lutheran writer)

“We Lutherans must therefore engage in missions in order to bring holy baptism to the heathen, for he that is not born anew of water and the Spirit cannot come into the kingdom of God.” He also contends that though faith and baptism are inseparable in the New Testament, baptism is the event wherein God acts, hence it is indispensable: “Through it, and through it alone, does the Christian enter into fellowship with Christ; here that fellowship is grounded, independently of the subjectivity of our faith-knowledge and religious experience.”

Conclusion: Baptism is the focal point of Satan’s attacks. The Jewish nation will permit essentially any participation in “Christian” practices except baptism.

Denominations that deny the necessity of baptism often misapply **Rom. 10:9** (“... if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved”) and ignore the fact that these people were ALREADY saved, as they were the ones baptized into the death of Jesus in chapter six and were called “Saints” in chapter one verse seven.

Baptism becomes the focal point because it is the most recognizable and verifiable part of man’s salvation. A person could repent and another could have great faith in Jesus and escape Satan’s notice just as Joseph of Arimathea could be a disciple of Jesus secretly. Satan is not omniscient, as is God. If Satan could get a man to omit baptism, he could know for certain that he was never saved.

For all our efforts, baptism does not ultimately need our defense. He who saves us from our sins told us: “But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw there a man not dressed in wedding clothes, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (**Matt. 22:10-11**)

Baptism is the believer’s wedding garment. No one will enter heaven without it, no

matter how many years spent inside a denominational church with a naked profession of faith only. No one who proudly wears the wedding garment of obedience to the gospel, and who has continued to live in the blood of the Lamb will be denied entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

# IN DEFENSE OF A *CAPPELLA* MUSIC IN WORSHIP

## *Dan Fredman*

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Dan was born in Oklahoma City, OK. He attended Oklahoma Christian College from 1967-1968, and 1992-1993, receiving a Bachelor's in Bible. He also attended Harding's Christian Communication Program (CCP) in 1980-1982.

He and his wife, Pam, have been married for 39 years and have three children. Their son, Johnie Fredman, serves as Campus Minister at East Central University in Ada, OK for the Southwest church of Christ. Their son-in-law, Jonathan Crowell serves as the Bible Chair director at Eastern State College in Wilburton, OK for the church of Christ in Wilburton, OK.

Dan has preached for 41 years, 26 being in full time work. He has worked with church of Christ in Broken Bow, OK for nine years. He has done local work in three states.

As a note of interest, Dan attended the Barnes church of Christ in 1952 and attended the Schwartz school in the area. Schwartz was one of the last one room schools in the state and Dan was one of three students in the second grade. The family moved to McLoud in 1953.

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### Introduction

#### A. In defense of: A Cappella music in worship.

1. All I can do in the next few minutes or so is to cover the basics.
2. There is actually enough material for several lessons dealing with the reasons we use only a cappella music, why we sing without instruments in the worship of the Lord's church.
3. This has been a prominent topic for study and discussion in the church for the past 250 years and in the religious world for the past 600 years.
4. That in itself, is an amazing statement - how old is the church approximately? Over 2000 years old - but instrumental music has been a topic for discussion in the church for only 250 out of 2000 years. That should tell us something by itself.
5. We will talk more about the history of instrumental music later in the lesson.

#### B. Before anything can be discussed concerning the worship of Almighty God, man must understand the basis of his relationship with God.

1. This basis is given to us in many passages but they are all pretty well summed up in these two passages.



- a. Jn. 4:21-24
  - 1) Worship of God is a spiritual activity because God Himself is a Spirit.
  - 2) Since God is "God," our worship of Him must be according to His instructions, His directions and His desires not ours.
  - 3) Because of His majesty and might, He will not accept superficial worship done for show, it must be sincere, coming from the heart.
- b. Col. 3:17
  - 1) "In the name of" means "by the authority of."
  - 2) All we do in word or deed, which naturally includes our worship of God, must be done by the authority of Christ.
  - 3) In other words, every act must be authorized by Christ.

C. As we study this lesson, we will follow this basic plan.

- 1. NT commands concerning singing.
- 2. Arguments for IM and answers to them.
- 3. Historical understandings of singing in the NT church.

I. NT commands and examples concerning singing.

A Singing passages –

- 1. ***Mt. 26:30***
- 2. ***Mk. 14:26***
- 3. ***Acts 16:25***
- 4. ***Rom. 15:9***
- 5. ***Cor. 14:15***
- 6. ***Eph. 5:19***
- 7. ***Col. 3:16***
- 8. ***Heb. 2:12***
- 9. ***Jam. 5:13***

- B. The Greek words used for singing in these passages.
1. I won't list them verse by verse because they are repeated over and over again. I will tell you where they are used.
  2. The Greek words
    - a. ADO (*Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16*) - to sing praise to God.
    - b. HUMNOS (*Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Mk. 14:26; Acts 16:25; Heb. 2:12*) - a song of praise addressed to God.
    - c. ODE (*Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16*) - used only in the NT, a song in praise of God or Christ.
    - d. PSALMOS / PSALLO (*1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jam. 5:13*) - To sing a song of praise to God. More will be discussed concerning the use of "psallo" later in the lesson.
  3. Notice, not one word of an instrument in a single passage - not in command, not in example, not even referred to.
  4. Words must be used in accordance with their meaning at the time of their writing - not what they meant years before or after their writing.
    - a. Example: Vulgar - 1500 A.D. referred to "common," a common people as opposed to educated or cultured people, a common language - the Latin Vulgate Bible translated by Jerome.
    - b. Today - vulgar means indecent, offensive or crude.
  5. The word "PSALLO" had also changed its meaning over the years.
    - a. It originally meant to pluck the twine or the strings.
    - b. But, by NT times the word had come to mean to sing vocally.
    - c. In fact, in NT times if one was to "PSALLO" and use an instrument - the instrument had to be specified. Paul, by inspiration, follows the grammatical rules of the time in both, Eph. 5:19 & Col. 3:16, when he specifies the instrument - sing with the heart.
  6. All these passages in the NT either command or set the example of a cappella singing with no IM accompaniment.

II. Arguments for IM.

A. They are used in the OT, therefore God approves the use of IM in worship to Him.

1. Did God approve the use of instruments in the OT? Yes!
  - a. **2 Chron. 29:25**
  - b. They were commanded by God to be used in their Temple worship as a part of the Law of Moses.
2. Does that mean God approves them today? No! In fact, it means just the opposite. This is one of the greatest proofs that God does not approve them today.
3. God says the Old Law was imperfect, He took it out of the way, did away with the Old Law to establish the New Law of Christ - the Perfect Law of Liberty (**Heb. 8-10; Jam. 1:25**).
4. If one keeps part of the Law, he must keep it all (**Jam. 2:10**).
5. If, because it was used in the OT, IM is right today, so are animal sacrifices, feast days, the burning of incense and a separate priesthood.
6. If God approves one, He must approve all. My Bible says He took the old Law out of the way to establish the New.

B. There are instruments in heaven (references to harps in Revelation).

1. First of all, I am not sure that there are harps in heaven - how would spiritual beings use material instruments?
2. Secondly, Revelation is written in symbolic language and, if one will notice, the vast majority of mentions of harps will say something like, "The sound as of harps" or "the sound as of harpers harping."
3. Thirdly, if something is in heaven, does that mean God intends for it to be in the church on earth? Jesus said in Matt. 22:30 that in heaven there is no marriage. If we are going to apply the harps now because they are in heaven, we must apply this one as well.

C. The word "PSALLO" (**Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16**) means to sing with the instrument.

1. As was discussed earlier, this was the original meaning of the word, but not by the time of the church. By the first century it was used in reference to singing only. **SEE ADDITIONAL NOTES**

2. Secondly, one better look at the context of both Eph. 5 and Col. 3 before taking this position. Neither of these chapters are discussing corporate worship, but rather, are discussing the Christian walk, the individual Christian life.
    - a. Every Christian is to do whatever is being commanded in the two verses.
    - b. Will this include corporate worship? Absolutely - that is a part of the Christian life.
    - c. But, if this includes the instrument - to be pleasing to God, every Christian would have to play the instrument when singing.
- D. First century Christians did not use instruments out of fear of discovery and persecution.
1. In the first 150 years of the church persecution was localized and the church did not hide to worship.
    - a. **Acts 2:46-47** - meeting in the temple daily.
    - b. **Acts 5:12-16** - meeting in Solomon's Portico, People held them in high esteem, Peter publicly walking the streets, people coming from other cities.
    - c. **Acts 5:42** - teaching every day in temple and from house to house.
    - d. **Acts 9:31** - church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace - continued to increase.
  2. Fear had nothing to do with not using instruments to worship in the first century.
- E. The Bible doesn't say not to use instruments.
1. We must understand the silence of the scriptures.
  2. It is vital that we submit to the authority of God's word in all things.
    - a. **Matt. 7:21**
    - b. **Col. 3:17**
  3. The silence of the scriptures is both, prohibitive and permissive.
    - a. Where God has not specified - His silence is permissive.
      - 1) **Matt. 28:19-20** - Jesus said go. He did not say how to go - walk, bus, train, fly, ride donkeys. How we go is up to us as long as we go!
      - 2) We have the example and command in the scriptures that we are to come together as the church on the Lord's Day and observe the Lord's Supper. He did not say WHERE. Homes, borrowed buildings or

owning a building for the church - its up to us as long as we gather together as God's people.

4. Where God has specified - His silence is prohibitive.
  - a. Jesus used fruit of the vine and unleavened bread for the Lord's Supper - He did not say don't use steak and potatoes, He did not say don't use Dr. Pepper or orange juice - He has specified by His example what we are to use, that eliminates everything else. The silence of the scriptures is prohibitive here.
  - b. The Lord commanded "baptism" meaning immerse - this eliminates sprinkling or pouring as baptism - He did not have to say "don't sprinkle or don't pour for baptism."
5. The Lord specified by inspiration through the NT writers that His people are to "psallo" (to sing) and specified the instrument by which we are to sing - the heart.
6. Singing is a form of music and this eliminates any kind of music other than singing.
7. Some object that I.M. is just an aid like a song book or a pitch pipe. Not true!
  - a. When one uses a song book - what kind and how many kinds of music do you have? One - vocal!
  - b. When one uses a pitch pipe or tuning fork to get the pitch, how many and what kinds of music do you have? One - vocal!
  - c. When one uses the instrument to play the song as it is being sung, how many and what kinds of music do you have? Two - vocal and instrumental.
  - d. One has then added to what God specified.
  - e. **2 Jn. 9**
  - f. **1 Cor. 4:6**

### III. The Testimony of History

- A. The Bible is to be our guide, not history. But history can, at times and in certain situations, confirm for us whether or not our understanding of certain things is correct.
  1. For instance - the Lord's Supper.
    - a. We read **Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16:1-2** and infer that the 1st century church met to observe the Lord's Supper EVERY 1st day of the week.
    - b. A study of church history confirms our beliefs. Church history from various sources all point to the truth of our understanding. History does not give us our beliefs, but confirms them.

