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

Return Services Requested

Sunday Services: 9:00 a.m.
Bible Classes
Worship 10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.
Bible Study

Readers' Response

"I'm writing to let you know I finally got the last package of papers you sent. We had water damage in our apartment when Katrina hit. Everyone had to move. I think it would be best not to mail any more bundles until I get settled. You keep up the good work you are doing. God bless you and your wife. In Christian love" — **Thelma Clark, AL.** (*We're thankful you were not hurt. — Editor*).

"Have been thinking of you all and meant to write sooner. Hope your health has improved. The work you do with the paper is outstanding and I pray God will help you continue. Our fondest regards." — **Lucille & Lloyd Krantz, AR.** (*My health has improved considerably. My wife has been having severe problems with a sciatic nerve, but has made some improvement. — Editor*).

"Please transfer the bundle to the Union Grove church address. I will be 80 in November and have been given orders by my doctor to quit driving...I sure thank you so much for your trouble. I really enjoy your publication." — **W.C. Goode, TN.** (*I reached that 80 mark in Sept., but am still able to drive and carry on my work. Our years fly by in such a hurry! May the Lord bless your health. — Editor*).

"I continue to enjoy your paper, and have almost ceased being amazed at innovations, and or departures from the Old Paths by many. Do hope that at this time your health has improved and you will have many more years to teach and preach. I have two names I'd like you to add to your mailing list. These are friends of mine." — **Dorothy H. Strattis, TN.** (*It is good to hear from you. We will be happy to add the names. I, too, am no longer amazed at what is happening within the church. I know your late husband would have been greatly disturbed by the loss of love for the truth of God. — Editor*).

"Thank you for sending BOT each month. You are to be highly commended for the excellent, sound articles. Keep up doing the Lord's work!" — **Maurice Brown.**

"My friend gave me free literature. I would love to learn more. God bless all who believe, Banner of Truth." — **Lavona Twitty, MO.** (*Happy to add your name. If you enjoy BOT, tell others about it. — Editor*).

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK

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Will "Our Schools" Be Our Downfall? (#1)

Present conditions and evidence from the past testify strongly in the affirmative. This should serve as a dire warning that what once constituted a great blessing can later become a great and lasting curse.

[Editor's note: This question was discussed in Banner of Truth just over nine years ago. It was carried in three parts. Since the conditions within our schools have not improved, but rather to the contrary have worsened, we believe it is timely to rerun the articles. In some instances we may make a "note of update."]

Preparatory to our discussion of this serious and timely question, let me suggest that by posing the question, "Will 'Our Schools' Be Our Downfall?" (future tense) we are neither overlooking nor minimizing the great harm which has been done already. As to how many have been led away from the truth and into error by a multiplicity of false doctrines propagated by brethren in our schools, only the Lord knows the true number; but, by our own observation it has been more than a few. Informed, truth-loving brethren will readily acknowledge this fact. However, a greater devastation of the faithful can and will occur if the present trend continues.

Another thing I want to point out is that I am well aware that "Our Schools" is a highly sensitive subject with a great many brethren, often evoking a very unfavorable response when discussed in any sort of a critical way. My objective in this discussion is not to engage in any sort of "mean-spirited" criticism of our schools, but rather to face reality and weigh the evidence as it relates to the question under consideration. It should also be point that I am not alone in registering my concern relative to our schools. In more recent times a number of brethren have been speaking out on the subject. This is most encouraging since concern when followed by appropriate action can bring about needed change.

My request from the readers of the following material is that the content be considered with a spirit of fairness, wherein the evidence offered in support of conclusions reached weighed on the basis of reality. This will preclude the effect of any sense of loyalty to any school and will, →

BANNER OF TRUTH

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Continued from Page 1

above all, give due consideration to God's will as it relates to the subject. We now begin the main discussion of the question under consideration by asking:

ARE "OUR SCHOOLS" SCRIPTURAL?

By this question I mean, do these schools violate the teaching of the New Testament? In years gone by some brethren have opposed schools operated by our brethren, contending that they have no scriptural right to exist. Let it be understood that I am not now, nor have I been, one of those brethren. This, however, is not to say that I am in favor of any teaching and/or practice of our schools which is not in harmony with God's word. I have and will continue to oppose such. It is the principle of schools operated by our brethren that I uphold.

In 1953, when brother H.A. Dixon was President of Freed-Hardeman College, I entered the school as a Bible major (preacher student), and spent about three years altogether. I shall always be thankful for the

instruction received while at FHC. I was then proud to say that I was a student at Freed-Hardeman.

Until a couple of decades ago my wife and I put forth efforts to help FHC in a financial way. She spent many hours working with the FHC Associates to raise funds. We made contributions ourselves, and I personally encouraged the raising of several thousand dollars for the school. Let it not be said that we just oppose "our schools," period. But there is another important question to which we should give our attention. That question is:

ARE "OUR SCHOOLS" A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

This question can hardly be answered sensibly without some qualifications. For example: Which schools are we talking about? At what period of existence are we considering? As we look back over the years it is clear that some of our schools were at times a great blessing indeed. In fact, most of our schools constituted a great blessing when they were operated in accordance with the objectives of their founders. The same would be true today if they were operated accordingly. However, as regrettable as it is, most of our schools are no longer operated as their founders intended. This we shall point out in the course of our discussion. But at this point we shall endeavor to point out some of the concern being voiced by a number of our concerned brethren.

VOICES OF SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT "OUR SCHOOLS"

The trend of pernicious liberalism which commenced within our schools several years ago continues in a forcefully unabated way; but it is encouraging that a number of our brethren, some of whom have been involved in our schools for a great many years, are now speaking out and sounding vigorous warnings as to the dangers being faced in our schools of today. We ask our readers to seriously consider the words of these brethren who are or were in a position to know what they are talking about. This list is in no particular order.

