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BANNER OF TRUTH  
February/March 2003

**The Christian's Necessary Warfare  
With Reflections on the Current Carnal Conflict**

*History has recorded innumerable instances of warfare from early on. The horror, suffering and death caused by those wars defy description. However, the faithful Christian must engage in a spiritual warfare, which is of so much greater importance than any carnal conflict.*

For several months now, war clouds have been appearing on the horizon. This subject has dominated the news. While a sizable majority has voiced its support for the removal of the Saddam Hussein Regime, some have spoken out in such a manner as to encourage the evil and belittle our country and its leadership.

In spite of all the efforts to prevent the war, the hostilities began about three weeks ago. Already, dozens of our people have lost their lives, as is also true of the British. There is no way of knowing the multiplied thousands of the Iraqis who have been killed; some by their own leaders.

This war has been brought on by the evil dictator, Saddam Hussein, and his henchmen. The present war is only a part of a much greater conflict, called "The War on Terrorism." The primary blame for the war can be attributed to the evil influence of the false religion of Islam. The acts of terrorism which have been committed against our country during the past several years have been caused by Islam. There is intense hatred of Americans by a great many Muslims, as well as for the Jews and other non-Muslims.

Within the past several years thousands of Americans have lost their lives at the evil hands of Muslims. The Palestinians (Muslims) continue to murder the Jews, including innocent women and children. The threat of more acts of terrorism has increased considerably since the terrible carnage which took place on 9/11.

The present war has been made necessary for our own protection, as well as that of others. Few people like war, one exception being Muslims like Saddam, but it is some times necessary in order to survive as a country. The true Muslim is not averse to war. The Koran clearly teaches Muslims to kill non-Muslims. That includes us. It is a matter of history that Islam has made most of its gains in the world by the sword. This fastest growing religion in the world would like to dominate the entire world, and its resurgence in the past several decades evidences that fact.

As we continue our discussion we shall give attention to the warfare in which we must engage if we would be successful as soldiers of Christ.

**THE CHRISTIAN'S NECESSARY WARFARE**

One of the most powerful descriptions of the life of the faithful Christian is that of the physical soldier. We can understand why this is so. Christians in every age have been somewhat familiar with

carnal warfare. It is clearly evident that in order to be victorious in this warfare certain things are necessary. This may well account for all the emphasis upon the Christian as a soldier in the New Testament. In the following we will give attention to this emphasis.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he exhorts the brethren to be, "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." In keeping with the exhortation, Paul gives specific instructions as to how this objective might be accomplished:

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And having your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:11-17).

In those days of the apostle Paul, hardly could there have been a better prepared soldier than the one described above in a figurative manner. Without such preparation victory could not have been expected. On the other hand, however, victory could be assured. This principle of preparation set forth by Paul is just as valid now as it was then.

To the young preacher, Timothy, Paul gives a number of instructions which relate to a soldier or to warfare. If Timothy needed those instructions so do we. We have never faced greater danger or more determined enemies than in these present "perilous times." As there are some determined enemies in their evil pursuit in this current carnal war, so are there determined enemies in the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged.

Early in Paul's first letter to Timothy he said, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare" (I Tim. 1:18). It was only by "warring a good warfare" that Timothy might expect "a crown of righteousness" at the end of his battle, as did Paul.

Again in Paul's first letter to Timothy, he calls attention to warfare and what was at stake, namely **eternal life**. "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (I Tim. 6:12). People are "called" by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14), but to receive the reward of that calling it is necessary to fight that "good fight of faith." How often do we think of soldiering?

When Paul writes his second letter to Timothy, warfare was still on his mind as evidenced by his inspired statement, "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Tim. 2:3). Paul had just said, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (v. 2). Without enduring hardness as a good soldier Timothy would not be successful in overcoming the obstacles he would face. What a great lesson for us today! When the whole truth is taught today, endurance is a necessity. Some have not love for truth.

In what is some times called Paul's "Proper Farewell," Paul says, "I have fought a good fight..." (2 Tim. 4:7). Paul's prize or reward was "a crown of righteousness" (v. 8), which is available to all who prepare as did Paul.

Jude uses a term which relates to warfare when he said, "...earnestly contend for the faith..." (Jude 3). *Vine's* defines the term "contend" to mean, "...contend about a thing as a combatant."

The Book of Revelation pictures warfare between good and evil at great length. And, there are other references made which in some way relate to the military or warfare with regard to the Christian.

In some instances we may have used “warfare” to represent such things as: conflict, battle, contest, etc. But it is very evident that Christians are engaged in a serious conflict, which is well represented by the term “warfare.” It is a struggle, the result of which is either victory or defeat. The great thing about it is that we can choose **Victory** rather than **defeat**.

As we discuss **The Christian’s Necessary Warfare** we want to keep in mind that our warfare is that of a spiritual nature. Physical or carnal warfare is used by Paul and others to show the importance of the conflict in which we are engaged and to provide instructions with regard to the preparations we must make if we would be victorious. The apostle Paul points out the nature of our warfare when he said,

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled” (2 Cor. 10:3-6).

As noted in the beginning of our discussion, we want to reflect somewhat on the current physical warfare in which our country is involved, and then make some comparisons or note some similarities and or differences between that and the spiritual warfare which is emphasized in the New Testament.

### **THE CURRENT CARNAL CONFLICT**

Earlier we discussed the beginning of the war in a very brief way, but we shall add a few things to what we’ve already said. One thing that we should not forget about this war is that the false religion has a major part to play. Though some have monetary interests in the war, had it not been for Islam this conflict would not be. This is something we hear very little about in the news. The answer to the all-important question, “Who is responsible for the horrendous acts of terrorism?” is not at all difficult!

Although the 15 members of The Security Council voted to take serious action against Saddam Hussein, several back peddled and were obviously willing for the Saddam Regime to continue.

Involved in this conflict is our freedom and way of life, as well as that of a great many others. Not of the least concern is the threat of Islam to true Christianity. Unless this evil terrorism is brought to a halt more terrible things can be expected to happen to our people.