2. The same can be true for other areas as well, including the worship of the church.
- B. History of singing in the worship of the church.
1. The scriptures and history are in complete agreement that I.M. was not ever used in the church or by the church when singing praises to God.
  2. From the establishment of the church through the next 600 years instruments were never used at all by anyone, even the apostate church.
  3. When an instrument was brought in during the 7th century, it caused such an uproar that it was not used until the 13th century.
  4. The split between the Greek Orthodox church and the Roman Orthodox church was a direct result of I.M.
  5. I.M. did not become prominent until 1700 years after the establishment of the church.
  6. Every major denomination opposed the use of instruments in praising God.
    - a. John Spencer Curwen of the Royal Academy of Music in London, Eng. said, "Men still living today can remember the time when organs were very seldom found out of the church of England. The Methodists, Independents, and Baptists rarely had them, and by the Presbyterians they were stoutly opposed."
    - b. John Calvin, along with John Knox the founder of the Presbyterian Church, in his commentary on the 23rd Psa. said, "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps and the restoration of the other shadows of the law."
    - c. Adam Clarke, one of the greatest of Methodist Commentators who ever lived, said in volume 2, page 690, concerning 2 Chron. 29:25, "But were it even evident, which it is not, either from this or any other place in the sacred writings, that instruments of music were prescribed by Divine authority under the law, could this be adduced with any semblance of reason, that they ought to be used in Christian worship? No; the whole spirit, soul, and genius of the Christian religion are against this: and those who know the Church of God best, and what constitutes its genuine spiritual state, know that these things have been introduced as a substitute for the life and power of religion; and that where they prevail most, there is least of the power of Christianity. Away with such portentous baubles from the worship of that Infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship him in spirit and in truth, for to no such worship are those instruments friendly."
    - d. John Wesley - great preacher for the Methodist Church, "I have no objection to instruments of music being introduced into our chapels,

- providing they are neither seen nor heard."
- e. Charles Spurgeon, greatest Baptist preacher who ever lived - preached in the Metropolitan Baptist Tabernacle in London, England to 1,000's of people - his writings are sold in all the Baptist Bookstores said, "I would as soon pray with machinery as sing with machinery," and refused to allow instruments to be used anywhere he preached.
  - f. David Benedict - Baptist Historian - said, "Staunch old Baptists in former times would have as soon tolerated the Pope of Rome in their pulpits as an organ in their galleries."
- 7. Church history, from the beginning, stands against the use of instruments in the worship of God.
  - 8. For nearly 1700 years all religious people stood together in agreement that I.M. was wrong and a violation of God's word.

#### Conclusion

- A. What can we say in defense of a cappella music in our worship today?
  - 1. We believe the NT commands a cappella singing. God did not say "make music" in spite of what the NIV says.
  - 2. He said "sing!"
- B. The definitions of all the Greek words support our belief.
- C. The example of the 1st century church supports our belief.
- D. The testimony of history supports our belief.
- F. We believe we must be completely and absolutely obedient to God to be pleasing in His sight.
- G. We believe that the addition of a mechanical instrument of music is a violation of God's will and puts one in violation of ***John 4:21-24; Col. 3:17*** and ***Rev. 22:18-19***.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

**DEFINITION OF THE WORD "PSALLO" FROM  
A GREEK/ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NT  
BY WALTER BAUER  
REVISED BY GINGRICH AND DANKER  
PAGE 891**

**Ψάλλω** fut. **ψάλω** (Aeschyl+; insec., LXX; Jos., Ant 11, 67; 12, 349) in our lit, in accordance w. OT usage, sing, sing praise w. dat. of the one for whom the praise is intended Ro 15: 9 (Ps 17: 50) Eph 5:19; in this pass. a second dat is added **τὰ καρδία υ μων** in or with your heart(s); here it is found with **αδω** (as Ps 26:6; 32: 3; 56: 8), and the question arises whether a contrast betw. the two words is intended. The original mng. of **Ψ.** was ‘pluck’, ‘play’ (a stringed instrument); this persisted at least to the time of Lucian (cf. Parasite 17). In the LXX **Ψ.** freq. means ‘sing’, whether to the accompaniment of a harp or (as usually) not (Ps 7: 18; 9:12; 107:4 al.). **This process continued until Ψ. in Mod. Gk. means ‘sing’ exclusively; cf Ψαλτης= singer, chanter, w. no ref. to instrumental accompaniment.** Although the NT does not voice opposition to instrumental music, in view of Christian resistance to mystery cults, as well as Pharisaic aversion to musical instruments in worship (s. EWerner, art ‘Music’, 1DB 3,466—9), it is likely that some such sense as make melody is best here. Those who favor ‘play’ (e.g. L-S-J; ASouter, Pocket Lexicon, ‘20; JMoffatt, transl. ‘13) may be relying too much on the earliest mng. of **ψάλλω**. B 6: 16 (cf. Ps 107: 4). **ψ. τω πνευμάτι.** and in contrast to that **ψ. τω νοι** sing praise in spiritual ecstasy and in full possession of ones mental faculties 1 Cor 14:15. Abs. sing praise Js 5:13. WSSmith, Musical Aspects of the NT, ‘62. M-M.’



## DEFINITION OF THE WORD "PSALLO" FROM THAYER'S GREEK/ENGLISH LEXICON OF NT GREEK, PAGE 675

ψάλλω; fut. ψαλῶ; (fr. ψάω, to rub, wipe; to handle, touch, [but cf. Curtius p. 730]); a. to pluck off, pull out: ἔθειραν, the hair, Aeschyl. Pers. 1062. b. to cause to vibrate by touching, to twang: τόξων νευρὰς χειρί, Eur. Bacch. 784; spec. χόρδην, to touch or strike the chord, to twang the strings of a musical instrument so that they gently vibrate (Aristot. probl. 19, 23 [p. 919<sup>b</sup>, 2]); and absol. to play on a stringed instrument, to play the harp, etc.: Aristot., Plut., Arat., (in Plat. Lys. p. 209 b. with καὶ κρούειν τῷ πλήκτρῳ added [but not as explanatory of it; the Schol. ad loc. says ψῆλαι, τὸ ἄνευ πλήκτρον τῷ δακτύλῳ τὰς χορδὰς ἐπαφᾶσθαι]; it is distinguished from καθαρίζειν in Hdt. 1, 155); Sept. for יָנַן and much oftener for נָנַן; to sing to the music of the harp; in the N. T. to sing a hymn, to celebrate the praises of God in song, Jas. v. 13 [R.V. sing praise]; τῷ κυρίῳ, τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ, (often so in Sept.), in honor of God, Eph. v. 19 [here A. V. making melody]; Ro. xv. 9; ψαλῶ τῷ πνεύματι, ψαλῶ δὲ καὶ τῷ νοῒ, 'I will sing God's praises indeed with my whole soul stirred and borne away by the Holy Spirit, but I will also follow reason as my guide, so that what I sing may be understood alike by myself and by the listeners', 1 Co. xiv. 15.\*

# IN DEFENSE OF SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT

## *Marion Fox*

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Marion was born in Sayre, OK and graduated from Sweetwater High School. He continued his education at the Elk City School of Preaching (receiving a certificate), and Oklahoma Christian College (Greek). He has earned the following degrees: Associate of Science, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and a Doctorate of Education.

He and Cynthia have been married for 38 years and they have three children. All of Marion's local work has been in Oklahoma. He has preached for 38 and 30 of that has been with the Barnes church of Christ. He is the Director of the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies and served in this work for seventeen years. He has had articles appear in the following papers: *Gospel Standard*, *Firm Foundation*, *Contending for the Faith*, *One Heart*, *Gospel Preceptor*, and *Think*.

He written the following books: *A Study of the Biblical Flood*, *The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. I*, *The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. II*, *The Role of Women, Vol. I*, *The Work of Women, Vol. II*, *The Great Commission*. He has also written many outline books for OKCSBS, including: *Fundamentals of the Faith*, *A Study of Angels, Satan, and Demons*, and *Logic and Debate*.

As a note of interest, Marion has engaged in five oral debates and two written debates.

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### I The original nature of the church government.

#### A The officers in the church (1 Cor. 12:28 & Eph. 4:11).

1. Apostles *αποστολος* “a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders.” (Thayer, page 68)
  - a. Paul was the last apostle (1 Cor. 15:8-9).
  - b. These men had authority over the churches (2 Cor. 10:8).
  - c. Their authority was then vested in the Scriptures (Eph. 3:3-4 etc.).
  - b. Paul was the last apostle (1 Cor. 15:8-9).
2. Prophets *προφητης* “to speak forth, speak out; hence prop. ‘one who speaks forth’ ... interpreter, Ex. vii. 1, cf. iv. 16; hence *an interpreter* or *spokesman for God*; *one through whom God speaks*.” (Thayer, page 553)
  - a. Prophesying ceased at the end of the age of miracles (1 Cor. 13:8-10).
  - b. The prophets were to cease from the land (Zechariah 13:2).
3. Elders *πρεσβυτερος* “of age; ...univ. *advanced in life, an elder, a senior*: ...a

## SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT - *Marion Fox*

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term of rank or office; among Christians, *those who presided over the assemblies* [or churches].” [Thayer, pages 535-536]

- a. The office (work) of elder is the same work as the office of bishop (Acts 20:17-32).

α - The elders were summoned to meet Paul (Acts 20:17).

β - These elders were called bishops (ASV) overseers (KJV) in Acts 20:28.

- b. The elders were told to shepherd (feed ASV) the church (Acts 20:28). Peter called the elders “shepherds” (pastors) in 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

- c. Titus was to ordain *elders* who are called *bishops* (Tit. 1:5-7).

- d. It must be concluded that the office of elder is the same office as bishop and the same office as pastor.

α - The Greek word πρεσβυτερος is translated **elder** or **elders** everywhere it is found, in the New Testament.

β - The Greek word πρεσβυτεριον is translated **elders** twice and **presbytery** once (1 Tim. 4:14).

γ - The Greek word ποιμην is translated **shepherd** in 17 of the 18 times it is found in the New Testament. It is translated **pastors** in Eph. 4:11.

δ - The Greek word επισκοπος is translated **bishop** in all five instances in which it is found, by the American Standard Version. The King James Version has the better translation, in Acts 20:28, but translates it as bishop in the other four instances.

4. Evangelists ευαγγελιστης “*a bringer of good tidings, an evangelist.*” (Thayer, page 257)

5. Deacons διακονος “one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master; a servant, attendant, minister.” (Thayer, page 138)

### B. Each congregation was autonomous (self governing).

1. Elders had authority over the local congregation (1 Tim. 5:17).

- a. Their authority was in the area of expediency (the manner of fulfillment of generic instructions).

- b. They could not make doctrine or change doctrine, not even the apostles had this power, they preached what the Lord wanted preached (Mt. 18:18)

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NASV)

Mt. 18:18 NASV Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

c. Examples of the authority of the elders:

α - They were in charge of the money sent for benevolence (Acts 11:29-30).

β - They were charged with overseeing the teaching program of the church (Acts 20:17-32).

2. There was a plurality of elders in each congregation.

a. The apostle Paul ordained elders (plural) in every church (Acts 14:23).

b. Titus was told to ordain elders (plural) in every city (Tit. 1:5).

c. In no instance does the New Testament even hint of there being only one elder in any church.

### II Ways that it was changed.

A. It was not changed prior to AD 100.

1. The epistle (letter) written by Clement of Rome, in AD 95, to the church in Corinth, mentions a plurality of elders (presbyters).

a. There is no hint of a bishop being over the elders (presbyters).

b. This did not develop until later.

2. The Didache [AD 130-150] makes no distinction between a bishop and an elder (Didache, 15)

B. In the second century one elder began to become dominant over the other elders. He chose the title of bishop for himself, exclusively.

1. The epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians, written about AD 160, seems to have a bishop over the church (I. E. 1, 2).

2. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians (I. E. 6.) asserts that the bishop is the spokesman for God.

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3. The Letter of the Smyrnaens on the Martyrdom of Polycarp, which occurred in AD 155 or 156, elevated the bishop above the other elders (16)
4. The Epistle of Polycarp spoke of the bishop and elders as a different group (preface).
5. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians (3 and 8) associates the bishop with division. It seems that the church was divided because of the bishop, not the elders.
6. The fact that Ignatius repeatedly tells various churches to submit to the bishop proves that there was something about the bishop that caused division. If there had not been a distinction between a bishop and an elder prior to this time, this would explain why it caused division.