Thomas B. Warren: "To see the possibility of the apostasy of Christian colleges, one need only to spend a little time in studying the history of such colleges. One who, in loving concern for truth and right, †

FELLOW-HELPERS

August, September, October

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Barbara Kist | 75.00 |
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| Jean Harbin | 10.00 |
| Cynthia McIntyre | 95.00 |
| James D. Jackson | 100.00 |
| Thomas A. Harris | 25.00 |
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| Ed Armstrong | 100.00 |
| Shirley Taylor | 15.00 |
| Lucile Krantz | 25.00 |
| Anonymous | 75.00 |
| Anonymous | 1,000.00 |
| K. Jayne Massey | 25.00 |
| Berea church of Christ | 100.00 |
| Repaid to BOT Lecture expense | 1,516.20 |
| Total contributions Aug.-Oct. | 5,301.70 |

"fellow-helpers" to the truth (3 John 8)

Banner of Truth Financial Report

Aug., Sept., Oct. 2005

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Balance on hand August 1, 2005 | 10,686.31 |
| Aug. — Oct. contributions | 5,301.70 |
| Total funds available | 15,988.01 |
| Aug. — Oct. expenses: | |
| Banner of Truth Lectures | 1,516.20 |
| Postage (returns, foreign, other) | 2,077.92 |
| Internet for one year | 117.00 |
| Labels for two months | 61.62 |
| New Stapler | 345.00 |
| Paper | 1,422.00 |
| Envelopes, tape, staples, supplies | 241.35 |
| Total expenses | 5,781.09 |
| Total funds available | 15,988.01 |
| Less total expenses | 5,781.09 |
| Total on hand Oct. 31, 2005 | 10,206.92 |

We are truly thankful for those who make our work possible. Whatever the amount given is greatly appreciated. You are *fellow-helpers* in the message going out to many thousands of people in this country and in several other countries of the world.

Banner of Truth Lectures

June 5 – 8, 2006

Theme: Warring a Good Warfare
Curris Center — Murray, KY

Why not make plans now to profit from this feast of spiritual food which we all need?

Tapes of the 2005 Lectures are available from: Knedal Rasnake, 15973 Little Buck Blvd., Boonville, MO 65233. Phone: (920) 569-6504. E-mail: sleuther@yahoo.com

Evil Islam Is On The Move

Recent events, including the bombings in Aman, Jordan, should remind us that Islam is a global evil. If Islam were in control in our country, religious freedom would not exist.

from P. 11— those who truly love the Lord and who respect His authority. It is an un-get-aroundable fact that unauthorized beliefs and practices are the cause of division.

The restoration in pure undenominational Christianity depends upon a willingness and a desire for all Christians to have a “thus saith the Lord” for everything they teach and practice. Abandon the Biblical principle and unity becomes an impossibility. There is an observable tendency today among the church of Christ to copy the innovations of the denominations and not to look to the scriptures for authority. Where did children’s worship, youth directors, church leagues, gymnasiums, etc. originate? Not only have many adopted the language of Ashdod but they have followed the innovations. No longer is the word of God sufficient for salvation, but clowns, meals and recreation must be the incentive. Worship is no longer about giving praise and thanksgiving to God for His manifold blessings and unspeakable gift, but it is all about what the worshiper desires to make him feel good about himself. Brethren, we are no longer going in and out the doors as authorized by God’s word, but many are jumping out the windows of innovation with the denominations.

Has the day now come when we need a restoration of the churches of Christ? What do you think?

—1186 Marthalevell Rd., Lebanon, TN 37090

Your Help Urgently Needed!

Wouldn’t you like to have a part in putting another faithful Gospel preacher on the firing line for the Cause of Christ?

I don’t know a greater need within the Lord’s church today than that of more faithful preachers of the Gospel of Christ. One who is capable and willing to help fill that need deserves our support in a financial way and sincere encouragement in other ways.

A capable and willing young man, Kevin J. Flowers, of Cleveland, Tennessee, where Roger D. Campbell is the preacher is willing to give his life to the preaching of God’s word. He needs our financial assistance to enable him to get the training he needs to carry out his sincere desires. How can we say no to such a one as Kevin? I have confidence in our brethren that we will stand be-

hind him.

In the following is some information about Kevin, from a letter of recommendation by Roger Campbell, the preacher where Kevin worships.

“I have been acquainted with Kevin J. Flowers since we moved to Union Grove over six years ago. Kevin, now twenty years of age, desires to prepare himself to preach the gospel. He desires to enroll as a full-time student in the Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies, in Pensacola, FL, as soon as possible.” “Kevin has grown in the faith so much since I first met him. He is serious-minded about his work in the kingdom. At union grove he leads singing one service per month, often leads in prayers, and in the past has preached or extended the invitation a number of times.” “It is my pleasure to recommend Kevin. The shepherds of Union Grove will be supporting him during his two years of study, but he will need more financial assistance.”

Bro. Ken Burleson, director of the school, says Kevin has been accepted as a full-time student, to begin his studies Nov. 28, 2005. Ken says, “I can recommend Kevin to be worthy of your financial support.” Students do not have time to work at a secular job for financial support during their two years of intense study. Support for Kevin will be acknowledged by the school, and Kevin will be required to send his grades to his supporters at the end of each quarter.

Kevin says: “Would you please consider supporting me as a student as I prepare myself to preach the gospel? Any support will be greatly appreciated by me and by the school on my behalf. Also, I have two letters of recommendation, one from the director of the school, Ken Burleson, and one from Roger Campbell, the evangelist of the Union Grove church of Christ where I attend. I thank you so much for your consideration.”

Kevin’s phone: (423) 478-3389; Roger Campbell’s phone: (423) 473-9344; Ken Burleson’s phone: Res. (850) 968-2207, Ofc. (850) 474-9257. E-mail: kenwb@nwfsbs.com

While I do not know Kevin on a personal basis, I do have the utmost confidence in brethren Roger Campbell and Ken Burleson. I have known them for many years. I also have great confidence in the school which Kevin plans to attend. I would encourage those interested to contact those above for more detailed information.