Although a great majority of our people agree that America, along with the British, should do what they are doing, some of our people have gone to great lengths in opposing the action. Some have been so outspoken that it makes one wonder as to whose side they are on? Please note the following harsh criticism from *The Paducah Sun*, Mar. 29, 2003:

#### **Professor calls for U.S. defeat**

**AP**, New York

A Columbia University professor told an anti-war gathering that he would like to see “a million Mogadishus” – referring to the 1993 ambush in Somalia that killed 18 service men.

At Wednesday night’s “teach in” on Columbia campus, Nicholas De Genova also called for the defeat of U.S. forces in Iraq and said, “The only true heroes are those who find ways to defeat the U.S. military.” And he asserted that Americans who call themselves “patriots” are white supremacists.

De Genova’s comments about defeating the United States in Iraq were cheered by the crowd of 3,000, *Newsday* reported. But his mention of the Somali ambush – “I personally would like to see a million Mogadishus” – was largely met with silence. . . .

The above could not be more outrageous, but unfortunately this is just a sample of people heaping criticism upon our country and its leadership. In the political arena some have been lashing out at our leaders in this time of serious conflict.

The great many who have been speaking out in opposition to our country and its leadership from Hollywood is no less than a disgrace to our nation. These people, in a large part, know little or nothing about what they are talking about. It seems that they only know that they are opposed to our country, in which they have enjoyed freedom, the fruits of their labors, and the privileges which abound here.

Many of the news media have engaged in very negative reporting, emphasizing the negatives about the war and ignoring the great progress that has been made in an important effort to protect our country from the evil terrorists, and to liberate a country where most of the citizens have lived in poverty and terror for more than two decades.

In the political arena we have witnessed some of the most outrageous and unjust criticism of our President and others in leadership. This has been on the very evening of war and some of it since the war began. A valid question with regard to this matter is, "On whose side are these politicians?" The very idea that politicians would seek to gain some political advantage by their unjust and unfounded criticism when our own people are shedding their blood for our country, and yes, even for those critics, is nothing less than deplorable.

One purpose for mentioning the above criticism [more could be mentioned] is to show that in this carnal conflict victory is being achieved in spite of the critics and their criticism. There are several reasons why this is so. Let us note a few of them: 1. The supporters of the conflict have greatly outnumbered the critics. 2. The service people have had excellent training for the task. 3. The hundreds of thousands of the military have worked together in a remarkable way. 4. The leadership in the conflict has been very qualified. 5. Those engaged in direct conflict with the enemy have had the courage to stand against the enemy. 6. The combatants have followed the orders of their commanders. 7. They knew how to identify their enemy. 8. They have not fraternized with the enemy. 9. Those on the field of battle have been amply supplied with their needs: food, clothing, ammunition, communication, and the many other necessary things. 10. They were willing to pay the ultimate price, death, to accomplish their objective. This list is by no means exhaustive.

### **SOME COMPARISONS, SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES, WITH REGARD TO SPIRITUAL AND CARNAL WARFARE**

As noted earlier, the Christians Warfare involves the spiritual whereas the carnal warfare relates to the physical. Even so, there are many similarities from which we can gain lessons, and there are differences which can be worthwhile to note.

**Rewards To Be Achieved.** In the current carnal conflict, the objectives are: a. Protect our country and our people from the evils of terrorism which is being perpetrated by the false religion of Islam. b. Free millions of people from a tyrannical dictator which ranks along with Hitler, Stalin, Lenin and others. As great as the goals are, they are limited to affairs on earth and of limited duration.

The reward of spiritual warfare is spiritual peace on earth and a living hope, but greatest of all is "eternal life" and all its blessings, in the world that is yet to come. As we sing, "Heaven will surely be worth it all." Christ tells us that our soul is worth more than the whole world (Matt. 16:26). The reward of our spiritual conflict is beyond our comprehension in that the things which trouble us in this life: sorrow, crying, death, pain, will not be known (Rev. 21:4). And, a mansion is prepared in the Father's house (John 14:1-3). How could anyone conclude that any war on earth would be more important than the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged as Christians.

**The Numbers Engaged In The Conflicts.** In the Iraq conflict, as in many carnal wars, numbers have played a very important part. While Iraq may have claimed a number in their military that exceeded that of the coalition, their numbers did not represent true strength. When the quality and provisions of the coalition forces are considered, they are overwhelming. While the war is not over, victory is assured. Those who thought otherwise must not have thought in terms of reality.

In the spiritual warfare, numbers do not play such an important role. God's people have almost always been a very slim minority, yet they have often been victorious. One of the great things about the spiritual warfare is that these Christian soldiers can gain the victory regardless of their numbers. While numbers can lend strength and encouragement, the individual can defeat the enemy because God is on his side. In strength that equals a majority.

In the Christian soldier's warfare, the whole multitudes of the world are faced, but in addition there are those enemies within his own army that he must face. This is not new. Many warnings of false teachers, "enemies of the cross of Christ," are given in the New Testament. More about this later.

**The Training Of The Combatants.** The troops in Iraq are perhaps among the best, if not the best, trained troops we've seen. Their training is paying off, in that they have brought such great defeat upon the enemy with the loss of relatively few lives.

In the realm of the spiritual it is far different! "The people of the Book," are few and far between among our brethren in comparison with what it used to be. This is having a telling effect in the numbers that are falling by the wayside or going off with the disloyal. More and more of our members don't know truth from error. If a preacher is friendly and outgoing many swallow what he says, be it truth or outrageous error. Objective truth has lost its place to rank subjectivism, and what training is done is often not in the Truth.

**"Pockets Of Resistance."** In the current war we are hearing of "Pockets of Resistance," among the enemy. A few diehards will hold out when all odds are against them.