### III A plea for a return to the New Testament practice.

#### A. Modern titles which are not found in the New Testament:

1. Pope
2. Patriarch
3. Cardinal
4. Archbishop
5. President
6. District superintendent

#### B. Let us return to the following:

1. Each congregation being ruled by plurality of elders.
2. Each congregation being served by a plurality of deacons.
3. Each congregation having an evangelist or evangelists.
4. No eldership ruling more than one church.

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5. Elders = bishops = pastors.

C. We have authority for those of “B” but no authority for those of “A.”

D. What if the church does not have two or more men qualified to serve as elders?

1. Men are to be the leaders in the spiritual realm.

2. Wise men will seek the counsel of others (including godly women [Prov. 15:22, 20:18, etc.]).

### THE CHARACTERISTICS THAT ELDERS NEED TO DO THEIR WORK

Introduction: Elders are the same men after they become elders they were before becoming elders. They have all the frailties and weaknesses they had before becoming elders. How can the church help them in their work?

I In their work as shepherds there are some particular things that are helpful to the shepherds.

A. The church can follow their lead.

1. The sheep need a shepherd to lead them into safety (Num. 27:16-19).

a. Joshua was charged to consult God for his wisdom (Num. 27:20-21).

b. Paul instructed the church at Corinth to follow him (1 Cor. 11:1).

2. The elders (shepherds) are to help the weak to become stronger (Ezek. 34:15-16).

a. There must be a mending of the wounds of sin (Gal. 6:1-2, Mt. 4:21, etc.).

b. They must be gentle with the sheep (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

3. Things good shepherds must do (Jn. 10:11-15).

a. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, just like a loving husband will give his life for his wife (Eph. 5:25-27).

α - If a man loves his wife enough to die for her, he will not abuse her in little matters. He will sacrifice for her in little things. (elders must sacrifice themselves for the flock in little matters – they must be willing

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to be inconvenienced for the good of the flock).

β - The sheep totally trust the shepherd because they know he loves them and is willing to protect them and care for them.

γ - The elders (shepherds) are to be called when the sheep are ill (Jas. 5:14-15).

b. False prophets (in New Testament times) were depicted as wolves in sheep's clothing (Mt. 7:15-20).

α - Zechariah prophesied that prophets would pass out of the land (Zech. 13:1-3).

β - This is probably why Peter speaks of false teachers rather than false prophets who would trouble the church (2 Pet. 2:1-2).

c. Good shepherds must not be afraid of confronting wolves (Tit. 1:13).

d. The sheep must get to know the shepherd (Jn. 10:14 and 10:1-6), this is why it is important that the elders get to know each member of the church.

B. Elders must have wisdom to lead the flock.

1. Solomon properly asked God for wisdom to lead Israel (2 Chron. 1:9-10).

a. Solomon was granted miraculous wisdom to be king.

b. We must study the Scriptures to make application of them to gain wisdom.

c. Elders do not know everything just because they are elders, they ought to seek the counsel of other Christians (Prov. 11:14).

2. Wisdom comes from the Word of God (2 Tim. 3:15, Ps. 19:8, and 119:98).

a. Wisdom and discernment are equated (Pro. 2:2-3 [Hebrew parallelism]).

b. We must exercise our senses to discern (Heb. 5:14).

c. God will providentially give us opportunities to apply what we have learned from the Scriptures to enable us to gain wisdom.

C. Elders (leaders) must constantly study the Word of God (Deut. 17:14-20).

1. God does the choosing of the leaders of His people (Deut. 17:15).

a. The qualifications of elders/bishops/shepherds are found in 1 Tim. 3:1-7

## SCRIPTURAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT - *Marion Fox*

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and Tit. 1:5-9.

- b. Other passages give them instructions (Acts 20:17-32 and 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
  - c. It is dangerous to choose a man who is not qualified to serve as a leader of God's people.
- 2. He must not allow his wife to draw him away from God (Deut. 17:17).
    - a. The qualifications of the wives of deacons are set forth in 1 Tim. 3:8-12.
    - b. If the lesser office must have qualified wives, the greater office must have qualified wives.
    - c. His wife also sets an example for the other women of the church.
  - 3. He must fully trust in God (Deut. 17:16).
  - 4. He must read the Scriptures every day (Deut. 17:18-20).
    - a. Paul commended the elders at Ephesus to the Word of God (Acts 20:32).
    - b. There is power in the Word of God (Rom. 1:16-17).

### D. Elders must have compassion for the lost.

- 1. Jesus had compassion on the sheep (Mt. 9:36-38).
  - a. Compassion caused Jesus to want to care for the sheep.
  - b. Compassion will cause the undershepherds to care for the sheep.
- 2. Elders will have a heart filled with compassion (Col. 3:12-14).
  - a. The elders will forbear, be kind, lowly, meek, longsuffering, etc.
  - b. They will distinguish between sheep and wolves (2 Tim. 2:24-26 & Tit. 1:13).





# IN DEFENSE OF THE END OF MIRACLES

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## INTRODUCTION:

- A. I appreciate the invitation and the opportunity to speak on this 19th Annual Lectureship.
- B. Some very timely subjects have been selected.
  - 1. Lessons that are greatly needed today.
- C. The topic assigned to me is "In Defense of the End of Miracles."
- D. With regard to miracles, there are several things I want to cover in this lesson.
  - 1. What are true miracles?
  - 2. What was their purpose?
  - 3. Miracles were to cease once the purpose was reached.
  - 4. There is no evidence of miracles being done today.

## I. What Are True Miracles?

- A. The subject of miracles is confusing to many people today because of the many ways the word miracle is used.
- B. Some use the word to describe any wonderful or amazing thing, such as "the miracle of birth," or "miracle of medicine." Occasionally we hear of a person being in a terrible accident - perhaps falling several stories out of a building window - and living to tell about it. These events are described as "miracles." They are truly amazing, but not miraculous. Some even call conversion (or the

spiritual birth) a miracle.

C. God has a law that governs both the spiritual and the physical realms. (Some call it natural law).

D. A true miracle is an event that transcends natural law and comes from a supernatural source. It is an event that is contrary to the usual course of nature. It is a "special" operation by God and goes beyond natural physical or spiritual laws commonly recognized in the world.

1. Physical birth is not a miracle. It is an event that conforms to natural, physical law.

2. Conversion (spiritual birth), is not a miracle, but is an event which conforms to spiritual law. (*John 3*) When one obeys God's commands - that is - when one conforms to the will of the LORD (*Rom. 6:17-18*), which has been revealed to us in "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (*Rom.8:2*), a spiritual birth takes place.

E. God doesn't have to use miracles to be active in the world.

1. "A good wife is of the Lord" (*Prov. 19:14*)

2. Adam got his wife by a miracle, God transcended natural law. (*Genesis 2:21-23*)

3. Isaac got his wife through natural means, yet God was working through natural law to bring it about. (*Gen. 24:7-48*) This is sometimes referred to as "providence."

4. Both Adam and Isaac got their wives from God. One was by a miracle, one was not.

F. True miracles were also instantaneous and complete.

1. The apostles healed the lame and the palsied instantly. (*Acts 3:7-8; 32-35*)

2. They even raised the dead. (Dorcas - *Acts 9:36-41*; Eutychus - *Acts 20:9-10*)

3. People were totally, completely, and instantly healed. (*Luke 13:10-13*)

## II. What Was the Purpose of Miracles?

A. There is design in all the mighty works of God. He does not do things without a purpose.

1. In studying miracles, one of the most important things to know and remember is the purpose of miracles. Actually, God had a dual purpose for using miracles.
  - a. Revelation of the truth.
  - b. Confirmation of the truth.
  - c. Miracles were always to fill some definite need. After that need was met, they ceased.
  - d. It is not a matter of God's power, but His plan.

B. For the Revelation of Truth.

1. **1 Cor. 1:21** "... the world by wisdom knew not God ..." It took a revelation.
2. Man left to himself could never have known God's great plan of redemption. It had to be made known to mankind by divinely inspired men. (**1 Cor. 2:11-14**) "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them* because they are spiritually discerned."
3. Christ promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit, "Whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you ALL things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." (**John 14:26**) (Emphasis mine).
4. He further assured them in (**John 16:13**) that the Holy Spirit would guide them "... into all truth: for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
5. When was this to happen?
  - a. After Jesus ascended back to the Father. (**John 16:7, 28**)
  - b. Before He ascended, He instructed the apostles to tarry "...in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." (**Luke 24:49**)
  - c. This power was to come when the Spirit came. (**Acts 1:8**)
  - d. This was to occur "...not many days hence." (**Acts 1:5**) Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit came. (**Acts 2**)
  - e. The apostles spoke "...as the Spirit gave them utterance." (**Acts 2:4**) (Revealing God's will.)
6. The apostles were not only empowered to speak in languages they had never studied, but they were also given power to do other miracles. "And fear came

upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles." (*Acts 2:43*)

7. The apostles spoke and wrote by the guidance of the Spirit to reveal God's scheme of redemption to man.
  - a. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "...by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." (*Eph.3:3-5*)
8. Thus the purpose of revelation was complete. No other truth is to be revealed. (*Jude 3; Gal. 1:8-9*)
  - a. Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them "... into all truth:" (*John 16:13*)
  - b. "According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (*2 Peter 1:3*)
  - c. "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*)
  - d. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost." (*2 Peter 1:20-21*)
- C. Miracles were not only for the purpose of revealing God's truth, but also for the confirmation of truth. (*Mark 16:15-20*)
  1. The gospel was to be preached in all the world. How could the preachers prove God had sent them and that the message was from God?
    - a. They had no New Testament. It had not been written yet.
    - b. The Lord gave them special powers by which they were able to convince the world He had sent them and that the message they spoke was from Him.
  2. Miracles also confirmed the truth of Jesus' mission and His divine Sonship.
    - a. *Matthew 11:2-5; John 1:46-51; John 2:23*
    - b. *John 3:2*
  3. Miracles were also used in the Old Testament for confirmation.

a. *Exodus 4:1-9*

4. All of God's truth -that He wishes for man to know- (Deuteronomy 29:29), has been revealed and confirmed.

a. *Hebrews 2:1-4*

III. Miracles were to cease once the purpose was fulfilled:

- A. All truth has now been revealed and confirmed. (*John 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:15-16; Heb. 2:1-4*) The purpose for them is now complete and finished.

- B. No further revelation or confirmation needed.

- C. Neither Jesus, His apostles, nor others need to continue to perform miracles in order for us to believe. *John 20:29*

- D. A thing revealed and proven is forever revealed and proven. A truth once confirmed is forever confirmed.

1. We now have the evidence in writing. *John 20:30-31* The written word of God.

2. The written word of God supplies the man of God completely to every good work. *2 Tim. 3:16-17*

- E. Miracles have fulfilled their purpose and the need for them has ceased. Only the wicked seek for more signs. *Luke 11:29*

1. We need nothing in addition to the word of God. *2 Peter 1:3*

2. Miracles once performed and attested to by credible witnesses stand as evidence for all time. That is why they are recorded in the Bible.

IV. Miracles Have Ceased: No Evidence of Them Being Worked Today.

- A. Not even the so-called speaking in tongues.