—Editor

calls attention to some matter which seems to indicate a ‘drift’ away from the truth is really a friend of every Christian college. It is a tragic mistake to regard him as an enemy. (cf. II Tim. 4:1-5).” (Originally printed in *The Restorer*, Feb. 1986).

The advice given by brother Thomas Warren is surely worth heeding. Who is better qualified to speak on the history of our colleges? We now call your attention to some things said by others of our brethren, relative to our schools.

Glenn Colley: “Today our area Christian college administrators often perceive themselves to be in a bit of a fix when it comes to taking strong positions for the truth. For you see, they know that there is a great movement afoot to change the church....”

“So what are university administrators to do? Since they call their schools ‘Christian’ colleges, and since they maintain Bible departments in which doctrines are taught, and since they have guest speakers come to campus to speak, they HAVE to take positions with regard to this ‘change’ movement. It’s unavoidable. The rub comes in the fact that whichever way they go, they will offend some supporters, and lose some students; either because the student and parents look for a more liberal atmosphere, or because the students and parents want to avoid the existing liberal atmosphere....” (*Words of Truth*, Sept. 16, 1994).

A man well qualified to speak concerning Christian schools was H. Leo Boles. It is interesting to note a prediction he made just prior to his death in 1946. The following quotation from brother Boles is from an article entitled, *Our Colleges*.

“The next generation of preachers of the gospel will come from these colleges. If the colleges are not kept loyal to truth and faithful; they will be unsound in doctrine and unfaithful to the Bible. As are the preachers, so will be the churches. The colleges mentioned above will have a powerful influence on the churches of Christ.” (cited from: Steve Miller, *Firm Foundation*, March 1994).

Roy Deaver & Thomas Warren: “Even a casual look over our brotherhood today warrants the conclusion that a number of ‘our Christian Colleges’ definitely are a part of the problem, rather than their being a part of their solution, as related to the

matters which our people face today.” (cited from *An Open Letter To Abilene University*).

Wendell Winkler: “May I say in the next place, that our Christian schools have contributed to some degree to the wounding of the body. I want to preface that by saying that many years of my life have been dedicated to the Christian education movement among churches of Christ....But Jesus taught that we will know a tree by the fruit it bears (Matt. 7:15-20). Accordingly, when graduates from our schools are doctrinally suspect something is apparently wrong with the influence under which they have been....Christian schools have the potential for absolute good—but at the same time they have the potential for creating great harm. All of us know about Bethany. Such being the case, the boards and the administrators of our schools must insist on distinctive NT Christianity being taught again and again and again, in the chapel services and in the classroom. Additionally, there must be strong emphasis on high Christian morals and ethics being exemplified and vigorously taught. Here is a sobering thought: much of what the Lord’s church will be in the 21st century, in the very nature of the case, will be contingent upon the moral and doctrinal soundness of our Christian schools....” (From a speech at the FHU Lectures, Feb. 7, 1995).

Alan E. Highers: “Through their influence on young people, the colleges also have an effect upon the church. It is not a question of whether this should be the case, or whether we approve. It is a fact. Those who attend preacher schools, colleges, and universities operated by Christians, often become the elders, deacons, preachers, teachers, and leaders in congregations wherever they go. Therefore, like it or not, the educational institutions are a force for either good or evil upon the churches....If we have modernistic teachers in the schools, we will soon have modernistic preachers in the pulpits. If we have doctrinal compromises at college lectureships, we will soon have doctrinal compromises in congregational activities. If our young people drink at poisoned wells, they will soon become weak and sickly in their spiritual convictions. The good schools can do when they are on the right track is dwarfed by the harm →

they can do if they go astray.” (*Spiritual Sword*, Vol. 22, July 1991).

J. E. Choate: “The college [College of the Bible, wwp] was a great success story, but came to an ignominious end in 1917 with the invasion of the new liberal theology. Who would dare try to make the case that this same scenario is now unfolding before our very eyes in our Christian schools?” (*Yokefellow*, Apr. 1996). “It seems to this writer that the major source of the problems confronting the conservative churches of Christ are generated in the classrooms of our schools and colleges. We would that they would straighten up their rhetoric and admit that the direction of our schools is being re-defined within the framework of the religious values of postmodern culture. We can, at least, understand that kind of honesty.” (ibid.).

Ben Vick: “There needs to be some purging in ‘our’ schools; and if not, a purging of ‘our’ schools. Instead, our brethren invite the heretics and sectarians to teach and influence our children. Third, the boards and administrators of these institutions need to remove those teachers who do not hold to the sacred principles taught and believed by the founders, because they are a direct undermining of the very purpose of the institutions.” (*The Informer*, May 5, 1996).

Wayne Coats: “WHICH OF ‘OUR’ PRESIDENTS COULD YOU CALL ON TODAY? I would lovingly ask: 1. Which one of ‘our’ University Presidents will come over into Macedonia and meet a denominational preacher in debate? Is that a wicked question? 2. Which University President could consistently meet some false teacher? 3. Which University President thinks it is not his job to defend the faith on the polemic platform?... I distinctly recall when those brethren were set to defend the gospel (Phil. 1:17). But that was ‘once upon a time, long long ago.’ (cited from an article: *School Men And Once Upon A Time*).

In addition to these warnings, many others could be given; but, in spite of serious warnings, based on evidence, more and more of our brethren seem oblivious as to what is happening in our schools and the great danger which is involved. Perhaps a number of factors contribute to this lack of perception, but we are convinced that a major cause involves loyalty, and a lack of sincere love of the truth.

THE DANGER OF UNSWERVING LOYALTY

Loyalty to a cause which is upright and in accord with God’s will is a good thing. In the past some of our good schools were able to continue rendering a good and needed service only because of the loyal support of brethren. But loyalty must never become so strong that it fails to recognize departures from the right way when and if such occurs.

Instances of loyalty going too far can be exemplified in a number of areas of society. Let us note a few examples. In the area of politics we hear some people described as “Dyed in the wool.” Such people are so loyal to their party that they will not change, regardless of what direction the party may take. To the politicians these people are “in the bag.”