Within the continuing spiritual warfare it is completely different. From all across our country comes the sad message that in areas where there are several congregations, there are only "Pockets" of those who are still standing for the whole truth and willing to defend it! Sound brethren say that in the city of Nashville, TN, which includes Davidson County, there are very few places where one can worship with a good conscience.

I'm thankful that things are no worse than they are right here in our own area, but even so, the changes which have occurred would have been unbelievable to me thirty years ago. When I came to the area in 1968, there were 15 congregations in Calloway County. I didn't have fellowship with one of the congregations [a non-cooperation group] but I attended meetings at all the others. In that almost 35 years a drastic change has occurred. There are now less than half that number whose activities I have to do with. There are signs that that number may change downward.

The University congregation had a Christmas program this past Christmas. They have been advertising their Easter celebration for this year. The Glendale congregation has fellowshipped the local Catholic Church, as their preacher participated in the Catholic Churches' *Jubilee 2000 Revival!* Elders and members from Glendale were also in attendance at the Catholic Revival. Glendale's preacher, John Dale, has since been appointed to the Board at Freed-Hardeman.

A thing which is so troubling about the above is that few of our brethren seem to be concerned. This makes the prospects for the future look dark indeed.

Thirty years ago there were only "Pockets" of error, and very small ones at that, here in the county. There was not one really far out congregation. Now error is in the majority. Yet, there are many places where error is prevailing to an even greater extent. How our Lord must be weeping.

**Leadership In Warfare.** The leadership in the warfare against the Iraqi regime has been described as second to none, notwithstanding the critics. It would be virtually impossible to overstate the contribution of good leadership in this conflict.

How pleased our Lord would be if the same quality of leadership was being exhibited in the spiritual warfare in which we are now engaged. We are now, however, seeing a serious deterioration in that leadership. This weakness is being seen in two areas especially. First, some leaders are not feeding their flocks, and are not protecting the flocks against the “wolves” which are always looking for a place of entrance. Second, as deplorable as it is, some leaders are actually leading their flocks into the domain of the wolves.

By “leadership” in the spiritual warfare we have in mind the elders, or the men of the congregations. But we also call attention to the preachers who often exercise considerable influence in the area of leadership. It is not that those in leadership positions have no instructions as to how to lead. Divine instructions are available, but some are obviously completely ignoring God’s provisions in this area.

**Unity In Warfare.** In the Iraqi conflict unity has prevailed from the top all the way down to the individual combatants. By working together they have been strengthened and better able to deal with the enemy. In unity there is strength.

In our present day spiritual warfare there is the greatest lack of unity which has been seen during our lives. This disunity has greatly weakened the cause of Christ. In I Corinthians I, Paul speaks forcefully relative to the unity which should exist within the church. Instead of all “speaking the same thing,” a growing number of brethren are “speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20: 30). Multitudes are following these false teachers, in defiance of God’s word.

The lack of unity is some times blamed upon those who are determined to “stand fast in the faith,” rather than upon those who have gone astray. The time was that lack of unity was blamed upon a few who had taken up some false way. Now, it is different, when those who stand uncompromisingly for the truth are blamed.

**Courage To Stand Against The Enemy.** Our service people have shown great courage as they have faced “suicide bombers,” and other fanatics who have used about every means conceivable to kill and maim our people. In Baghdad our troops have purposely revealed themselves to draw fire from the hidden enemy, in order to deal with them. In Iraq, our troops have faced the possibility of being exposed to weapons of mass destruction. Yet, in the face of all these things they have shown courage.

What a blessing it would be if our brethren had the same courage to face the enemy in the spiritual warfare as did our military. No one can in truth deny that Christians are taught to be militant. But that is not the picture we are seeing now. It is a matter of fact that some are showing cowardice, in the greatest cause ever. This is quite widespread.

Some have not the courage to stand up for truth for fear they might hurt someone’s feelings. That our Lord’s feelings are hurt seems not to matter. Some will not stand up to a false teacher simply because they are afraid. I’ve heard of instances where members were afraid to question anything an elder or the elders might say, even though the elders were upholding something which was wrong. A thing which bothers me greatly is when preachers are afraid to stand up for what is right and oppose error, for fear they might have to move. Paul said “all that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). It is better to suffer persecution [such as being fired] than to live “ungodly” in failing to support the truth and oppose error.

**Recognizing The Enemy In Warfare.** One of the major difficulties our military has faced in the Iraqi conflict is identifying the enemy. Enemy soldiers in civilian dress have been a problem. Some fanatics have pretended to be friends in order to get the chance to harm our people. But in most instances the enemy has appeared in enemy uniform, making their identity easy.

In the spiritual warfare there is a great similarity to what our military has faced. In some cases the false teacher has made a pretense of standing for the truth, until he was able to accomplish his objective of turning people away into error. In other cases false teachers have tried to stand on both sides of the fence, revealing their true belief only when forced to do so. But just as in the Iraqi conflict, most of the enemy in the spiritual warfare parade about in their uniform and are easily identified.

Those who would be faithful in serving the Lord are richly blessed in that they have been provided with a means of identifying the enemy. The means of identifying is God's word, His whole counsel. Those who "transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God..." (2 Jn. 9). That is, they are without God's approval. There are a great many warnings in the New Testament about false teachers. Attention is also called to some of their tactics. They may be in "sheep's clothing" (Matt. 17:15). They may "privily...bring in damnable heresies" (2 Pet. 2:1). John tells us to "try the spirits [teachers] whether they are of God" (1 Jn. 4:1). This is done by applying God's word.

When the enemy is identified, which in most cases is very easy to do, it is then the duty of faithful brethren to warn others, and stand up in opposition to the enemy and his error. One must not in any way defend, encourage, or uphold the enemy, since this would be bidding "God speed" to error (2 Jn. 10).

**Fraternizing With The Enemy In Warfare.** In carnal warfare friendly association with the enemy is not allowed and is not practiced. It would be considered a serious offense, which could be giving aid to the enemy.