- B. New Testament usage:

1. Tongue as a member of our body.

2. A language or dialect.

3. Anything shaped like a tongue. (Such as a shoe tongue or wagon tongue).

- C. The gift is mentioned in only 7 chapters of the New Testament.
- D. The word *unknown* in the old King James Version is in italics. This means that it is supplied by the translators to help clarify a passage. Here, however, it has only served to obscure the correct meaning.
1. The (New English Bible) calls it ecstatic speech. (*1 Cor. 14:2*)
- E. The term tongues as used in the New Testament were languages that were used and understood by a nationality of people, not "ecstatic" speech. 4 "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia; 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretes, and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." (*Acts 2:4-11*) Try and substitute ecstatic or unknown in verses 6 and 8.
- F. Some will ask, "What about (*1 Cor. 14:27*)?"
1. The problem with that argument is that they were misusing their gifts. Read verses 22-24.
  2. The apostle Paul shows the proper use of the gifts in verses 5 - 9 and other parts of (*1 Corinthians 14*).
  3. An example is given in verses 8 - 11 of (*1 Cor. 14*).
- G. People who claim this gift say that, "...the Spirit takes complete control of their actions and speech." As a result, there is much confusion.
1. This claim is contrary to what the Bible teaches.
    - a. *1 Cor. 14:33* "For God is not *the author* of confusion ..."
    - b. (Verse 27) They were to take turns. "... *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and *that* by course; and let one interpret."
    - c. (Verse 28) "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church;..."
    - d. (Verse 32) This could be done. "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."

2. He that spoke in a tongue (language) that no one in the assembly understood edified only himself. "He that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; ..." (*1 Cor. 14:4*)

#### H. Signs Were To Cease

1. When "...we all come in the unity of the faith, ..." (*Eph. 4:13; Jude 3*)
2. When "...that which is perfect (or complete) is come," (*1 Cor. 13:8-10*)
  - a. That which is complete or "perfect' has come. (*Jas. 1:25; Eph. 4:12-13*); also "... earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (*Jude 3*)
3. They were to last approximately 40 years. From about A. D. 30 - the time Christ began His ministry, to about A. D. 70 - the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.
  - a. *Micah 7:15*

#### I. No Evidence Today

1. Nothing even remotely resembling the miracles of the apostolic age is being observed today.
2. The method of receiving them as they were bestowed in the early church is not available today.
  - a. In the first century, the only way men received such power was through a baptism in the Holy Spirit which came directly from heaven. As was the case in Acts - (*Acts 1:5, 8; Acts 2:1-18*) - on the 12 apostles.
  - b. Or by the laying on of an apostle's hands. (*Acts 8:18*)
  - c. By the time *Eph. 4:5* was written, there was only one baptism: a baptism in water. (*Acts 10:48*) No more baptism of the Spirit. It was fulfilled.
  - d. The laying on of the hands of an apostle is no longer valid. We have no apostles.
    - 1) In order to be an apostle, one had to be an eye witness of the resurrected Christ. (*Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1*)

#### CONCLUSION:

- A. The New Testament plainly teaches that miracles were not to be perpetual.
- B. The purpose of revelation and confirmation has been fulfilled.
  1. All truth has been revealed. We are warned not to accept any other



- revelations - even from an angel. (*Gal. 1:8-9*)
2. All truth has been confirmed. (*Mark 16:20*)
- C. Let us accept what the Bible teaches about miracles and not what men teach concerning them. (*Acts 17:11; Deut. 4:2; Pro.30:6; Rev.22:18-19*)
1. The Bible teaches that they would cease and they did.
  2. These miracles were written that we might believe and have life. (*John 20:30-31*)

# IN DEFENSE OF THE UNITY OF BELIEVERS

*Frank R. Williams*

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He has taught in three schools: The Northside School of Preaching, the School of Biblical Knowledge (Wetumka, OK) and the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies (Oklahoma City, OK). Frank has served as local preacher in Arkansas, Missouri, Wyoming, and Oklahoma and has preached for 39 years. He has written articles appearing in the *Gospel Advocate*, *Firm Foundation*, *Gospel Standard*, *Contending for the Faith*, *Gospel Journal*, *One Heart*, and edited *The Spirit of Restoration*.

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**TEXT: JOHN 17:20-21**

## **INTRO:**

- A. No greater subject was nearer the heart of Jesus of Nazareth than the unity of believers.
1. I know this to be true because as Jesus neared his death, he prayed to his Father in heaven, in what is truly “the Lord’s prayer,” and his subject was the unity of believers. He prayed: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one; as thou , Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
  2. In these words, Jesus not only revealed his deepest desire and concern but he also made three other most important points:
    - a. First, Jesus expressed two desires in **verse 20**: “Neither pray I for these alone (the apostles, frw) but for them also which shall believe on me through their word” – the church for which he died;
    - b. Second, in **verse 21**, he revealed the type of unity he had in mind: “that they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us” and,
    - c. Third, also in **verse 21**, he revealed the reason for this unity: “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”

3. It is anti-Christ to believe in division among believers!
  - a. Division among believers is against the desire of Jesus, the concern of Jesus, the prayer of Jesus, and the nature of Jesus. It is against the reason the Word became flesh and dwelt among the human family.
  - b. Yet, standing before us today is a world of religious division unparalleled in history.
  - c. The religion of Christ is nearly to the point of being unknown;
    - 1) Like the “altar to the unknown God” in Athens during the first century – **Acts 17:23**;
    - 2) We could today build an altar to “the unknown religion of Christ.”
- B. Walk down any street in America and ask the question: “What is the religion of Christ?” and you would get as many answers as people asked.
  1. There is no wonder that more and more people no longer believe in God, in the Bible, and that Jesus of Nazareth is the only begotten son of God.
  2. Division, in this loosely called realm of “Christendom,” has nearly, if not all together, destroyed any possibility of the Lord’s prayer becoming a reality in the general context
  3. May I impress upon your minds today, in the general context of “Christendom,” and the division that it represents, God will not count us guiltless!
  4. In the general context of “Christendom,” God will hold it against every so-called “Christian” for every name and for every doctrine that divides a-would-be believer from Christ and from the one church for which he died.

## **I. THE WORD BELIEVERS**

- A. However, before we can even approach the subject of unity among believers, as expressed in Jesus’ prayer, it is necessary that we understand the terms of the subject, the meaning of the words.
  1. Let us start with the word, “believers.”
    - a. First, as our Lord prayed, he was not using the word “believe” is a generic since.

- 1) It has nothing to do with the word “Christendom.”
  - 2) The words, “believe” and “believers,” do not yield themselves to the divided world of “Christendom:” – the denominational churches among us today.
- b. In the generic since the word “believer” may be applied to any person who believes in any thing.
- 1) It may correctly be said: **“He is a true believer”** in referring to an atheist, as such a person truly believes in atheism;
  - 2) It may correctly be said: **“He is a true believer”** in referring to a worshipper of idols, as he truly believes in idolatry;
  - 3) It may correctly be said: **“He is a true believer”** in referring to a Muslim, as he truly believes in the Koran and that Mohammad was a prophet of God;
  - 4) It may correctly be said: **“He is a true believer”** in referring to a Mormon, as he truly believes in the Book of Mormon and that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God; and
  - 5) It may correctly be said: **“He is a true believer”** in referring to a member of one of the thousands of denominational churches, as they truly believe in the doctrine of their denomination.
2. May I as kindly as it is within me is, say to you, Jesus was not praying for any of the five examples of “believers” just given, when he prayed: “but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.”
3. Jesus prayed for those who would become “believers” by means of the word the apostles preached, and
4. That word included both the Old and New Testaments, and nothing but the Old and the New Testaments.
- B. We need to know, for the sake of our own salvation, how the inspired writers of the New Testament use the words, “believe” and “believer.”
1. May I point out that the type of unity for which Jesus prayed will not allow the word “believer” to be used in the manner described in the five examples which I just covered?
  2. The “unity” for which Jesus prayed is expressed in his own words: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be

one in us.”

3. Therefore, the question: “How are Jesus and the Father one?”
  - a. Jesus and the Father are one in the following manner:
    - 1) The unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is understood in the word, “Godhead.”
      - a) The word, “Godhead,” expresses the state, dignity, condition, and quality, of being God; thus, their oneness.
      - b) In other words, every thing that makes God, God is included in the word “Godhead,” and there is the ultimate unity.
      - c) If it were possible, and it is not, for one member of the “Godhead” to go out on his own, to do his own thing, then the “Godhead” would be incomplete and there would be no unity.
    - 2) The members of the Godhead are the same in nature and essence and as their oneness is related to mankind, they are one in purpose; yet, they are three divine beings.
  - b. I trust that these few remarks will help in understanding the manner in which the Father and the Son are one;
  - c. It will help in our efforts to understand how believers are to be one.
4. The unity of the believers is seen in Paul’s words: **1 Cor. 12:12**  
“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.”
  - a. The “unity of believers” is realized in the “one body” which is the church; yet, this one body has many members,
    - 1) Not many churches as in denominational churches,
    - 2) But many members in one body!
  - b. These “many members” are the believers for which Jesus prayed in **John 17:20-21**.
5. The word, “believe,” in **John 17:21**, the believers for whom Jesus prayed, have the obligation of being one – of being “one body” as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, are one. Thus, Jesus’ words: “as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”

C. It is an awesome responsibility!

## **II. WHO ARE THESE BELIEVERS?**

A. Now, having some understanding of the “Unity” in “The Unity of Believers,” the question remains: “Who are these believers for whom Jesus prayed?”

1. Jesus is not praying for just any “believers” as we have already pointed out.
2. As pointed out earlier, the word “believers” is not generic but it identifies, it is limited to a certain people.

B. Let us turn our attention to the Acts of the Apostles to learn how the inspired writers of the New Testament used this word.

1. The first time the word “believers” appears in Acts is **Acts 5:14**  
“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”

a. It is of interest to note the context in which these words appear.

- 1) In the first part of chapter five, Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, “lie to God.” – **Acts 5:4.**

2) Both Ananias and Sapphira died by the hand of God.

- b. Upon their death, “great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch ... And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women).” – **Acts 5:11-14.**

2. Here we have “believers,” but who are they and what did they believe?

C. Let us go back to **Acts 2** and follow the context to see what we can learn.

1. There was no oneness, no unity, until the gospel was preached, gladly received, and obeyed.

a. **Acts 2:41**

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three souls” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!

- b. **Acts 2:42**  
“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - c. **Acts 2:44**  
“And all that believed were together, and had all things common” - There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - d. **Acts 4:4**  
“Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - e. **Acts 4:32**  
“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul: ...” - There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - f. **Acts 5:14**  
“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - g. **Acts 8:12**  
“But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - h. **Acts 8:13**  
“Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, ...” - There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
  - i. **Acts 8:37-38**  
“when the man of Ethiopia asked: ‘What doth hinder me to be baptized?’ And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Then Philip baptized him ...’” – There is unity of believers for which Jesus prayed!
- 2. The common factor in each case is the gospel of Christ: gladly received, believed, and obeyed!
  - 3. No one can doubt that in each of these cases that the words, “believe” and “believers” are a direct result and limited to the gospel of Christ!
  - 4. It was for these of whom we have just read and the apostles (and these only!)

that Jesus prayed in **John 17:20**

“Neither pray I for these alone (the apostles, frw) but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” – There are the believers and the means of that unity!

D. The unity of believers is achieved by means of the gospel of Christ and the word “believers” is limited to those who gladly received, believe, and obey the gospel of Christ.

1. No one should ever follow any man who is not willing to declare: “I was crucified for you!”
2. When the church in Corinth began to identify themselves by the name of preachers, Paul asked three penetrating questions in **I Cor. 1:13**
  - a. “Is Christ divided?”
  - b. “Was Paul crucified for you?”
  - c. “Were you baptized in the name of Paul?”
3. Christ is not divided and he cannot be divided!
  - a. No man was ever crucified for us and no man can ever be crucified for us in the manner of Christ.
  - b. Finally, no one has the right to be baptized in name of any man who was not crucified for them, i.e. who cannot bring about their salvation.
4. Therefore, the unity of believers is achieved by means of the gospel and is limited to those who believe the gospel.