Today’s cults depend upon the unswerving loyalty of the members. This loyalty can be so strong that the adherents completely lose their ability reason sensibly. We well remember Jim Jones and his 900 followers, most of whom committed suicide on command. Then there was the Waco fiasco. This shows just how strong loyalty can become.

An example of loyalty gone too far is seen in the followers of W. Carl Ketcherside. This involved one of our own brethren. Ketcherside was for years a proponent of a radical sort of anti-ism. But then he changed his course and became an avid supporter and propagator of ultra liberalism, doing much to advance the ungodly doctrine of “Unity in diversity” within the church. Many followed him blindly from one evil extreme to another.

Loyalty can become so strong, as evidenced by the above examples, that there is great danger of one losing his sense of reality. This does not mean that one has evil intent or desire, but the fact is that one’s ability to discern properly between the right way and the wrong way can be adversely affected. Things which otherwise would have aroused attention are not noticed and, therefore, overlooked. It is simply a matter of fact that there is a reluctance to be critical of things to which we have great loyalty, regardless of how warranted criticism may be.

From personal experience I know what it is to have a sense of loyalty to a school. How well do I remember my days at Freed-Hardeman, beginning in 1953. I shall never forget, nor cease to be thankful for, the sound J

“things” that relate to moral and spiritual excellence.

It was to the Jews that God had “intrusted the oracles” (3.2), “the letter” (2.27), yet they did not live up to their heritage. With this marvelous “letter” and the unique sign of “circumcision,” they were, after all, “transgressors of the law.”

Then, using the same “spirit” and “letter” contrast as used in II Corinthians 3, and Romans 7, Paul moves his Jewish readers to consider **now** the Jew and circumcision who and which are “in spirit” — that is, according to the New Testament — as opposed to **then** when Jewishness and circumcision were “outward” and “in letter” — that is, declared to be so by the Old Testament. An eight day old boy of Jewish parents was a Jew, and circumcised, whether he liked it (that is, being circumcised), or even knew it (that is, he was a Jew.) Under the Old Testament, you became a Jew first, and were later taught to “know the Lord” (Heb 8.11); whereas, under the “new covenant,” one becomes an “inward Jew” by virtue of God’s Law being heard and thereby “put into their mind,” and written “on their heart”(v. 10; cf. Jno 44-45). Isaiah Boone Grubbs says of verses 28-29,

The contrast before the writer is not between a good Jew and a bad Jew, but between a Jew and a Christian. Under the dispensation of grace, outward Judaism amounts to nothing; we must be Christians, “for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phill 3.3) — *Commentary on Romans*, p. 52.

Unless Paul changes the meaning and usage of “spirit,” “letter,” and “law,” from their meaning and usage in the other passages discussed — and there is no reason within the context that demands such a change — then, Grubbs is exactly right. This passage isn’t talking about any “spirit” and “letter” *levels* of any law, much less the Law of Christ.

There we have it. Of the three passages which use the words “spirit,” “letter,” and “law” (2Co 3:6; Rom 2:27, 29; 7:6), not one of them teaches that Divine Law has a “spirit” level and a “letter” level. There is no such thing as a person focusing too strongly on the so called “letter of the law” to the diminishing of the superior so called “spirit of the law.” —AA

Different Kinds of Smart

There are book smarts, street smarts, people smarts, business smarts, and so on. The truth is, for a successful life, you need some of all of these, plus more. Little, if any, of this comes naturally, which is why the Spirit is concerned that we “receive instruction” (Prov 1:3). Our (English) “instruction,” is from (Hebrew) *musar* which carries the idea of discipline, correction; even, a formal discipline and approach to things. We tend to have a pretty shallow concept of discipline thinking that it’s limited to punishment or a whipping; it’s broader than that. The fact is the Book of Proverbs is a “formal discipline and approach to things.” In other words, it’s a manual on all kinds of “smarts.” For it to work, however, we must “receive [*laqach*]” it, i.e. take it in hand, carry it along with oneself.

This manual is not only for the “young man” (v. 4), but for the “wise man” (v. 5) as well. Stupidity is unbiased when it comes to age. The manual will train a person in such things as: “wise dealing” [wisdom, KJV], “righteousness,” “justice” [judgment, KJV], “equity,” and “discretion” (vv. 3,4). A manual like this must have made its author a billionaire; surely there are millions of frayed and worn copies of this amazing book. We know better: talk about your secret hidden in plain sight. Look at that list again: Wise dealing [*sakal*]—insight, circumspection, that which causes success; righteousness [*tsedek*]—rightness, what is right or normal; justice [*mishpat*]—straight, right; equity [*meshar*]—even, level, smooth; and discretion [*mezimmah*]—purpose, device, as in choosing the right course of action.

A person lacking in any of these areas is at best going to have a hard row to hoe, and at worst he’s going to be miserable; most live somewhere betwixt the two. As christians, sometimes our troubles “need be” (1Pe 1:6). We can’t “go out of the world” (1Co 5:10), and if you are a faithful christian “marvel not...if the world hateth you” (1Jno 3:13). In the meantime, it is the height of folly for anyone to be taking it on the chin because they don’t know and live by “the proverbs of Solomon.” —AA

Spirit of the Law *Versus* Letter of the Law? (IV)

In reality, Divine Law, whether Patriarchal, Mosaic, or Christ's, has **no** so called *spirit* part and *letter* part, and most certainly which "parts" are mutually antagonistic. Whence, then, the title? — It's a Chimney Corner Scripture which has been "wrested" (2Pet 3.16) out of passages which do use the words: "spirit," "letter," and "law," but which passages, when "rightly divided" (2Tim 2.15), are seen to be discussing two different Divine Laws (Old and New Testaments), and not two different "levels" of Divine Law.