In spiritual warfare, fraternizing with the enemy [those guilty of error] is not allowed. This would amount to having fellowship with those in error. Yet this is occurring on a widespread basis. If we would follow the teaching of God's word on this matter, we would draw a line which we would not cross with regard to the fellowshiping of brethren in error. Paul says of the brother in error, "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess. 3:15). Those who are in error are still "brethren," but they have also become enemies of the truth by abiding in error. To the Philippians Paul wrote, "(for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ..." (Phil. 3:18).

God's law on fellowship is quite clear. That law is set forth in such passages as: Rom. 16:16-17; Eph. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14; Eph. 5:11. This teaching is being violated or compromised on virtually every hand. People continue to support things which are in error, sometimes even with their eyes wide open. This is a great setback in spiritual warfare. If brethren would quit fellowshiping false teachers, and those who support them, a dramatic change for the better would be seen quickly. Yet, brethren who claim to be sound violate God's law on fellowship.

**Traitors In Warfare.** In physical warfare engaged in by our forces it is quite unusual for one to be a traitor. This is a very serious offense and can be punished by death. However, one traitor has been found in the Iraqi conflict. This person [can't recall his name] is a Muslim. [Perhaps many do not know that we have 14 Muslim chaplains in our military]. The person under consideration tossed a grenade into more than one military tent. The result: two of our soldiers killed and more than a dozen wounded.

Now, in spiritual warfare, Judas is remembered as a traitor. Not many name their sons Judas. Paul says that in the last days "perilous times shall come," and there would be among other evil men, "**Traitors.**" (2 Tim. 3:4). How about the present time? Are there **Traitors** among our brethren today? *Vine's* defines the word translated as "traitor" by saying it "denotes a betrayer."

Now the question, "Are there betrayers of Christ and/or His word today?" Who would say "no"? To use as an example the thrower of the hand grenade in Iraq, what about all the "grenades" being thrown out by our brethren who have denied the faith? Men like Max Lucado and Rubel Shelly, and a host of others, are tossing out their grenades filled with deadly spiritual disease, and the toll taken already is frightening! Only our Lord knows what the final toll will be. The untrained, untaught soldiers are being taken over at an alarming rate.

As far as I know, no one has attempted to number the deadly errors being taught by our brethren today, but that they are many no one can truthfully doubt. Error is rampant in the areas of: 1. Worship. 2. The work of the church. 3. Fellowship. 4. The operation of the Holy Spirit. 5. Marriage and divorce. 6. Salvation in man-made churches. 7. Women's place in the church. 8. The necessity of

baptism. 9. Observance of the Lord's Supper. 10. The distinctiveness of the one true church, and others. Those who teach error are betrayers!

I can't think of a greater affront to our Lord than to teach that the man-made religions of today can be equated with the one true church for which Christ gave his blood, and that salvation can be found in these false religions. But that is what we are hearing more and more. If this is not a betraying of Christ and His truth which makes men free, what could be such? To say that salvation is found in that for which Christ did not shed His blood is to say that the cross of Christ was not needful. If the teaching of such would not include those to whom Paul refers as "enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phi..3:18), just who would be included?

**Willingness To Pay The Price In Warfare.** To be a good soldier in carnal warfare, one must be willing to pay the necessary price, which some times means death. Most people in our country have respect for those who have been willing to suffer injury, even death, in behalf of our country. What a shame that many Muslims are willing to give their lives just to kill some Americans, or other non-Muslims. They are fighting for an evil cause.

In our spiritual warfare we should be willing to pay the ultimate price, death, if need be. It is not likely that we will be called upon to pay that price in order to be a faithful servant of the Lord. But for some of us, that could be so. In Christ's letter to the church in Smyrna, he warns them of suffering they may have to endure. The extent of the price they should be willing to pay was set forth by our Lord's words when he said, "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give the a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Note that this passage says "unto death," not "until death." Of course we are to remain faithful as long as we live, but if need be we should be willing to give up our physical lives to save our spiritual life.

It seems that the price we are willing to pay in serving the Lord today falls far short of what the church at Smyrna was asked to pay. Some aren't even willing to give enough of their time to be a participant in all the meetings of the church. Few are they who are actually seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matt. 6:33). In too many cases our serving the Lord is mainly based on convenience. It is not our highest priority.

If we would only stop to think of the price which our Lord paid in order for us have the great blessing of being a part of his church and inheriting the everlasting reward which is in store, wouldn't we think more seriously about the price we are willing to pay to be found faithful in the Lord? I would hope such would be the case. It may be that we don't often stop to think just how fortunate we are.

### **A FEW CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

The ongoing war in Iraq should be a reminder to us that we are engaged in a different kind of war, a spiritual war rather than a physical one. Just as we have seen such great success in the physical war due to the preparation and determination of the fighting forces, we should remember that the same thing is essential for victory in our spiritual war.

We should never forget that there is so much more at stake in the spiritual war than in any physical war. Victory to us means life everlasting in the world to come, as well as the benefits enjoyed in this life. It would do us good to read quite often what our Savior said to his apostles, from whom he was going to be separated for a while (John 14:1-3).

Paul's Victorious Farwell should constantly remind us that the same victory can be ours, if we with all our might will it to be so. Paul said: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:7-8). That crown can be ours also.

- - Walter W. Pigg



### A Sincere Apology

Due to physical problems I have been delayed greatly in getting out this issue of B.O.T. I had eye surgery on my right eye to remove a cataract. More than a week ago I had surgery on my left hand. Apr.15<sup>th</sup> I'm to have surgery on my left eye. Apr.17<sup>th</sup> I'm to see the doctor in Nashville relative to my hand surgery. All told I've made several trips to Paducah and to Nashville, and have a few more to make. But I'm thankful that all my surgery thus far has gone very well. I've had little pain with my hand and I can see much better with the eye on which I had surgery. - - *Walter W. Pigg*

## I'm Not His Judge!

*Brock Hartwigsen*

It is not uncommon to hear brethren when asked to express their opinion on such as the following: "If such and such is a sin" and "so-and-so" engages in it, is he a sinner and lost in his sins?" with the answer, "I can't answer that, **I'm Not His Judge.**" How true it is that Jesus is the Judge and He will judge us by His words. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12:48). But, when it comes to these types of issues, all we have to do is look to Judge Jesus. If Jesus has addressed the situation, then all we have to do is see how He has said He will judge the action or the person involved. Let's look at a few common situations and see how Jesus will judge.