F. In **2 Cor. 6**, Paul asked five other penetrating questions that reveal the limitation of the word “believers.”

1. His five questions follow a command: **verse 14** – “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:
  - a. “What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?” There is unrighteousness in every point of faith not in harmony with the gospel of Christ.
  - b. “What communion hath light with darkness?”
  - c. “What concord hath Christ with Belial?”



- d. “What part hath the believeth with an infidel?”
- e. “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?”
- 2. One might ask, what fellowship, what communion, what concord, what part, and what agreement, has a believer in the gospel of Christ with any other teaching and practice?
- 3. Therefore, we see the limitation of the word “believers” as used in the New Testament – it is not generic! It is limited to those who believe through the words of the apostles!
- 4. It does not refer to believers who must be identified by applying other words, such as:
  - a. Catholic believers,
  - b. Lutheran believers,
  - c. Baptist believers,
  - d. Pentecostal believers, and
  - e. the favorite of today, ecumenical believers.
- G. It started that way and it will end that way – “they continued in the apostles doctrine” (**Acts 2:42**) There is the “believers” found in Acts of the Apostles.

### **III WHAT WAS THE REASON?**

- A. Returning to our text – **John 17:20-21** – we pose the following question: “What was the reason that Jesus prayed for the unity of believers?”
  - 1. I would to God, that the world called “Christendom” would take to heart and finally believe the prayer of Jesus: “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”
  - 2. The power in such unity would live today as it did the book of Acts, and the world would truly be turned upside down!
  - 3. We would witness the words of Jesus become a reality: “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
- B. But my brethren, the problem of division is much closer home than that divided world called “Christendom.”

1. Today the churches of Christ are so filled with “envying, and strife, and divisions” (**1 Cor. 3:3**) that we make the first century church in Corinth look good!
    - a. Preachers and elderships of today have become so petty and so carnal, that the unity for which our Lord prayed is an impossibility!
    - b. Fellowship is broken at the “drop of a hat,” without ever talking, without ever seeing the evidence, and without ever honestly studying together the subject or subjects that have produced the problem.
    - c. Today, division is the first order of business; there is little “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (**Eph. 4:3**).
  2. Today elderships just stop fellowshiping a sister congregation without ever contacting the other congregation.
    - a. No effort is made to keep fellowship; it is just dropped as if it means nothing to our Lord.
    - b. Fellowship among churches of Christ today is broken as though our Lord never prayed.
  3. Let it be understood, the Lord will not hold us guiltless; the “blood” of broken fellowship will be upon our hands.
- C. Today, preachers pronounce “edicts” which they proceed to bind upon all churches of Christ;
1. And practices that churches of Christ have practiced, based upon New Testament authority, have been discarded; and
  2. Practices and teachings which preachers of gone by years have debated and affirmed as not having New Testament authority have become common place among us.
  3. Today in some places, “unity” is measured by counting the numbers. Whatever will bring in a larger number of people goes! Change is the order of the day!
- D. My brethren and friends, as Paul would say, “my dearly beloved brethren,” let us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;
1. Let our tears be mingled with the tears of Jesus;

2. Let our agony be measured with the agony of Jesus.

**CONCLUSION:**

- A. My brethren, the world is lost.
  1. Standing directly between the lost and the soul saving gospel of Christ is our division.
  2. Jesus knew that the unity of believers stood between the salvation of the lost and the gospel of Christ: “that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”
- B. Yet, with all this before us, it is still true, the unity of believers is limited to the truth that has the power to make us free.
- C. **Acts 20:32**

# IN DEFENSE OF MALE LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

*Scott Elliott*



Scott was born in Oklahoman City, OK and attended Rose State College, Oklahoma State University, Harding Graduate School, and the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies. He received a Bachelor of Science in Education from Oklahoma State University.

His wife's name is Laura. All his local work has been in Oklahoma and he has preached for five years. He has worked with the church of Christ in Wilburton, OK for two years while serving as the Bible Chair Director part of that time. He has written articles appearing in One Heart.

As a note of interest, Scott has worked at Frog Road Bible Camp and has been a speaker on the Oklahoma City Lectures. Scott is an alumnus and a great supporter of the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies.

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## I. Problems We Face

- A. Liberalism is the most obvious problem we face in the church today when it comes to the issue of male leadership. These are those people who argue for female leadership in the church. Their positions vary, but they advocate such things as: women teaching mixed adult Bible classes, women leading men in prayer, women preachers, and women elders. In order to arrive at these positions they must ignore crucial Biblical texts on the subject or twists their meanings.
- B. Extremism is another problem the church faces when it comes to this issue. Those who are extremists try to bind where God has not bound. Some of these brethren have argued that 1 Timothy 2 applies to secular as well as spiritual matters. They would have women adhere to the same rules whether they are in a college classroom or in Sunday morning worship. Some have also suggested that 1 Timothy 2 not only applies to women teaching men, but also to women teaching women and women teaching children. Extremism is just as wrong as liberalism and the church must be aware of both.
- C. A third problem the church faces when it comes to the issue has not gathered as much attention. It is the problem of gender neutrality in Biblical translation. Some newer translations of the Bible reflect this type of translation philosophy. This will become more and more prevalent in the future and might affect some people's view of 1 Timothy 2-3, and 1 Corinthians 14.

## II. History of Male Leadership in the Church

- A. Although history is not authoritative it is important to look at. By looking at history one can identify trends and changes. A person must then ask themselves if the changes were based on the Bible or something else that was happening at that time.

B. Early Church History

C. Restoration History

III Proper Interpretation of Biblical Texts

- A. One argument that has been made regarding these passages is that they do not apply today. Those who make this argument usually suggest that these passages are cultural. This is a serious accusation that deserves attention. Richard E. Oster Jr. in a lecture on 1 Corinthians 11 and head coverings wrote the following: “A possible problem with this approach is that if used unreflectively it might leave one with the impression that Paul and the others virtually used asterisks in the Greek manuscripts to denote teachings and practices which were to be understood as ‘only cultural.’ This, of course, was not the case. When we label something as ‘cultural,’ it is crucial that we realize this label is our own and cannot be supported by a ‘thus saith the Lord.’ While virtually every church and theologian has used the term ‘cultural’ to dismiss the binding nature of biblical material, the use of a label such as ‘cultural’ often reflects one’s own cultural values and hermeneutic, and does not necessarily reflect a straightforward reading of the Scripture.”<sup>1</sup>
- B. One Bible professor told me that the key to understanding the Bible is context and common sense.<sup>2</sup> What would happen if we used this method with the passages in question?

IV Biblical Passages Concerning the Role of Male Leadership in the Church

- A. 1 Timothy 3:1-13 Context: This passage is describing qualifications for elders and deacons.  
Common Sense: Both elders and deacons must be the “husband of one wife.”<sup>3</sup>  
Common sense would tell us that God desires men to hold these positions.
- B. 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 Context: The assembly of the church. What is the assembly? It is when the saints gather together and observe all acts of worship. The assembly is not Sunday morning Bible class. It is not a fellowship meal following services. It is not a gospel meeting or lectureship held throughout the week.  
Common Sense: The word for silence in this passage is different than the one we

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1 Richard E. Oster Jr., “Culture or Binding Principle - A Study of Head Coverings, Hairstyles, etc.”, *The Church of God in a Pagan World* (Harding University 67th Annual Lectureship), (Searcy, AR: Harding University, 1990), pp. 427-428.

2 Neil Lightfoot expressed this in a seminar to preachers.

3 1 Tim. 3:2, 12

find in 1 Timothy 2. The word used here means complete silence. Does this mean a woman can never make a sound in the assembly? No! A woman is commanded to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Is this a contradiction? No! The Bible never contradicts itself. We must remember that assemblies in the 1st century were not exactly like what we experience today. They might have done some things differently. One thing that doesn't occur very often today is a dialogue situation in the assembly, but this did happen in the 1st Century.<sup>4</sup> This cannot always be seen in our translations, but it is evident in Hugo McCord's translation of Acts 20:7. "On the first day of the week, we assembled to break the loaf, and Paul conducted a discussion, intending to leave the next day. He extended his message until midnight."<sup>5</sup> In 1 Cor. 14 the woman is being forbidden from entering the discussion during the assembly. She is not forbidden from singing, giving a confession, instructing her children, etc. Common sense would tell us that God desires men to be the leaders in the assembly of the church.

C. 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Context: The context of 1 Tim. 2:8-15 is broader than 1 Cor. 14:33-35. It applies to all spiritual matters.

Common Sense: The controversy in this passage is mainly focused around vs. 12. In this verse Paul forbids the woman to do two things. Those two things are "teach" and "exercise authority over a man." Is a woman forbidden from teaching at all? No, remember this only applies to spiritual matters. Is a woman forbidden from teaching Bible class? No, in other parts of the Bible women are commanded to teach other women and children. Does this mean a husband cannot learn anything from his wife? No, what is forbidden in this passage is an authoritative type of teaching. Common sense tells us that it is the man who is supposed to take the lead in spiritual matters whether that is in the home, a group Bible study, or a fellowship meal with brethren.

V Seeking Male Leaders

- A. So far, I have defended male leadership in the church, but we cannot stop there! We desperately need qualified men to step up and fill these positions. In 1 Timothy 2:8 Paul requests that these men be holy. In 1 Timothy 3:1-13 Paul lists qualifications that all men should strive for. Not only that, we need men who are spiritual leaders of their home. We need men who will treat their wife and children as they should be treated. We need men who will be good examples to others and who will lead people to Christ.

VI Conclusion: These passages are the inspired Word of God; they are applicable for

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4 Acts 20:7

5 *The Everlasting Gospel*, trans. by Hugo McCord, 4th ed. (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman University)

today, and they are not difficult to understand. The question is: Are we willing to obey God's will for the church, or do we want to set our own agenda?

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Richard E. Oster Jr., "Culture or Binding Principle - A Study of Head Coverings, Hairstyles, etc.", *The Church of God in a Pagan World* (Harding University 67th Annual Lectureship), (Searcy, AR: Harding University, 1990), pp. 427-428.

*The Everlasting Gospel*, trans. by Hugo McCord, 4th ed. (Henderson, TN: Freed-Hardeman University).

# IN DEFENSE OF THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*John Bellah*

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John was born in Oklahoma City, OK and his wife's name is Rhonda. They have been married for five years and they are expecting their first child.

He graduated from Choctaw High School, Choctaw, OK. He has continued his education at Oklahoma Christian University and the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies.

John has written for the One Heart Journal and has been a member of the Barnes church of Christ for five years.

As a note of interest, John has served as the director of the Bible School for the Barnes church and teaches Bible classes. John is always willing to step forward and fill areas of need.

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*“One of the first errors that I had to meet when I began preaching was the denominational claim that the Holy Spirit worked directly and apart from the Word of truth. This is one of the basic doctrines of the denominational world. The teaching that the Spirit works directly and apart from the truth strikes at the very foundation of the authority of the Scriptures. This doctrine opens the door for the claims of all false teachers from Joseph Smith and Oral Roberts to Billy Graham.”*

*Franklin Camp, The Work of the Holy Spirit in Redemption, pg. ix*

This statement by Brother Camp back in the early 1970's is no less true today that it was over 35 years ago. Today these doctrines are not only opening doors of false teachers like Smith, Roberts, and Graham, they have become a springboard for division by bringing unauthorized teachings and worship practices into the Lord's body. The subject of the Holy Spirit is a very worthy topic for every Christian to study. Entire lectureships have focused on the Holy Spirit. It is a shame that many of us have spent little time studying this subject, despite being faced with the fruits of error on this subject everyday when we talk to those around us about God. The following is only a thread in the “hem of the garment” when it comes to the work of the Holy Spirit.