When men arrogate to themselves the right to appropriate words from the Bible and use them in ways in which the Bible does not, they set in motion a juggernaut that ultimately renders The Book meaningless and without authority. A "preacher" per se does not "pastor" a church; "church" is not a building or a denomination; sprinkling is not "baptism"; "tongues" is not babbling; "faith" is not conviction in the absence of proof; **nor** do "spirit" and "letter" refer to two parts, aspects, or levels of Divine Law. Let us continue to push and promote the plea that men "speaking as the oracles of God" (1Pet 4.11), thereby call Bible things by Bible names.

Of the three passages that bring together the terms: "spirit," "letter," and "law," we have examined two, II Corinthians 3:6, and Romans 7:6. Now, let us move to the third and ask,

DOES ROMANS 2:27, 29 TEACH THE "SPIRIT" OF THE LAW VS. THE "LETTER" OF THE LAW IDEA? This Scripture is a bit more involved, but no less clear, than the others. The theme of *Romans* is the "gospel...the power of God unto salvation" (1.16). Chapter one develops the theme by showing that Gentiles need the Gospel because they stand before God "without excuse" (v. 20). Chapter two shows that Jews have the same need because they also are "without excuse" (2.1). In both cases, they were without excuse and in need of the Gospel because both, Gentile and Jew had "sinned" (v. 12).

Gentiles before the Christian Age were under Divine Law. Paul does speak of them as those who "have sinned without law," (Rom 2.12), but this cannot mean they were without **any** law, rather that they were with-

out the Law of Moses. This is true for two reasons.

First, Paul plainly says they "sinned" and would "perish." He also says that "where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (Rom 4:15). In other words, no law, no sin (Cf. 1Jno 3.4). But, they had "sinned," therefore, they were under Divine Law; only, not the Law of Moses.

Second, as to the state of the Gentile world before the Christian Age, Paul vividly describes the litany of their "sins" (vv. 21-31). Notice carefully, in verse 32, that he says of the Gentiles: "who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death..." "Ordinance [judgment, KJV]" comes from the Greek *dichaioma*, which means "What has been established and ordained by law, an ordinance" (*Thayer's*, p. 151).

From Adam to the Christian Age, *non* Jews (Gentiles) were subject to Divine Law. There never has been, nor is there now, any such thing as a human being who is not under Divine Law. The one and only Divine Law in effect today, for all men, is the Law of Christ (Matt 28.18-20).

The Jews were "without excuse" because they had "sinned under the law." Note carefully in verses 14 and 15; Paul speaks of "the things of the law" and the "work of the law." Whereas the Jews felt themselves superior to the Gentile (cf. vv. 17-24), yet some of the Gentiles, in contrast to many Jews, were "by nature (habit or practice of life)," striving to live in harmony with the moral and spiritual excellence that God has always demanded of His creatures. At the core of all Divine Law has always been, and is, the goal of moral and spiritual excellence; that is, things which are "holy, righteous, and good" (7.12; cf. Matt 22.40; 12.8-10). To the shame of many Jews with all their "advantage" (3.1-2), it was some of the Gentiles who actually showed this "work of the law written in their hearts."

It is in this sense, and out of this background, that Paul speaks of Jews ("circumcision") being "transgressors of the law [of Moses, AA], and the Gentile ("uncircumcision") "keeping" and "fulfilling" the same law (vv. 24-27). Certainly, the Gentiles were not "keeping" the Sabbath law, Feast laws, etc., rather "the things" of the Law — of every Divine Law — †

Bible teaching I received at the feet of dedicated men who loved God's word and were set for the defense of the gospel. No uncertain sounds were heard as these men urged their students to walk in "the old paths, where is the good way" (Jer. 6:16). My loyalty was unquestioned in those days and I was proud to say that I had attended a school which was known for its loyalty to the cause of truth and righteousness. I am, however, thankful that my loyalty was not so strong, that when some changes began to occur indicating a change of course for the school, I was not oblivious to those changes. In fact, my concern about those changes have been made known to the administration at Freed-Hardeman.

Loyalty, if strong enough, can tend toward rationalization. A case in point is two politicians I heard on TV. One said he thought that our taxes should be lowered, and that would result in better things for us. The other, an advocate of higher taxes, responded by saying that we in America don't have taxes as high as the European countries. That supposedly made our high taxes alright. The fallacy of that reasoning is that we should want the very best for ourselves, regardless of what the Europeans have. In recent years, we have in the BOT voiced concerns about our schools; in response to this voicing, I have received letters from a couple of readers, each manifesting great loyalty for FHU. Both writers reasoned that FHU is better than some other schools. This could well be the case, but this doesn't justify settling for anything less than the very best at FHU, or at any other school operated by our brethren.

One writer expressed his displeasure with regard to the practice of hand-clapping in connection with spiritual activities at FHU; but, he rationalized that since one speaker at the annual Open Forum firmly rejected the practice, that made everything OK. The buck should stop on the President's desk (or those of the board members), and the practice should end there. I remember when such a practice would have been stopped dead in its tracks.

Another example of rationalizing goes something like this: Though the FHU Lectures have had some speakers of a liberal hue, there have also been some good ones. Some "good speakers" does not justify the use of some who are liberal. Does it? In a similar

vein, a brother said that since we all sin, those guilty of error at the school only need to ask forgiveness like we all do. A prerequisite, however, for forgiveness is repentance. When error continues over a period of time, repentance is lacking; otherwise, it would be dealt with responsibly.

It is my belief that a question relative to our schools, which needs to be dealt with in a most serious manner, is: When changes begin to occur in our schools, at what point should one's loyalty be examined and reconsidered? The degree of one's loyalty will certainly affect the response to that question.

Those brethren who have supported Pepperdine, Abilene, Harding, OCC and Lipscomb have surely thought about this question; or, have they? Anyway, my point is: Those schools have had their loyal supporters, and whatever lines of communication they have had with the schools, and whatever concerns they may have voiced, did not stop the drift of the schools into error. As long as a school can count on such loyal supporters, and its leadership is inclined in the liberal direction, why would one imagine that the danger of drifting into error is not real?