A man divorces his wife for a reason other than fornication and remarries. Is he and his new wife living in sin? Jesus has told us His verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, "Yes." Jesus said, "And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9).

A Buddhist, or a Hindu, or a Jew or any non-believer in Jesus dies. Is that person lost? Jesus told us His verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, "Yes." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

The so-called "Mother" Teresa, the late Catholic nun, did good works and sacrificed for the poor and needy of the world. Is she in Abraham's bosom with Lazarus or in torment with the rich man? Jesus has told us His verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, "in torment." "Mother" Teresa, for her good works was not obedient to the will of God but the traditions and customs of men, i.e. the Roman Catholic Church. Jesus said, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).

Will a believer in Jesus [who does not obey] be lost if he dies without being baptized? Jesus has told us His verdict in such a situation. The verdict is, "Yes." Jesus in the Great Commission said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16). He also told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

The words of Jesus that we can use to answer questions of judgment correctly are not limited to the actual words said by Jesus while He was on earth which were recorded in the four gospels. Jesus told the apostles that when He died the Holy Spirit would guide them and deliver additional teachings

from Him. "I have many great things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 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" (Jn. 16:12-13). These additional words of Jesus brought through the Holy Spirit, i.e. all of the New Testament, are just as binding and will be used to judge mankind as the actual recorded words of Jesus in the four gospels.

In the New Testament we have Jesus' judgmental condemnation of many things which people today refuse to address an opinion on or try to condone. The following are just a few; **denominationalism** – it is sinful because it is nowhere authorized. Extending the hand of **fellowship** to members of the Lord's church who go beyond the teaching of Christ – this is sinful (2 Jn. 9-11). **Women preachers** – it's sinful (I Cor. 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-14). **Homosexuality** – it's sinful (Rom. 1:26-28).

When a person is confronted with a situation addressed by Jesus and asked whether it is right or wrong (sinful or righteous), no matter what he does he makes a judgment. It cannot be avoided. He either humbly judges that Jesus is the judge and submits to the words of Jesus by using them as the guideline to address the situation, or he elevates himself to the role of judge and ignores, alters, adds to or takes away from Jesus' words. If he responds, "I can't answer that. I'm not his judge," then he is, in fact, elevating himself to the position of judge. He is judging that Jesus' words are not the correct answer. He is judging that, whereas Jesus expressed a judgment, he knows better and he has judged that a judgment cannot be made.

When a person refuses to share Jesus' condemnation of actions with the lame excuse, "I'm not a judge," then he is guilty of one of two things. He is either guilty of being ignorant, and Paul told the gathering on Mars Hill that God no longer condones

ignorance (Acts 17:30), or he is guilty of rejecting Jesus as the judge by rejecting His judgment concerning the action in question.

What about you and me? Are we humble servants of Christ, willing to call a sin a sin and a sinner a sinner? Or, are we ignorant servants of Christ who don't know a sin or a sinner when confronted with one because we don't know the Bible? Or, are we arrogant believers in Christ who think we know better than Christ? Anyone who refuses to take a stand on an issue that Jesus has expressed judgment on, is either an ignorant or arrogant servant. A humble servant will not shy away from endorsing Jesus' verdict no matter what the cost.

12521 Holly Sprigs New Hill Rd.  
Apex, NC 27502

## Not Staying Behind — The Denominations, That Is

Fifty years ago it was a very rare thing indeed for a congregation of the Lord's people, or a Gospel preacher, to have anything to do with the denominational religions around us. There was one exception with regard to preachers, and that was the many debates which took place. The denominational people were challenged to uphold their faith and practice by the Bible in public debate.

How things have changed since fifty years ago. The number of instances where brethren, including preachers, are fellowshiping the man-made religions is increasing rapidly. Not only are brethren fellowshiping these religions, they are in some instances helping them to grow. Just one example of that very thing was when several congregations in Nashville supported the Billy Graham Crusade a short time ago.

Debates seldom occur anymore. Not many of the religious folk will debate what they believe and practice, and a number of our well known brethren would not debate because of their affinity for the denominational people. There are an increasing number of areas where they would not find anything to differ with them.

It appears that a number of our brethren are **Not Going To Stay Behind The Denominations** in an ever increasing number of areas. A prime example of keeping up with the denominations is the active ties of the University congregation here in Murray.

On the religious page of the Jan. 17, 003 issue of *Murray Ledger & Times* there is about a quarter page write up about the Christmas program of the University congregation. Under the heading: **Special held at University church** are two, three by four inch pictures of the activities. One shows a group of children participating in the program. The other picture is that of the youth group and high school students engaged in Group Singing. Santa Claus is on the right.

The following excerpts are from the one column on the right side of the pictures:

University Church of Christ held its first holiday program on Dec. 21.

Members of the Church Youth Group participated with the high school students enacting their version of "Twas the Night Before Christmas" and grades 1 to 6 singing various carols. . . .

Matt Hale, program organizer, said "while Churches of Christ in this area have typically not held Christmas programs, we felt that the teachings of Christ could best be shared with our neighbors, friends and family by expressing the joy we have as Christians through an event like this."

From the above account and the comments by Matt Hale, it appears that the University congregation has a goal of **Not Being Behind** the denominations with reference to the Christmas holiday. Could this be what the elders of the University congregation are feeding their flock? Apparently so, since the Christmas celebration was followed by falling in line with another activity of denominations.

The University congregation displayed an electric sign with revolving words, in the front of their building, facing Highway 641. The sign carried the message to Celebrate Christ at the University Church of Christ, Easter Sunday 4/20. "All our friends and neighbors" were invited to "Friendly Day!" Easter is not a New Testament holiday.