## I. Who is the Holy Spirit?

### A. The Holy Spirit is not an “It”

1. Not a ghost
2. Not a dove
3. Not a wind
4. Not a force

### B. The Holy Spirit is deity

1. The Holy Spirit was active in Creation



- a. Genesis 1:1-2, 26-27
- b. Job 33:4
2. The Holy Spirit by inspiration is referred to as God
  - a. Acts 5:3-4
  - b. Acts 7:51-52 and Nehemiah 9:26-32
3. The Holy Spirit bears the attributes reserved for Deity
  - a. He is Eternal
  - b. He is Omnipotent
  - c. He is Omnipresent

## II. The work of the Holy Spirit according to Jesus

### A. Jesus promises his apostles they would not be left “desolate” (John 14:18)

1. The word desolate (comfortless, KJV) comes from the Greek word *orphanos* which is where we get our English word “orphan”. It literally means, “bereft” (that is to say, deprived of or lacking something).
  - a. Specifically they would not be deprived of a teacher
  - b. The NKJV actually translates this as “orphans”
2. Jesus is leaving them
  - a. To die
    - i. Mark 9:31
    - ii. Mark 10:33-34
    - iii. Matthew 16:21
  - b. To return to the Father
    - i. John 14:28
    - ii. John 16: 5
    - iii. John 16:28

### B. Jesus promises the Comforter

1. The Holy Spirit is the comforter (John 14:26)
2. Jesus promises “another” comforter
  - a. The word “another” (Gk. *allos*) means another of the same kind as opposed to “another (Gk. *heteros*, which is another of a different kind)
  - b. Jesus is telling his apostles that he is sending them another one like him
  - c. “Comforter” comes from the Greek word *paracletos*,
    - i. Defined as one who pleads another’s cause before a judge, a defense counsel.
    - ii. Specifically this means that the Holy Spirit is one who is called to another’s (the apostles) side to plead a case or to be an advocate on

- their behalf.
  - iii. This same word is translated “advocate” in 1 John 2:1 where Jesus is called our advocate.
  - iv. Some translations also translate this word “helper.”
3. To whom was the Comforter given?
- a. The apostles were given this promise.
    - i. John 14:25
    - ii. The apostles were the only ones to whom he was speaking (Luke 22:14).
  - b. The world could not receive him
    - i. John 14:17
    - ii. The word receive in this verse means to take by force (Gk. *lambano*).
    - iii. Jesus was about to be taken “by force” and the Holy Spirit would be sent in his stead, seeing that the world “beholdeth him not”. In other words, the Holy Spirit could not be seen and therefore could not be taken away like Jesus was to be taken.
4. What was the Holy Spirit sent to do?
- a. Guide (John 16:13)
  - b. Teach (John 14:26)
  - c. Bring to remind the apostles of the words of Christ (John 14:26)
  - d. Convict the world of sin (John 16:8)
  - e. To equip the apostles in fulfilling the Great Commission
    - i. Luke 24:44-49
    - ii. Acts 1:8
5. Jesus promises were fulfilled
- a. John 14:18
  - b. Matthew 28:20
  - c. Mark 16:17-20
  - d. Acts 2:1-4

### III. Various false doctrines relating to the Holy Spirit

#### A. Modern miracles

1. “Faith Healing”
- a. Some proponents of modern day faith healing claim the healing can only be received if the recipient has enough faith.
    - i. Jesus told his disciples (later to become apostles) it was because of their lack of faith that they could not heal, not the lack of faith of the recipient. (Matthew 17:14-20)
    - ii. Despite all attempts at common sense these doctrines and proponents of these doctrines have a massive following.

- b. Other proponents consider all healing as miraculous
        - i. To assume such is based not on evidence but on human “wisdom.”
        - ii. Often those of this persuasion will assume anything that they cannot explain is miraculous.
        - iii. These so-called miracles will often take place in a far away land, and never in your town or my town.
  - 2. “Tongue Speaking”
    - a. “Tongue Speaking” as it is called today has virtually no resemblance to that which is described in the Bible.
      - i. These were described as languages (Acts 2:4-11)
      - ii. “Tongue speaking” as it is called today is usually a collection of unintelligible noises.
      - iii. Paul said tongues that were not understood were of no use and spoke of prophecy as being a greater gift (1 Corinthians 14:1-28)
    - b. Modern “tongue speaking” as practiced usually is in violation of Scripture.
      - i. One at a time (1 Corinthians 14:27)
      - ii. Must be interpreted or it is to be kept silent (1 Corinthians 14:28)
  - 3. “Prophetic Words”
    - a. There are some today claiming that they speak by inspiration.
    - b. Scripture easily refutes these men (and women).
      - i. 1 Corinthians 14:37
      - ii. 1 John 4:1
      - iii. Women are forbidden of such displays in the public assembly (1 Corinthians 14:34)
  - 4. “Raising the dead”
    - a. There are still some today claiming that the dead are still being raised up through men by the power of the Holy Spirit.
    - b. Most of those who tell of such things have only heard about it happening.
    - c. The rest of us will have to wait until the Judgement to witness such.
  - 5. The written word should be sufficient evidence for us today to have faith.
    - a. Romans 10:17
    - b. John 20:30-31
- B. Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit
- 1. Calvinism
    - a. These doctrines claim that a person cannot do anything to affect their salvation in one way or another.
      - i. Some claim humans are totally incapable of any spiritual decisions and that the Holy Spirit directly controls their will and his power cannot be

resisted.

- ii. Others claim they are led directly by the Holy Spirit yet are capable of resisting his power.
- iii. There are many teaching the latter claiming to be members of the Lord's church.
- iv. Doctrines of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and many other denominations teach various forms of this doctrine.

2. Holiness doctrines

- a. Calvinism heavily influences these doctrines.
  - i. They usually claim "irresistible grace."
  - ii. Grace is described as a force (i.e. the Holy Spirit baptism).
- b. Sinless perfection
  - i. Proponents of this doctrine often appeal to 1 John 3:9 as a proof text.
  - ii. 1 John 1:8-10 must be ignored if this doctrine is to be followed.

3. Illumination

- a. This doctrine states that the Christian or "honest seeker of truth" is aided directly by the Holy Spirit in the interpretation of God's word.
- b. This doctrine is being taught by nearly every religious denomination.
  - i. Unfortunately many in the Lord's church have also picked it up.
  - ii. This doctrine often defeats itself in that you can rarely find two people both claiming to be aided by the Holy Spirit that agree.
  - iii. God commanded that his followers speak the same thing (1 Corinthians 1:10).
  - iv. God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33) therefore this doctrine cannot be true.

4. Emotionalism

- a. Emotionalism cannot be clearly defined but can perhaps be described as "you know it when you see it" by someone on the outside looking in or a proponent of this might say, "you know it when you feel it."
- b. Often people claim to be moved by the Holy Spirit during assemblies, swaying, waving hands, and/or uncontrolled emotions or outburst.
- c. Some churches find their unauthorized worship in that they "felt they were being moved in that direction."

IV. While there is much to be said about the Holy Spirit and doctrines relating to the Holy Spirit, one thing stands out, regardless of what the religious world says, the Holy Spirit had one purpose for being sent to mankind and that was to save man from his sins. The Holy Spirit, through the revelation, inspiration, and confirmation brought mankind a message capable of being understood and obeyed that by it we might be saved.



# IN DEFENSE OF THE ESTABLISHED KINGDOM

*Howard D. Williams*

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Howard was born in Des Moines, Iowa. He and Lenora have been married for forty-two years. They have two children. He graduated from Carl Albert High School in Iowa.

He attended the Northside School of Preaching in Harrison, AR receiving a Master's degree in Sacred Literature. Howard never desired to become a preacher but to prepare himself to better serve the Lord. However, he has done full preaching in Arkansas and Oklahoma. He is now serving as a deacon at the Nacoma Park church of Christ in Nacoma Park, OK. He also preaches there about once a month and teaches Bible classes.

Howard spoke in last year's lectureship. He has taught one class at the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies and he is always a willing helper and supporter of the school.

As a note of interest, Howard is retired from Oklahoma National Guard having served four years in active service and thirty years in the guard; thus, a total of thirty-four years in honorable service to America.

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## *Philippians 1:17*

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. As early as **Genesis 17:19** God began revealing his plan to save man.
  - 1. His promise to Abraham of a son, and through his seed an everlasting covenant. **Gal. 3:6-9, 16-19.**
  - 2. Nathan the prophet renewed the promises to David: **2 Sam 7:1-29.**
- B. In **verse 11** God promised a House and in **verses 12-13**, an everlasting kingdom.
  - 1. I believe David misunderstood God and thought he meant the temple.
  - 2. The Temple was Physical and did not last forever.

### II. THE LORD'S HOUSE

- A. Isaiah speaks of the Lord's house (**Isa. 2:24**) and all nations flowing into it.
  - 1. Consider **verse 4**, people will beat their swords into plowshares, etc.
    - a. This passage hints of all nations living in peace.
    - b. Not possible in a physical world.
  - 2. Only in spiritual world can this scripture be possible.
- B. Isaiah writes of a child being born in Isa. 9:6-7 who will establish a government with no end, and king on the throne of David.

1. Jeremiah speaks of a covenant (Jer. 31:31-37) and a law put in the hearts of the people.
2. Micah makes the same prophesy as Isaiah (Mic. 4:1-3)
3. Malachi prophesies of a messenger before the Lord. (Malachi 3:1),
4. And names him in (Mal. 4:5-6).

### III. THE KINGDOM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

#### A. After the birth if John, Zacharias prophesied about him (Luke 1:69-76).

1. John was the one Malachi was talking about.
2. Mat. 3:1-3 speaks of John being the one Isa. 40:3 spoke about.
3. Mark 1:2-4 records the same message.

#### B. We need to look at more scriptures to see if John is the one the Old Testament was talking about.

1. John 1:6-7 says John was sent by God to witness of the light.
2. Jesus speaks of John in Lk. 7:25-28 as the greatest man born of woman but least in the kingdom Is greater than him.
  - a. The reason for this is John was never in the kingdom.
  - b. We will see from further study John was never in the kingdom.
  - c. Mat. 11:9-11 records the same statement.
3. Mat.17:11-13 sets the record straight.
  - a. John is Elijah.
  - b. The one Malachi prophesied about.
  - c. Mark 9:12-13 records the same account.
4. Mark 9:1 and Luke 9:27 inform us that some of the people Jesus was talking to would not die before the kingdom was established.

### IV. THE KINGDOM NOT OF THIS WORLD – SPIRITUAL

#### A. **John 18:36** tells us that THE KINGDOM SPOKEN OF IN THE SCRIPTURES IS NOT OF THIS WORLD. (not physical).

1. If we are looking for a spiritual kingdom let us continue to search the scriptures.
2. **Mat.16:18-19** show us the kingdom and the church is the same institution.

#### B. **Acts 1** starts with the promise of Jesus to the apostles that they would receive power from the Holy Spirit.

1. In **verse 6** they ask if Jesus will restore the kingdom to Israel.
2. Just as many today misunderstand the kingdom as they were looking for a physical kingdom .