There is a current practice, relating to our schools, which should be discussed in a responsible way. This is especially true inasmuch as the practice could bring about drastic changes relative to the work of the church. The above practice involves the question—

SHOULD "OUR SCHOOLS" SUPPLANT THE CHURCH?

No brethren, perhaps, would explicitly suggest that schools operated by our brethren should replace the church; at least I hope not; yet, with the happenings within the church in recent years, one never knows what might happen. By supplanting the church, we have in mind the schools performing works which the Bible ascribes to the church. We have reference, in particular, to mission work done by our schools rather than by the church. Some activities in recent years make this a timely question for discussion, from the standpoint of what the New Testament teaches. Let us, therefore, consider →

the following specific question: Should our schools supplant the work of the church in the area of mission work?

We must surely agree that the church ordained by God and purchased by the precious blood of his son, is the institution and organization through the important work of evangelism was intended to be carried out. This being true, is it in order to use other organizations, such as a school, to carry out this God-approved mission of the church? Let us set forth a couple of not uncommon scenarios which give rise to our concerns:

First, one of our brotherhood schools embarks upon a concerted effort to do mission work in a foreign country. The school is not the church and is not under an eldership; but, the school recruits or invites individuals to be a part of their mission effort. Both congregations and individuals are solicited for financial support of the school's mission work. This mission work is planned and supervised by the school, and has no congregational input or leadership.

Second, a school approaches an eldership relative to mission work. The school's proposal is that the congregation turn over to the school the congregation's budgeted allowance for mission work, and let the school use their money to do mission work under the school's direction. The school is not under any eldership and of course it is not the church.

My question is this: If 25 individuals and 25 congregations can contribute to a school in order for the school to do its mission work, why couldn't a hundred individuals and a hundred congregations do the same thing? If one hundred, why not a thousand, etc.? At what point would it become wrong? Would it be wrong to begin with, or would it be wrong in principle only if every congregation did it?

Does not the New Testament teach that the church is the God-approved organization for doing mission work? Is not the church its own missionary society? Though various congregations can participate in a mission effort, it remains a fact that the work is being done through the organization of the church, not some other organization. If it is in accordance with God's will for schools to carry on mission efforts without being under an eldership or a congregation, why in principle could not the schools take over the church's

work of evangelizing, thereby supplanting the church in that particular area of work? These questions deserve an answer.

Evidence says that our schools are not now generally serving the purpose for which they were founded. The following statement by brother Wendell Winkler is worthy of consideration:

But may I observe that our Christian colleges were established as adjuncts to the Christian home with the distinctive mission to accurately teach the Bible as the word of God, by assisting in the molding of the lives of young men and young women in the greatest service in the kingdom of God and as well as to equip them for better citizenry within the nation. (cited from a speech at the *FHU Lectures*, Feb. 7, 1995).

It seems to me, and others have expressed a like concern, that our schools are more and more encroaching upon the role which God intended for the church. Some have expressed it as "the tail wagging the dog." We shall have more to say regarding this matter later.

In **Part 2** of this discussion we shall give attention to a number of our schools, showing how they have departed from the course envisioned by their founders, and their failure to operate in accordance with scriptural principles. —Editor

MISCELLANEA

Drunkard and alcoholic: The difference? The Bible uses "drunkard," society, "alcoholic." Alcoholic is considered less judgmental. God's word condemns the "drunkard" (See I Cor 5:11; 6:10). Renaming a sin by doesn't change the facts. Alcoholism is not a "disease," rather a damnable sin, call it what you may.

Does the state have more authority over children than their parents? The infamous 9th Circuit Court of Appeals just said, Yes. The case in point involved children, ages 7 through 10, being given nine questions about sex by the Palmdale School District in California. It is much later than many of us think with regard to the state taking the control of our children. This was the practice in the communistic Soviet Union before its collapse. Could such happen here? A number of things have that we would not have thought possible 50 years ago. —Editor

Desire for Unity and Futile Attempts to Achieve It

Lloyd Gale

It is the will of our Lord and Savior for all Christians to be united, as He expressed in His prayer to the heavenly Father: "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 all may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me" (John 17:20-21). He first prayed for the unity of His Ambassadors, the Apostles, and then for all others who would believe upon Him as a result of their teaching. It was a prayer for the unity of true Christians. The type of unity that Jesus prayed for is the kind that exists between Jesus and His heavenly Father. It is not an agreement not to disagree or a "unity in diversity."

THE FAILURE OF SO-CALLED UNITY MEETINGS

I have no account of the many so-called unity meetings that have taken place, yet there is no unity. The amount of time and money squandered by such attempts are exercises in futility. What has taken place in these meetings is an attempt, by those who have transgressed God's laws, to seek acceptance among those who have kept God's law. If the violators are successful, then all involved are in error. To bid "God speed" to those in error makes one partaker of their evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

Evident in such meetings is that the rule violators do not want to discuss. That is, they do not want to show authority for their innovations. They want to talk about things we agree upon. That is a subtle way of making the unacceptable acceptable. Those who have gone onward and who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, have no desire to give up their innovations, they want others to follow after them. This is the only reason they will meet with those who have no compromised.

If there is a sincere desire for unity, then the doctrines of men must be the subject of discussion. Otherwise, such meetings are sinful and time wasted. It is man-made innovations that cause division and until such are removed unity is impossible. The road to unity is not that complicated. Those who have intro-

duced instruments of music and the missionary society must be willing to give up that for which there is no New Testament authority.

Those who today support The Churches of Christ Disaster Society must give up their para-church organization if they do not want to be the cause of further division. When they were invited to meet with faithful brethren and have the meeting video taped with fair and equal representation on both sides they refused. They refused because they know there is no New Testament authority for such an organization, with their board of directors the churches of Christ. Those who are willing to accept this benevolent society might as well join with the Christian Church, with all their innovations. They have forfeited the principle of New Testament authority.

Consider for a moment two men who are following a blueprint in constructing a building. One of the builders notices that the other builder has added some things which are not included on the plans. So., they have a conference and the builder who has failed to follow the blueprints only wants to talk about the parts of construction where he has followed the blueprint. Now, if the builder who is following the blueprint just goes along with the other builder, would not the architect hold both parties responsible? I think you know the answer.