So, with Easter as well as Christmas, the University congregation is keeping up with the denominations. What will come next? Who knows? Probably only they know. But there is one thing I do know, and that is, I'll not be surprised, in view of the above activities. Why stop with two holidays?

One would think that the University elders along with Matt Hale would know that God's word does not authorize the observing of Easter and Christmas as religious holidays. We note that Matt Hale is quoted as saying, "...we felt that the teachings of Christ could best be shared with our neighbors...." It is when people base religious activities on what they "feel" to be best, rather than on what God's word teaches that all manner of things may occur.

I have used the University congregation here in Murray as an example because it is right here at home. But the same type of thing is happening all across our country. As sad as this is, it should not come as a surprise, since there are so many warnings in the New Testament of brethren departing from the faith. We are seeing that now. - - Editor

## Power of the Printed Page

With all the improvement in means of communication which has occurred during the past few decades, the **Printed Page** continues to be one of the most effective means of communication. This is due in part because people who are without the advanced tools of communication can read the written page. The printed page can be read over and over, and studied if need be. It can be kept as a record for future reference on an unlimited number of subjects.

It is easily passed on from one to another. An unusual example of the latter is the following concerning a copy of *Banner of Truth*.

Below is a letter from Nsanje, Malawi, Africa, which was addressed to the Hickory Grove church of Christ, the sponsors of *Banner of Truth*.

*Greetings to you. I was very much pleased when I was traveling to another country where I sat next to the brother who had a reading materials called Banner of Truth. I was very much Blessed after reading the article. Then I thought of writing and ask you if you can send me some. I'll be very much pleased if my request will meet your favorable heart.*

*Your sincere brother in Him,*

*O. J. Magas, minister*

The Hickory Grove church is a small country congregation. They, along with members of the Dexter congregation where I preach, provide much help in getting the paper ready to mail. It is most encouraging to know that the hands of our brethren at these congregations had a part in providing a printed page which would be read in Malawi, Africa.

The above is just one of many examples of the printed page made ready by the members of these two congregations which have been a blessing to people in other countries, and to many in our country. We are thankful for our "*fellowhelpers*" who make the paper possible by their support. - - Editor

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**A Personal Note:** Earlier in this issue I apologized for being so far behind with B.O.T. I have now had surgery on both my eyes for cataracts. In addition I had surgery on my right hand. I had a very severe case of Dupuytren's Disease. It didn't help when I learned that was French. Seriously, it was discovered by a Frenchman. I have made more than a dozen trips to Nashville and Paducah combined, losing much time.

I'm well pleased with the surgeries. I can see much better, and my hand is healing. I should be back to normal soon. - - *Editor*

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## Third Annual Banner of Truth Lectures

Curris Center Murray, KY, June 23 – 26, 2003

**Theme: *Back to The Old Paths — The Good Way***

### Monday June 23

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| 10:00 a.m. | Alan Adams — “The Old Paths” As They Apply Today     |
| 11:00 a.m. | Don Greene — The Lord's Supper, As Our Lord Intended |
| 1:30 p.m.  | Rick Knowles — Speaking The Truth In Love            |
| 2:30 p.m.  | Michael Willey — The New Testament and Legalism      |
| 3:30 p.m.  | Bill Willard — Our Schools and Their Influence       |
| 7:00 p.m.  | Roger Campbell — Seeking The Lost                    |
| 8:00 p.m.  | Joe Spangler — The Basis of God Approved Unity       |

### Tuesday June 24

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| 10:00 a.m. | Roger Campbell — The Old Paths and Our Youth         |
| 11:00 a.m. | Joe Spangler — When Division is Necessary            |
| 1:30 p.m.  | Jeff Bates — Things Written Aforetime                |
| 2:30 p.m.  | Jimmy Bates — The One True Church                    |
| 3:30 p.m.  | Garland Robinson — The All Sufficiency of God's Word |
| 7:00 p.m.  | Don Waggoner — The False Religion of Islam           |
| 8:00 p.m.  | Ken Burleson — Preaching The Word                    |

### Wednesday June 25

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Tim Hester — The Cheerful Giver Whom God Loves      |
| 11:00 a.m. | Gilbert Gough — The Sin of Homosexuality            |
| 1:30 p.m.  | Roger Sculley — The Whole Counsel of God            |
| 2:30 p.m.  | David Lemmons — Committing The Word to Faithful Men |
| 3:30 p.m.  | Lindon Ferguson — Marriage As God Intended It       |
| 7:00 p.m.  | Alan Adams — The Old Paths and Leadership           |
| 8:00 p.m.  | Gilbert Gough — Contending for The Faith            |

### Thursday June 26

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Richard Adams — Seeking to Please God or Man?           |
| 11:00 a.m. | Ken Burleson — Being an Example of Believers            |
| 1:30 p.m.  | Walter W. Pigg — Faith That Overcomes the World         |
| 2:30 p.m.  | Paul Curless — Leadership in True Worship               |
| 7:00 p.m.  | Richard Guill — The Lord's Vengeance on the Disobedient |
| 8:00 p.m.  | Lenard Hogan — Looking for a Crown of Righteousness     |

Murray, Kentucky has many eating places and a number of motels. There is also a park for R.V.'s. In the future we will be giving detailed information concerning places of lodging.

The *Banner of Truth* Lectures, sponsored by the Dexter and Hickory Grove congregations will provide a wonderful opportunity for those who want to be edified by God's word.

For further information I may be contacted at (270) 753-3675. E-mail: [wpiggbot@earthlink.net](mailto:wpiggbot@earthlink.net)

## ET Phone Home

*Alan Adams, Assistant Editor*

**Editor's Note:** The following article is one of a series entitled, **ET Phone Home**. There are several articles and we will be running one in each issue of BOT in the coming months. Though written about eight years ago they are still very timely.