C. Let us look at one more passage in the Old Testament: **Joel 2:29-32**.

1. **Acts 2:16-21** tells of the fulfillment of this prophecy.
2. From **Acts 2**, and the establishment of the church, the kingdom, is referred to as being present.
  - a. **Col. 1:12-14**,
  - b. **1 Tim. 3:15**
  - c. **Heb. 12:28**
  - d. **Rev. 1:9**
  - e. **Rom. 14:17**
  - f. **1 Pet. 1:11**

V. CONCLUSION:

- A. The Old Testament proclaimed the kingdom.
- B. The New Testament delivered the kingdom with power.
- C. Today, one must obey the Gospel, through which the Lord adds one to the church; thus, one enters the kingdom.
  1. be added to the Church and enter the kingdom.





## IN DEFENSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (PART ONE)

*Marion R. Fox*



Marion was born in Sayre, OK and graduated from Sweetwater High School. He continued his education at the Elk City School of Preaching (receiving a certificate), and Oklahoma Christian College (Greek). He has earned the following degrees: Associate of Science, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and a Doctorate of Education.

He and Cynthia have been married for 38 years and they have three children. All of Marion's local work has been in Oklahoma. He has preached for 38 and 30 of that has been with the Barnes church of Christ. He is the Director of the Oklahoma City School of Biblical Studies and served in this work for seventeen years. He has had articles appear in the following papers: *Gospel Standard*, *Firm Foundation*, *Contending for the Faith*, *One Heart*, *Gospel Preceptor*, and *Think*.

He written the following books: *A Study of the Biblical Flood*, *The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. I*, *The Work of the Holy Spirit, Vol. II*, *The Role of Women, Vol. I*, *The Work of Women, Vol. II*, *The Great Commission*. He has also written many outline books for OKCSBS, including: *Fundamentals of the Faith*, *A Study of Angels*, *Satan*, and *Demons*, and *Logic and Debate*.

As a note of interest, Marion has engaged in five oral debates and two written debates.

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### I. The original practice of the church in the times of the apostles.

#### A. The Lord's supper was eaten on every first day of the week.

1. The church assembled to partake of the Lord's supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:6-7).

Acts 20:6-7 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days. 7 And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight.

- a. There is no biblical evidence that the Lord's supper was eaten on any other day of the week.
- b. Paul had the authority to call the church together (Acts 14:27).

Acts 14:27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles.

- α. He did not call them together earlier than the first day of the week (Acts 20:6) even though he was in a hurry (Acts 20:16).

Acts 20:16 For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if it was possible for him, to

be at Jerusalem on Pentecost.

- β. It is obvious that Paul did not have the authority to change the time of the eating of the Lord's supper, he had to wait seven days to partake of the Lord's supper with the church.

- γ. The apostles only bound what God had already bound (Mt. 18:18 NASV).

Mt. 18:18 (NASV) Truly I say to you<sup>pl</sup>, whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. (pl = plural)

- 2. The partaking of the Lord's supper was a regular occurrence (Acts 2:42).

Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

- a. The question is how frequent was the partaking of the Lord's supper?
- b. The breaking of bread (Lord's supper) was as frequent as the fellowship (contribution). The contribution was taken every first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2, The New American Standard Version has a better translation of this passage than either the KJV or the ASV).

1 Cor. 16:1-2 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

- c. The Corinthian church was assembling every first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2) and were partaking of the Lord's supper in that assembly (1 Cor. 11:17-34, refer to verses 17, 18, 20, and 33).

B. The Lord's supper was eaten by all of the church.

- 1. Jesus commanded that they all partake of the bread and fruit of the vine (Mt. 26:27-28).

Mt. 26:27-28 And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 for this is my blood, of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.

- 2. The early church ate both the bread and fruit of the vine (1 Cor. 10:21 and 11:28).

1 Cor. 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons.

1 Cor. 11:28 But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of

the cup.

3. The disciples all drank of the cup (Mk. 14:23).

Mk. 14:23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them: and they all drank of it.

- C. There is no evidence that the fruit of the vine had to be fermented wine in the New Testament.

1. The expression “fruit of the vine” is generic, and could include either fermented or unfermented grape juice (Mt. 26:29).

Mt. 26:29 But I say unto you, I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

2. The Bible never uses the word “wine” to refer to the juice of the Lord's supper.

- D. The unleavened bread and fruit of the vine are representative of the Lord's body and blood (Mt. 26:26-28).

Mt. 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.

1. It would require that a miracle be worked in order for this to become the literal blood and body of Jesus.
  - a. If miracles ceased in the first century, then the bread cannot literally become the body of the Lord.
  - b. If miracles ceased in the first century, then the fruit of the vine cannot literally become the blood of the Lord.
2. This must be figurative language, since it would have the Christian to eat blood, which is forbidden (Acts 15:28-29).

Acts 15:28-29 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

- a. This is obviously a metaphor where the bread represents the Lord's body, and the fruit of the vine represents the Lord's blood.
- b. It can be chemically analyzed and it is still bread and grape juice.

II. Ways in which it was changed.

A. The frequency of the Lord's supper was changed from weekly to special occasions.

1. The Lord's supper was eaten on a first day of the week between Passover (Easter) and Pentecost (Acts 20:6 and 16).

Acts 20:6-7 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days. 7 And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight.

Acts 20:16 For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if it was possible for him, to be at Jerusalem on Pentecost.

2. Some churches partake of the Lord's supper for weddings, funerals, and only at special times. They have no scriptural authority for this.

B. The laity (common people) were prohibited from partaking of the fruit of the vine.

1. Robert Pulleyn was probably the first to teach this doctrine (Sent. P. viii. c. 3)
2. Alexander Hales, Bonaventura, and Thomas Aquinas also taught this doctrine.
3. The doctrine of concomitance was advanced (concomitance = doctrine that Jesus exists wholly in both elements of the Lord's supper; therefore it is not necessary to partake of both elements.)

C. The doctrine of transubstantiation was made an article of faith by Pope Innocent III (Conc. Lat. iv. c. i. and *de Mysteriis Missae*. 1. iv. c. 7.)

1. The first reference to this doctrine was by Ignatius in his epistle to the Smyrnaeans 6 (I. Sm. 6). He affirmed that the bread became the literal body of Christ in order to combat the false doctrine that Jesus was not flesh. This was written in about AD 160.
2. The doctrine of transubstantiation became official at the council of Trent: "... in the Eucharist, that which before consecration was bread and wine, becomes, after consecration really and substantially the body and blood of our Lord." (*Catechism of the Council of Trent*, pages 148-149) [1545-1563]
3. Several religious groups teach this doctrine.

- D. The second century church often brought gifts with the elements of the Lord's supper for the bishop. They gave thanks for what Jesus had done for them, hence the word Eucharist from the Greek word *ευχαριστια* (pronounced *eucharistia*).
1. This was understood to be a sacrifice (contribution) made by the Christian. Clement of Rome [AD 95] (chapters 40-44) and the Epistle of Barnabas (chapter 2) discuss this practice. Justin Martyr in his Dialogue with Trypho (chapter 117) discusses this as well. [AD 103-165]
  2. Cyprian is the first recorded person to advance the idea that the priest made the sacrifice and that it was an imitation of the sacrifice of the Christ. He does not advance that it was a repetition of the Lord's sacrifice. [AD 195-268]
  3. Later the doctrine of transubstantiation was taught and linked with this and it was claimed that the blood and body of Jesus was sacrificed each time the bishop blessed the bread and wine. Gregory the Great (Moral. Lib. xxii. 26)
    - a. This brought on a fear of spilling the wine, and hence the blood of Jesus.
    - b. From this fear came the idea that the common people should not partake of the wine, for fear that they might spill it.
      - α. One superstition led to another, along with pragmatic reasoning.
      - β. It was argued that the body and blood were in the bread and they did not need both elements.
  4. The writer of Hebrews says that Christ was offered **once** (Heb. 9:25-28).

Heb. 9:25-26 nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; 26 else must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

    - a. It is a serious matter to crucify Jesus afresh (Heb. 6:6).

Heb. 6:6 and *then* fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.
    - b. This is what this doctrine implies (that Jesus is crucified afresh each time the elements of the Lord's supper are blessed).



## IN DEFENSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (PART TWO)

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#### Introduction - What Are the Elements of the Lord's Supper?

A. A Memorial for the Death of Christ.

B. Two Main Parts

1. Unleavened bread represents Christ's body.
2. Fruit of the vine represents Christ's blood.

C. Other Elements

1. Blessing the bread & cup
2. Self-examination

I. A Memorial

A. Instituted by Christ looking forward to His death, Luke 22:13-16.

B. I Cor. 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

1. Show: Καταγγέλλω (kataggello ᾱ) "... to proclaim, promulgate: - declare, preach, shew, speak of, teach."
2. By ignoring the Lord's Supper, we turn a deaf ear to the death of Christ.

II. Unleavened Bread

A. Luke 22:19



1. The word “broken” (I Cor. 11:23-24) in the KJV is probably not genuine.
2. His bones were not broken, John 19:36 For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.
3. On the other hand, the flesh (which the bread represents, as opposed to His bones) was broken.

B. Passages exemplifying the suffering of the “flesh” of Christ:

1. John 19:1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.
2. Matt. 27:29 And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!
3. Psalms 22:14-15, 17 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. ... I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.
4. John 19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

C. Most of these examples represent both the breaking of His flesh and the shedding of His blood.

D. The term “flesh” probably emphasizes the physical pain endured on the cross, whereas the “blood” probably emphasizes the offering of His life.

III. Fruit of the Vine

A. Passages dealing with the blood of Christ:

1. Luke 22:17-18
  - a. The blood is the purchase price for the New Covenant of Christ that frees us from sin.
  - b. The fruit of the vine is a physical reminder of that price.
2. Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
3. Heb. 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

4. Heb. 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

B. Blood represents life.

1. Lev. 17:14 For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.
2. Deut. 12:23 Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

C. By offering His blood, Christ offered His life in atonement for man's sins.

1. I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
2. I Pet. 1:18-19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

IV. Blessing the Bread & Cup

A. I Cor. 10:16

1. Blessing the cup is put on the same level as breaking the bread – ESSENTIAL.
2. This is how Christ instituted His Memorial.
  - a. Luke 22:17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, ...
  - b. Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave unto them ...
3. The Apostles respected Christ's authority as shown in His example.

B. Why "bless" the bread & cup?

1. Christ did it, and so did the Apostles.
2. It would be inappropriate to remember the death of Christ without given thanks for it.
3. It can help to distinguish the Lord's Supper from a common meal, I Cor. 11:22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

## V. Self-Examination

### A. I Cor. 11:27-29

1. A worthy, or reverent, demeanor is required to take the Lord's Supper acceptably.
2. The term "examination" literally means to prove or to try as a piece of metal.
3. For example, a life of sin disgraces the blood of Christ, Heb. 10:26-29.

### B. We can examine ourselves by ...

1. comparison to the life of Christ our perfect example.
2. comparison to the life described in the Bible, our perfect mirror, James 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

## Conclusion

- A. The Lord's Supper REMINDS us of all Christ suffered because of our sins.
- B. The Lord's Supper PREACHES the death and 2nd coming of Christ.
- C. The Lord's Supper COMPELS us to examine ourselves and live better lives.

What do you see in yourself when you take the Lord's Supper?

## DEFENDING THE NAME, CHRISTIAN

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As a note of interest, Mike is always ready to help in teaching the word of God.

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## INTRODUCTION

The word, Christian, is found twice in the American Standard Version, Acts 26:28 and 1 Peter 4:16. The word Christians is found in Acts 11:26. Literally Christian means "one who follows Christ." For the purpose of this lesson, I will use the term Christian to refer to scripturally baptized believers.