The Lord's church has but one architect. His plan is perfect (I Cor. 13:10). He has total authority (Matt. 28:18). His authority is set forth by His own instructions and those of His ambassadors, the apostles, and is complete. Any attempt to improve upon perfection will only mar that perfection and cause division. Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, that there be no division among you; but that ye perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

There can be no unity when some are advocating things not authorized by Jesus Christ. All the sentimental pronouncements in the world cannot make things that are unscriptural acceptable to → P. 14

but the term is certainly not limited to such. We cannot minimize the sin of such “traditional” worldliness, but we should give more attention to what we might call “respectable” worldliness. Many today who are considered respectable, upright citizens, even very religious, may also be very worldly in God’s sight. This “respectable” type of worldliness is just as soul-condemning as the traditional type, and may be more dangerous to average member of the church.

JAMES WARNS AGAINST BEING “OF THE WORLD”

A sterner warning could hardly be given than to ask the question, “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” When a Christian, who should be true to God, comes to love the world it is like the wife who gives herself to another man, thereby becoming an “adulteress.” In spiritual adultery one casts himself against God, thus becoming God’s enemy.

In the broad sense of the term, people who are not in the body of Christ are of the world; but many church members fall in love with the world. James reminds us that “pure religion” involves keeping oneself “unspotted from the world” (Jas. 1:27). It is the fashionable kind of worldliness which is more subtle and therefore more harmful to the cause of Christ. It steals away time and interest in spiritual things through the allurements of things which are not wrong within themselves. It is not wrong to have houses and lands, cars and clothes, or to enjoy some pleasant things of life, provided one’s interest in such is not so great that it relegates things of spiritual value to a second place in life. This “respectable” worldliness is rendering the church inactive and virtually powerless in the midst of a wicked world. We don’t have the time, we aren’t willing to make the sacrifices that are necessary to serve the Lord acceptably. This is due, in a great measure, to the fact that other things take a place of greater priority in our day to day living. Those “other things” James calls “the world.”

In more recent times people have become even more worldly than before. Materialism has never been so strong during my eighty years than it is now. But material things are temporal, says Paul.

JOHN WARNS AGAINST LOVING THE WORLD (I John 2:15-17)

John commands: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (v. 15). *Lenski* says “the things of the world” points to individual deceptive treasurers, pleasures, honors of the world, its wealth, its power, its wisdom, etc.” He continues, “But whatever in its connection, tendency, and influence is hostile to God, to Christ, and to his kingdom, however alluring or attractive it may otherwise appear, is ‘a thing of the world,’ to which we must be hostile since we belong to God, to Christ, and to his kingdom.”

The dire consequence of loving the world is seen in the fact that “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” When the “love of the Father” is not in someone, he will not obey the Father, whereas, “If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (Jno. 14:23). The world which we are not to love involves three areas: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These things are “not of the Father,” but are of the world.

A great contrast lies in the fact that the world and its lust “passeth away,” but “he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” If we would but count the cost of loving the world, surely we would choose “the will of God” instead. We cannot afford to build upon that which is passing away and cannot endure. Any hope which is built upon the world is false, and those who entertain such hope are doomed to a bitter disappointment and eternal ruin.

TEMPTATION OF THE WORLD IS NOT FROM GOD

People are prone to place the blame for their sins upon someone other than self. When the sin of worldliness begins its destructive influence in an individual’s life, neither God or anyone else to be blamed. James says, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man” (Jas. 1:13). The cause of the sin of worldliness is found in man himself when he is “drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (v. 14). This sin “bringeth forth death” (v. 15). It is true that God made us with certain desires but we must exercise restraint, lest we sin. —*Editor*

HAVE AMERICAN VALUES CHANGED?

Author’s name lost

The very liberal newspaper, the *New York Times*, recently published an article that was authored by Wayne E. Baker, a professor of sociology, management and organization. at the University of Michigan; which concludes that our values have not changed. Is he right?

Anyone who has studied human history would be foolish not to observe that, over a period of time, almost without exception, values do change and seldom for the better. I have no idea of what criteria the professor employed, but based on my own experience and observation, over almost eighty years as an American, the professor’s conclusion is nonsense. Nonsense appears to be what many of our schools of higher learning major in today. This is why the far left *New York Times* was so eager to publish this man’s work.

It might me that professor Baker’s definition of values is one of his own creation. There are two important questions to be considered in addressing the matter of values. First, what is the definition of values? Second, what is the source of all human values?

Values defined: “The desirability of worth of a thing, Sometimes regarded as desirable, worthy or right, as a belief, standard or moral precept.” This is the definition by *Funk and Wagnalls*. From these various uses of the word “value,” what is under consideration is “a standard or moral precept.” Therefore, what we have under consideration is the basis or standard that one employs to decide what is right or wrong. Taking it one step farther, a person who is not true to their stated belief’s or values, in effect has no values.

In spite of the attempt of liberal historians to rewrite our history, a true history of the founding principles and values upon which America was founded, reveals the biblical and Christian basis of our Constitution and Bill of Rights. It is no accident that public officials as they assume offices of major responsibility to so with their hand on the Bible. It didn’t just happen by change that when one is to give testimony that they place their hand on the Bible and solemnly swear to “tell the truth and nothing but the truth.”

WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF ALL HUMAN VALUES?

There are two and only two sources for human values. Our values come from fallible man or from the Infallible Creator of heaven and earth. Humanly originated values are just as imperfect as the humans who invent them. This is why man-made laws are in a constant state of modification and change. The law books of man get bigger and bigger as time goes by. This system may well be described as “situation ethics or values.”