ET was the lovable little alien (Extra Terrestrial) who was stranded on the earth in the movie by the same name. My favorite scene was when he pointed his spidery-like finger toward the heavens and said, "ET phone home." He was in a strange place and he wanted to go home and be with others like himself. After ten plus years out of the US and away from many things, I sometimes feel like an ET when I am around many Christians, particularly preachers. So much of the language, habits, principles, motivations, ideals, etc. of not a few preachers I have met in the last year makes me feel like I am from some other planet. At times it's like being Rod Serling's "Twilight Zone." Sometimes you just want to "phone home." In the last eight months, I have seen and heard some things very alien to me. Let me recount some of my strange experiences.

I have personally been told of Christians forming quartets (some call them "Gospel" groups) and then going out to perform at and for denominational activities and groups. I have tried to point out that denominationalism is wrong (Jn. 17:20-21; Matt. 15:13). I mean, I don't think I grew up in a strange place, or around strange people; but, I have always known that we ought not to fellowship or "bid God speed" to those who do not "abide in the teaching of Christ" (2 Jn. 9-11); to those "unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5:11). I love the people who are in denominations. I don't love their error, their sectarianism, but I love them and am trying to help as many as I can get out. I do not do this by playing with, performing for, and otherwise leaving the impression with them that "Hey, I'm OK and you're OK." But what seems clear to me is not so clear to others.

I am told that quartet singing is a legitimate method by which to "teach" the denominations the correct kind of music to be used in worship. I'm not making this up! This is precisely how it was explained to me. But, you see, the same passages that authorize acappella music and are silent about instrumental music, are also silent about using "songs, hymns and spiritual songs" for the purpose of performing for others. Some of the same passages that authorize *only* acappella music in worship to God, also authorize congregational singing: "speaking to one another in psalms...teaching and admonishing one another" (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Quartet, or other special music is not "speaking one to another." So, if one is truly concerned about "teaching" the denominations the correct kind of music in worship, it should at least be congregational singing.

To be sure, singing praises to God is not limited to the worship assembly (Matt. 26:30; Ac. 16:25; Js. 5:13). I sing all the time. Every Christian should love to sing hymns of praise. Sometimes when I sing, other people may hear me, just as the prisoners heard Paul and Silas (Ac. 16:25). This is a far cry, however from (A) using what is to be "praises unto God" for the purpose of performing for and entertaining an audience; and (B) one group singing to and for the rest.

Then there's this point that made to me: Since it would be OK to preach to or teach a group of denominational people; and since singing involves "teaching" (Col. 3:16), then it would be OK to

“sing” to a group of denominational people. I readily grant that preaching the truth to a group of denominational people would be a good thing. I have done that. I was once invited to speak to a Methodist church, and I lovingly, yet clearly presented to them Bible teaching on the plan of salvation, the church, the sin of sectarianism, etc. It is hard to believe, however, that anyone could honestly believe that I could, with God’s approval, say, stand up before a denominational crowd and do a solo (or add three more for a quartet) number on “Amazing Grace,” and call that “preach[ing] the word” (2 Tim. 4:2).

If this is an acceptable method for public teaching or preaching, then shouldn’t the quartets, or other groups, be “all male”? I mean, Paul makes it clear that in such public settings the women are not to “teach nor have dominion over the man” (I Tim.2:12). Of course this is all silliness! I “speak after the manner of men” (Rom. 3:5) for the sake of emphasis. The “teaching and admonishing” connected with singing “songs, hymns, and spiritual songs,” is that of brethren mutually edifying and encouraging one another by singing together. It ought to be pretty clear that Jesus did not say “Go ye into all the world and *sing* the gospel to every creature”!

Finally, some who go about performing for and playing with the denominations say, “It is not our intention to have fellowship with them.” Here’s a fair question: What precisely would one have to do in order for it to be said, “It *is* his intention to have fellowship with the denominations”? If getting together with man-made religions, clapping hands, stomping feet, singing to, picnicking with, and just generally having a “high old time” with them does not constitute “having fellowship with,” or “bidding God speed to” them; then, what kind of activities would? [More next time].

1653 Pine Ln. Dr., Cantonment, FL 32533

## Are Life Experiences To Shape The Interpretation of the Bible?

Marvin L. Weir

Randy Mayeux once professed to be a member of the church of Christ. Several years ago he preached for the Preston Road church of Christ which had long been ultra liberal regarding doctrinal matters. The Preston Road congregation had not, however, drifted as far away from God’s truth as Randy wanted them to drift. Thus, Randy made a break with churches of Christ (something all who are unhappy with the Lord’s church ought to do) and now is listed as senior pastor of Hope Community Church in Dallas.

Randy wrote an article in the guest column of the Saturday, March 22, 2003 *Dallas Morning News* commenting on the response of several “religious figures” who met on a recent Larry King show to discuss the war question. In the article, he mentions certain positions of Max Lucado (his friend since the 70s), John MacArthur, and Bishop Melvin Talbert. Space will not allow a discussion of every point raised in Randy’s article, thus we will mainly focus on his obvious disdain for Biblical authority.

Randy had no problem (and rightly so) in labeling John MacArthur as the person in the group who most respected Bible authority, saying, “He simply believes what the Bible says.” Mr. MacArthur, however, is the pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, so let it be stated that even he doesn’t not believe or respect **all** the the Scriptures teach. The Lord did not die for “Grace Community Church” (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16; Eph. 1:22-23). It is made clear in the Bible that “*every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up*” (Matt. 15:13).

Randy says, “Mr. MacArthur has always held up the Bible as the one and only authority in the church and seeks to follow it to the letter, regardless of the popularity, or lack thereof, of his conclusions.” The Bible **is** our only authority in the church, and the words of the Master will judge all

(Jn. 12:48). This surely displeases Randy and Max, but so be it! One is to follow the Word of God (Psa. 119:105) and agree with the **conclusions** that God has made. Randy opines, "Can we all understand the Bible alike was debated years ago. Maybe we can, but we don't." So whose fault is it that we do not understand the Bible alike? Do such differences in understanding **change** the Word of God? Absolutely not! God's Word means what it says whether or not one understands it that way. Paul told the Ephesian brethren, "*Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is*" (Eph. 5:17). Notice that it is the **Lord's will** that **can** be and **is** to be understood!