Why is it even necessary for us to defend the name, Christian? We must defend this name because Satan and his servants are tirelessly working to prevent people from becoming Christians and thus being removed from Satan's dominion to God's. To accomplish this end, Satan uses every device at his disposal and every agent, willing or unwilling, knowing or unknowing, he can enlist. By attacking the name Christian, Satan attacks Christ.

Although there are places in the world today where Christians are being killed for because they are followers of Christ, this is not the case for us. As I have studied and read in preparation for this lesson, I have become convinced that the most serious threats to the name of Christian are attacks from non-believers, and our own conduct.

### **I. We must defend the name from the attacks of non-believers.**

- A. Attacks resulting from ignorance. A column in the Daily Oklahoman, January 19, 2008 titled "Survey: 'Unchurched' Americans say church 'full of hypocrites'"

stated, “Almost three-fourths of Americans who haven’t entered a church in the last six months think it is ‘full of hypocrites’ and an even greater percentage consider Christianity to be more about organized religion than about loving God and people, according to a new survey. The people surveyed might never have met a real Christian, but they are influenced by actions of those they believe are Christians.

- B. Attacks resulting from the conduct of “Christians”, either real Christians or those who call themselves Christians.
  - 1. Muslims still blame Christians for the crusades.
  - 2. The Salem Witch Trials were committed by those who called themselves Christians.
  - 3. In Northern Ireland there were decades of warfare between two groups both professing to be Christians.

## **II. We must defend the name Christian from our own conduct.**

- A. From living immoral lives while professing Christianity
  - 1. Romans 2:24. Here Paul makes the case that because of the misconduct of the Jews, Gentiles blasphemed the name of God. They reasoned that if God’s people conducted themselves in an evil manner, God must condone evil. The same applies to us. If we conduct ourselves in an evil manner, it reflects evil on the name of Christ.
  - 2. Ephesians 5:3 tells us that sexual immorality should not even be mentioned among us.
- B. From conduct reflecting the world rather than Christ
  - 1. Look at what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:7. “Why not rather take wrong? Why not rather be defrauded?” Too often rather than yielding to our brethren, or trying to show them their error, we resort to the courts like everyone else.
  - 2. Another way our conduct reflects the world rather than Christ is our banding together to seek a political or civil remedy for a situation rather than using prayer and the gospel.
- C. From those who damage the name Christian by their teaching
  - 1. There are some in the Lord’s Church who undermine the scriptures by their teaching. In the book, God’s Holy Fire, the authors write, “The gospels do not purport to be direct eyewitness accounts of Jesus’ life. Rather, they trace back to oral and written stories about Jesus remembered by his disciples and shape

those accounts in light of the ongoing needs of the church, guided by the Spirit to understand Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

2. There are some in the Lord's Church who corrupt the practice of worship set forth in the New Testament. An article titled "Instruments of change" in the January 26, 2008 edition of the Daily Oklahoman describes the decision of the Quail Springs church to add instrumental music to their worship.
- D. From those who are mean spirited in their defense of the faith
1. Jude 3 tells us to contend for the faith. We must defend the things we have believed when they are attacked, but we must not be unkind or combative as we make our defense. In other words we must contend for the faith without being contentious.
  2. Matthew 18:15-17 provides us a three step method of resolving problems between brethren. Although spoken in a context of private matters between individuals, I do not we can go wrong if we use this method for handling all problems within the church, even doctrinal issues.
  3. Galatians 5:15 tells us that if we bite and devour each other we may be consumed by each other. Even worse, the enemies of Christ take advantage of our infighting. What kind of example does it set when we publically fight among ourselves?

### **III. How shall we defend the name, Christian?**

#### **A. Our method**

1. Teaching. Our focus must be on teaching the gospel. The gospel is the cure for all the problems of the world.
  - a. In 1 Corinthians 2:2 Paul resolved to know nothing but Christ and Him crucified. When we have truly implanted this attitude in our hearts we will have neither the time nor the inclination for religious infighting.
  - b. We must avoid being drawn away from the gospel into disputes about things that don't matter. We must instruct those who oppose us gently hoping that God will grant them repentance leading to knowledge to the truth. 2 Timothy 2:24
2. Conduct
  - a. John 13:34, 35. Jesus commands us to love one another. When non-Christians see our love for each other they are encouraged to learn more about Christ. On the other hand when they see us not loving each other,

they are encouraged not to follow Christ.

- b. 1 Corinthians 3:3 teaches us that when there is jealousy and strife among us we are carnal. The New International version translates carnal as worldly.

B. Our attitude. If we keep a right attitude, our actions will follow.

- 1. Galatians 6:1. Our attitude toward erring brethren must be one of gentleness lest we be tempted ourselves.
- 2. Thessalonians 3:14, 15. We must not treat those who err as enemies but admonish them as brothers.

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# IN DEFENSE OF THE FREE WILL OF MAN

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## INTRODUCTION

- A. Most of the religious world's thinking on the subject of Free Will is influenced heavily by John Calvin.
  - B. Calvin's teaching on the subject deprives man of the ability to obey God.
- I. The Sovereignty of God
- A. Calvin categorizes the two different views of God's omnipotence as:
    - 1. The "vain, indolent, slumbering omnipotence which sophists feign ..." versus
    - 2. The "vigilant, efficacious, energetic, and ever active" omnipotence that he believed.
    - 3. Illustration: Calvin used a stream as a metaphor to explain the two views.
      - a. The first view of omnipotence would have God influencing the actions and events of the universe through law and principle, as the banks of a stream contain and direct the various motions of the water within it.
      - b. His view, on the other hand, would have God being "intent on individual and special movements ... [He] so overrules all things that nothing happens without his counsel."
    - 4. Further statements by Calvin on God's omnipotence:
      - a. "... by whose authority, Satan, with all his furies and engines, is curbed as with a bridle ..."
      - b. "... there is no random power, or agency, or motion in the creatures, who are so governed by the secret counsel of God, that nothing happens but what he has



knowingly and willingly decreed.”

B. Calvin’s claims compared to Bible truth:

1. God is omnipotent and active with His power.
  - a. God is omnipotent (Gen. 17:1) and God is active (Deu. 5:26).
  - b. However, we should be careful to note that God acts and exerts His power as He pleases. That may not fit into a human view of what an omnipotent, active God would do (Is. 55:9).
2. God does not rule the Universe through laws and guidelines (medium) but through the purposeful manipulation of every piece and motion in the Universe.
  - a. Notice Calvin does not supply a passage that actually says this.
  - b. God does use the medium of law (Gen. 1:25)
  - c. One may oppose the will of God (Mt. 7:13-14; II Pet. 3:9).
  - d. God claims that He has not done some things (James 1:13-14).
  - e. God claims that He cannot do some things (Tit. 1:2)

II. Free Will

A. There is no agency in the creatures that God has made. Here, agency means the capacity, condition, or state of acting or of exerting power. Remember that man is a creature.

B. Calvin states concerning election and grace:

1. “Although it is now sufficiently plain that God by his secret counsel chooses whom he will while he rejects others, his gratuitous election has only been partially explained until we come to the case of single individuals, to whom God not only offers salvation, but so assigns it, that the certainty of the result remains not dubious or suspended.”
2. Notice as he dances around the subject of free will (agency). Here, he quotes Augustine to make his point:

“He had said a little before, (cap. 100,) that the apostate angels, by their revolt, and all the reprobate, as far as they themselves were concerned, did what God willed not; but, in regard to his omnipotence, it was impossible for them to do so: for, while they act against the will of God, his will is accomplished in them. Hence he exclaims, ‘Great is the work of God, exquisite in all he wills! so that, in a manner wondrous and ineffable, that is not done without his will which is done contrary to it, because it could not be done if he did not permit; nor does he permit it unwillingly, but

willingly; nor would He who is good permit evil to be done, were he not omnipotent to bring good out of evil,' (Augustin. in Ps. 111: 2.)”

3. We would ask how it can be that man could do evil at God’s demand and still be accountable for it instead of God. Read the following:

“From other passages, in which God is said to draw or bend Satan himself, and all the reprobate, to his will, a more difficult question arises. For the carnal mind can scarcely comprehend how, when acting by their means, he contracts no taint from their impurity, nay, how, in a common operation, he is exempt from all guilt, and can justly condemn his own ministers.”

- a. Read that statement carefully! Calvin and Augustine claim that even actions intended to oppose the will of God can bring about the will of God.
- b. With this we would concur. We can find many examples, like the persecutors of Christ and the early church, where those bent on opposing God only manage to bring about or further His goal. However, this does not mean that God controlled them or denied them choice. Calvin asserts this but has never proven it!
- c. The death of Christ did come about as foreknown by God and as desired by God. In a sense, it is true that God even instigated Christ’s death, but it must be understood that God did not instigate evil with evil.
  - 1) God knew that when light entered the world, darkness would reject it (John 3:16-21).
  - 2) He did not have to cause man to reject Christ; he only had to send him (James 4:4). It was an act of good that instigated wicked men to do evil.

### III. The Bible Asserts Man’s Ability to Choose

#### A. The doctrine of accountability, Rom. 14:11-12

“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

1. It would be unrighteous for one to force a person to do an act, and then hold them morally culpable for it.
- 2.

#### B. Reference to choice, Joshua 24:15

“And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

1. It would be absurd to command someone to do something they could not do.

2.

### C. Imperatives

1. The imperative is “the mood which expresses action which is to be realized by the exercise of the will of one person upon that of another.” (Summers, p. 112)

2. Imperatives are frequently used in the Scriptures.

3. No one but the subject of an imperative can obey an imperative. This means that God intend man to exercise free will in the following ways.

a. Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted , that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

b. Rom 6:12-13 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. [13] Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

c. Rom. 6:19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

d. Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

c. Rom. 12:16 ... Be not wise in your own conceits.

d. Rom. 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

e. Rom. 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

f. Eph. 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: ...

g. Col. 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

### D. Middle voice

1. English voices include Active (where the subject acts) and Passive (where the subject is acted upon by another).

2. Greek grammar also has the Middle Voice, where the “subject is acting so as to

participate in some way in the results of the action.” (Summers, p. 38)

3. Various passages containing actions often assigned to direct action/influence from the Holy Spirit on us are in the Middle Voice. With this voice, the subject must perform the action, generally to receive the result of his action for himself. The underlined terms are in the Middle Voice. Verses marked with an asterisk are also Imperative, making them very emphatic.
4. Conversion
  - a. Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.
  - b. Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized\*, and wash away\* thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
5. Put off & put on
  - a. Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
  - b. Col. 3:10 And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:
  - c. Eph 4:22-24 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ... [24] And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.
  - d. Rom. 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
6. Righteous living
  - a. Rom. 12:2 And be not conformed\* to this world: ...
  - b. I Cor. 16:13 Watch ye\*, stand fast\* in the faith, quit you like men\*, be strong\*.
  - c. Rom. 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
  - d. Phi. 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think\* on these things.
  - e. Gal. 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

- f. Eph. 5:1 Be ye\* therefore followers of God, as dear children;
- g. Eph. 6:10-17 Finally, my brethren, be strong\* in the Lord, and in the power of his might. [11] Put on\* the whole armour of God, ... [13] ... and having done all, to stand. [14] Stand therefore, having your loins girt ..., and having [put] on the breastplate ...; [15] And [having] your feet shod ...; [16] ... wherewith ye shall be able to quench ... [17] And take\* the helmet ... the sword ...
- h. Phi. 1:27 Only let your conversation be\* as it becometh the gospel of Christ: ...
- i. Phi. 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out\* your own salvation with fear and trembling.

## CONCLUSION

- A. Denying the free will of man takes away man's ability to obey, because Biblical obedience is a choice.
- B. God hold's us accountable for our actions because we do have free will.