In clear contrast the values derived from man’s infallible Creator have no need to change because they are perfect and therefore cannot be improved. This is why the Bible does not grow larger and larger as do men’s laws. God’s values are revealed to mankind in, by, and through His holy, inspired and inerrant word. It is the same today as yesterday and will be the same tomorrow. When God’s perfect revelation was completed, all other revelation would cease, and it did (I Cor. 13:10). Paul told Timothy how the scriptures would furnish him (and all other servants of God) completely to every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Simply stated, when God’s word was finalized our value system was set forever.

HAVE AMERICA’S VALUES CHANGED? HOW SHALL WE DETERMINE THE ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION?

Let’s be scientific and apply observation and the law of cause and effect. It may come as a big surprise to the uninformed chat Christians do in fact believe in true science. What we denounce is philosophy disguised as science. We find no conflict between God’s word and true science. In fact, every statement in the scriptures of a scientific nature has always been found to be true. The question we propose and answer is, “Are Americans today spending more time and effort seeking to learn the infallible values of their Creator, or is just the opposite true?”

When we ask if a greater percentage of Americans today are attending worship services and Bible →

study than fifty years ago, the answer is, far less. When we ask if the public schools are any longer reading the Bible and having prayer, the answer is a resounding NO! But the void that was created when the infallible standard was removed has been replaced by what is called “humanism,” or the fallible standards of men. Now we observe that the standard of humanism is also being adapted by humanly established denominations, as the general public has been brainwashed by the media, Hollywood and the public schools with fallible values. Hardly a month passes that we do not hear about some denomination voting to change their man-made creed to accommodate the latest “politically correct” value of humanism. Who would have believed that so called Christian churches would accept abortion on demand, or homosexual leaders in their churches? Who would have even imagined that those professing to be Christians would ever come to be willing to change the very definition of marriage to allow two women or two men to become wife and wife or husband and husband?

WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN OUR PUBLIC AND MANY PRIVATE SCHOOLS?

Who would have imagined that an atheist could bring a law suit that would result in a law that the reading of the Bible and prayer in public schools is unlawful? For many young children the schools was the only place where they were exposed to infallible values. What has happened in American schools is that the godless religion of organic evolution has replaced the value system that made America the greatest nation on earth. And we are being told by a small by “politically correct” minority that the theory of evolution should be mandatory in science classes, but that the concept of intelligent design (ID) should be outlawed?

If science is to be taught in science classes that should be alright with informed Christians. Let them teach the law of cause and effect, the law of gravity, the law of inertia., the law that matter cannot be created or destroyed, the first and second law of thermodynamics. Let them teach about the perfect order of the heavenly bodies. Teach them about the unique location of the earth in relation to the sun and the effect of the moon upon the earth. Tell them about the fact that the earth has the same amount of water as

in the distant past and how water is recycled. Tell them about the complexity of even simple forms of life and that the evidence is that kinds reproduce after their kind. teach them that the complexities of life could not have happened by blind chance. But above all, do not teach them and unscientific, unproven theory that was concocted by a disillusioned theologian called evolution. It is a waste of time and money and undermines the values that made America the leading nation of the world.

What is the evidence of the effect of these changes on American society? The destruction of the family with divorce running wild. The alarming increase in children being born to unwed mothers. Sexually transmitted diseases at an all time high. alcohol and other drug addiction destroying multitudes. Sexual perversion of epidemic proportions. Women, as well as men, who have no sense of modesty. Little girls grow up with the ambition to be a playboy bunny or featured on a centerfold. An epidemic of child molesters and rape. Crimes raters that are much higher than fifty years ago.

One would have to be intellectually ignorant and blind to conclude that America’s values have not changed. Movies and television have become increasingly vulgar as the promote the philosophy of toleration of any and everything with the exception of genuine Christian values. We are urged by the public media to be tolerant of any belief or conduct, but they will quickly label and condemn anyone who advocates the values of the infallible God. Such are called “judgmental” while they have no problem judging those who express God’s values. They demand that we accept their humanistic values while they claim Christians are trying to force their values on others. They attempt to convince others that there is no such thing as absolute truth, while at the same time they claim their relativism is the only absolute truth. WHEN EVERYTHING IS ALRIGHT, THEN NOTHING IS WRONG EXCEPT THAT WHICH IS RIGHT.

I’m afraid that a little learning has made professor Baker mad. Americans have indeed changed, and not for the better but for the worse.

Welcome New Readers. We enjoy hearing from you and knowing your thoughts. —*Editor*

*Wishing Our Readers And Helpers
A Safe And Happy Holiday Season!*



Time passes so quickly. Soon, another year will have come and gone. This is a good time to look back and count our blessings trusting that more will come in the year ahead as we serve our Lord in sincerity and in truth.



In this time of thanksgiving, we offer our thanks for those who have had a part in the *Banner of Truth*. This includes readers in almost every state in our country and in a good number of foreign places. It includes everyone who has had a financial part in our work and encouraged us in other ways. We also thank those who have contributed articles for the paper, and those from the Hickory Grove and Dexter congregations who have given of their time. We thank Hickory Grove for sponsoring the paper and providing a place to print and prepare it for mailing.

To all those above we sincerely wish for you a safe and happy Holiday Season.

May the Lord richly bless you in the days ahead!

In Christian love, Walter and Naomi

The Destructive Influence of “The World”

The book of James was written to Christians of a Jewish background for the purpose of setting forth practical instructions for living the Christian life. Those instructions dealt such things as: faith and works; prayer which avails; being a respecter of persons; the use of the tongue; and, a warning against The Destructive Influence of “The World.” As it is discussed in James 4:1-5, we give attention to this latter heading.

James attributes the “wars and fightings” among Christians to the “lusts” (pleasures) in their members. They didn’t receive God’s blessings through prayer because they didn’t ask, or because they asked for

that which would satiate their lusts. In their pursuit of pleasure they had become “friends of the world.” The seriousness of being a friend of the world is forcefully pointed out when James says, “Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” There is nothing so fearful, that I can think of, as that of standing before the “judgment seat of Christ” as the enemy of God.

“THE WORLD” DEFINED

Too often we limit worldliness to such things as drinking, gambling and sexual activities of a sinful nature. Those things are of the world, to be sure, →