Consider those who say that they cannot understand why one believes that God condemns homosexuality. What does God **say** regarding the matter? "*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination*" (Lev. 18:22). The N.T. says, "*the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due*" (Rom. 1:27; cf. I Cor. 6:9). The conclusion that homosexuality is an abomination before God and will condemn one's soul to hell is the **only** conclusion that one can **rightly** draw.

Randy says, "If you want labels, try these: Mr. MacArthur, as the defender of the faith, states clearly and unequivocally that all Muslims, and any other non-Christians, are destined for hell." It is obvious to those who know both Randy and Max that they long ago decided to be more lenient than the Lord regarding the gospel plan of salvation and entry into the Lord's church.

The Lord taught, "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned*" (Mk. 16:15-16). The apostle Paul said that upon the return of the Lord He will render "*vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might*" (2 Thess. 1:8-9). Can one follow the teaching of the Koran, or must one follow the teaching of the Bible? Can one follow Mohammed or must one follow Christ?

Randy says, "Human beings bring themselves into the act of interpreting the sacred text. They have, and they always will. Bishop Talbert has fought for civil rights. Mr. MacArthur has long spoken against those who would weaken or lessen the authority of the Bible. Mr. Lucado...has cultivated a warm and loving heart for individual people. Their life experiences inform their approach to the Bible and shape their interpretation of it."

A loving heart will **obey** God's will! "Life experiences" are not to shape one's interpretation of the Bible (cf. 2 Pet. 1:20-21). God's word has long been settled **in** heaven (Psa. 119:89). May our heart be like Ezra's heart (cf. Ezra 7:10).

-P.O. Box 975, Rowlett, TX 75030

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### Is Your Address Changing?

You can help us save \$\$\$ and not miss an issue of *Banner of Truth*. We appreciate those who help us by sending address changes.

**An Update.** . . Earlier in this issue of BOT we discussed the denominational trends of the University church of Christ here in Murray. We mentioned their Christmas program and also their Easter activity. The question was asked, "What will come next?" Well, the April 24<sup>th</sup> issue of *Murray Ledger & Times* tells of one more thing. Under about a six by five inch picture of "The Acappella Group," the following information is given:

"FREE CONCERT...The Acappella Group will present a free concert Friday at 7:30 p.m. at the University Church of Christ, 801 North 12<sup>th</sup> St., Murray. Cory Martin, standing left, son of Robert and Shirley Martin of Murray and a recent graduate of Pepperdine University, Malibu, Calif., is a member



of this Christian music group. The public is invited to attend this special concert, sponsored by the youth of the church.”

**Islamic Threat.** . . After our people spilled their blood to bring down the regime of dictator, Saddam Hussien, the Shiite Muslims are protesting by the multiplied thousands. They want the U.S. to leave and let them form an Islamic government. The false religion of Islam is responsible for the war with Iraq, and various acts of terrorism. The Islamic countries preach hatred for the Americans. Few Americans seem to realize the part that Islam has to play in the current war on terrorism. - - Editor

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### READERS' RESPONSE

“I appreciate receiving the publication, ‘*Banner of Truth.*’ It is refreshing to know there are brethren who have not compromised Truth – **Bill Trees.**” – **SD.**

“Here is a check to help spread the gospel in your bulletin. I enjoy reading it very much each month. Keep up the good work and may God continue to bless you in your efforts to teach the truth as God has written it – **Thersa Weir.**” – **TX.** (*Many thanks for your concern and for the check to help keep our work going. Editor.*)

“Dear brother, I was filled with energy to search the Bible when I read BOT. Put me on your mailing list – **Oben Anthony.**” – **Cameroon.** (*It's good to hear from brothers in other countries – Editor.*) (See next page)

“It was good to hear from you and that all is well with you and yours....I continue to be very pleased with B.O.T. I trust that you will stand in God's grace and contend earnestly for the faith. The victory is in Jesus and heaven will be home for all who remain faithful in Him where there is no condemnation. Many thanks from a brother in Christ – **Don Shiflett.**” – **AL.**

“My husband and I enjoy reading the BOT and then we pass them on to our daughter and her husband. I am sending a check for \$50.00 to help with your work and I am also enclosing our new mailing address... Thank you – **Ken & Catherine Pennington.**” – **TN.** (*Thank you for the check and for sending your change of address. If you know of others who would like to receive BOT let us know and we will add them to our mailing list –Ed.*)

“Dear Walter and Naomi. Kuin and I send you our greetings. We hope you are both keeping well. Thanks so much for Walter for the work you with B.O.T. I enjoy reading it and appreciate the articles. Take care and God bless **Glen Tattersall.**” - **Tasmania.** (*It's good to hear from down under and that you are well. We look forward to when you can visit with us again in the U.S. - - Walter.*)

“Please change my address to . . . The Banner of Truth is good reading. Thanks – **Jim Taylor.**” – **CO**

“I have been receiving your Banner of Truth for a few months now. My husband and I are very pleased with your message from God's word. We have been members of the Lord's church over 40 years and have seen it fall into worldly ways. This is very, very sad. . . Since my husband retired we have visited a lot of congregations that are not doing what is right. We would like to help in any way we can to help as many as we can stay strong in God's word.. – **Carroll & Shirley Miller.**” (*The condition of the Lord's church is not good in so many places. I'm hearing from people all across our country and it seems that it is the same almost everywhere. But the N.T. warns of such times as this. Your concern is so greatly appreciated. What a great blessing it would be if many, many more of our brethren were as concerned as you are – Editor.*)

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**Remember the *Banner of Truth* Lectures in Murray, KY, June 23-26. Twenty eight lessons will be delivered in four days.**

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